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Dominique Demartini and Claire le Ninan, eds., *Genèses et filiations dans l'œuvre de Christine de Pizan*. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2021. 442 pp. €78.00. (hb). ISBN 978-2-406-11891-6; €39.00. (pb). ISBN 978-2-406-11890-9.

Review by Charles-Louis Morand-Métivier, University of Vermont.

Christine de Pizan is arguably one of the most influential women writers of late medieval France. She wrote in genres including poetry, treatises, mirrors for princes, and love debates. Her works on gender and the place of women in medieval French society are often considered pioneer feminist writings. As such, academic studies on her life, works, and importance in late medieval intellectual and political life are many. What the editors of this collection of essays propose is an original and rather unusual approach to Christinian studies. Their main approach is to track how Christine built her intellectual lineage and how she inscribed her own filiation in her texts. Through numerous contributions presented here, the editors brilliantly offer a very complete analysis of this theme throughout the three parts that make up this volume: “Naître et hériter,” “Engendrer et transmettre,” and finally “Parentés, communautés.”

In “Naître and hériter,” the contributors all focus on what might be called the origins of Christine as a human being, as well as a writer, and how the two are closely linked. Anne Paupert underlines the importance, in her early-fifteenth-century writings, to Christine that her parents be identified as crucial elements in the “creation” of her identity and of her persona; she goes from daughter to woman and author with the evolution of her works. Fabienne Pomel puts onomastics at the heart of her chapter, notably the weight of the name of the father. She uses many female figures—like Sappho and Dido—and underlines, through deep analysis of the weight of a name in the creation of a female figure, how important cultural and intellectual figures recreate themselves by renaming themselves as figures of authority, allowing them to define themselves.

Christopher Lucken focuses on Christine’s mother as she is presented at the beginning of the *Cité des Dames* and the end of the *Chemin de longue étude*. Lucken explains that Christine’s mother seems “d’avoir partie liée avec l’écriture autobiographique et ses enjeux” (p. 99). He argues that her mother, whom Christine presents in the most autobiographical part of her works, is to be lauded for the orientation that Christine undertook in her intellectual life. Yasmina Foehr-Janssens studies the themes of procreation, creation, and fecundity in the *Advisation Christine*, and argues for a reading of the text as a nourishing entity. Finally, Philippe Maupeu studies the *Cité des dames* and, in a brilliant analysis and redefinition of the idea of *auctoritas*, argues that “Christine de Pizan plaide pour une nouvelle définition de la filiation auctoriale” (p. 130), defining a new conception of filiation in which opinion is no longer the most important tool.

To open the second part of the volume, which contains the best essays of this collection, Didier Lechat writes about Christine's female and male readers, specifically in the debate over the *Roman de la Rose*, the *Livre des trois vertus* and the *Livre du duc des vrais amants*. Unlike most medieval literature which was mostly directed towards men, Lechat demonstrates how Christine's texts were purposefully accessible to both sexes, appealing to the critical sense of women and their acute understanding as readers. Ellen M. Thorington argues that, in Harley 4431, Christine brings together the themes of maternity and textual genesis and compiles her own insights in the advice manual she offers Isabella of Bavaria for use in the education of her son, the dauphin. Linda Burke, in a comparative analysis of Christine de Pizan's *Cent Nouvelles* and John Gower's *Cinkante balades*, underlines the parallels between the two works as they both reflect on the personal woes of their authors and of their kingdoms and how the divine love of God is the only thing that can appease earthly sufferings. Ana Luisa Sonsino studies how the translations into Portuguese of the *Livre des trois vertus* between 1430 and 1455--first as the *Livro das tres vertudes*, then as *Espelho de Cristina*--vary quite greatly. Through an analysis of the reasons and contexts of the production of these two texts, Sonsino explores the reasons behind the modifications that led to these two, very different translations.

Anna Loba, based on a fictional invitation that Christine's father received from King Louis I of Hungary, writes a "fiction historique" (p. 201) about the possible female readership that Christine might have had if she had, indeed, lived this life. Christine Reno and Karen Robertson examine how Marie Tudor's succession to the English throne could have motivated Brian Anslay's translation of Pizan's *Cité des dames* (1521), and notably how the queen's self-image may have been inspired by Christine's writings. Lori Walters, through a close reading of the imagery of Chantilly 492-493 and of Harley MS 4431, notably that of childbirth, argues that these images were in a process of self-creation through her book by Christine, "to present herself and the Queen as potent maternal forces" (p. 244). Dominique Demartini addresses the *Epistre à la reine*, and argues that Christine was appealing for the transmission of power through the queen, rather than the more narrow, masculine-centred transmission of power through royal blood. Claire Le Ninan argues that Marie-Anne Robert's *Voyage de Milord Céton dans les sept planets ou Le Nouveau mentor* uses themes close to those of the first chapters of the *Cité des dames*. Even if it is not certain whether Robert read Christine, both texts, written centuries apart, represent the transformation of women into authors. Finally, Franck Latty establishes links and filiations between international law and the *Livre des faits d'armes et de chevalerie*, recognizing the importance of Christine in the early development of this branch of law by being the first woman to write on the topic.

To open the last section of the book, Nikolai Wandruzka studies how Christine's parents and their socioeconomic and intellectual positions (a noble father and a bourgeois mother), as well as their education, were absolutely crucial in shaping Christine and preparing her intellectual life even before her move to France. Following along these lines, Bernard Ribémont studies Christine's role in her family as a wife and mother. With the trauma of the death of her husband and the extreme duress that followed, Christine had to reinvent herself as the head of the family and assume the role of provider, one traditionally assigned to men. In this climate of duress, writing became a way to come to terms with and expiate these traumatic experiences. By exploring how Christine rarely presents traditional families in the *Cité des dames*, Roberta Krueger argues that the families she creates are all helmed by strong women, demonstrating the leadership that Christine believed women should take at various crucial junctures in the life cycles

of their families. Andrea Tarnowski focuses her chapter on the *Epistre de la prison de vie humaine* and its unique manuscript. In it, Christine thematizes the importance and the weight of time through references to multiple authors and through the analyses of the use of reason.

Kevin Brownlee analyzes the filiation between the three last works of Christine: the *Epistre de la prison de vie humaine*, the *Heures de contemplation*, and finally the *Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc*. In these three works, he demonstrates how Christine's voice is addressed to a feminine audience, and how she deals with topics that resonate especially with women. Deborah McGrady explores how, in the *Débat des deux amants* and the *Epistre d'Othéa*, Christine weighs her desire to find a suitable and reliable patron against the desire for Louis d'Orléans to be recognized as a worthy heir to his father. When the king fails to do so, she alters her text in order to attract other potential patrons. The last paper of this section and of the volume is by Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet, who explores three kinds of genealogies developed by Christine in her works: "normal" genealogies (families with both a father and a mother), "troubled" genealogies (in which the heir is a girl or an illegitimate child), and inverted genealogies (in which the girl is powerful and the boy is a coward).

Well-written, covering a large spectrum of Christinian studies, with specialists drawn from both North America and Europe, this volume is a great tool for Pizan scholars and students alike.

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