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Parergon, Volume 13, Number 2, January 1996, pp. 1-20 (Article)

Published by Australian and New Zealand Association of Medieval and Early Modern Studies (Inc.)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/pgn.1996.0013>



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Miniatures as interpretation: Cambridge, Trinity Hall MS 12

The manuscript Cambridge, Trinity Hall 12 came to my attention while collecting information about the medieval French translations of Boethius' *Consolatio philosophiae*, in preparation for establishing critical editions of those texts. This manuscript contains amongst other things a copy of the lengthy verse translation of the *Consolatio*, Translation X,¹ a translation dating from the early 1380s in its original form, and dedicated to the young Charles VI. Translation X is itself a reworking of an earlier verse translation (IX) written by the Dominican, Renaut de Louhans. There are at least thirty-five extant manuscript copies of X, dating from the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, and at least two incunabula. Trinity Hall MS 12 is unlikely to play any major part in establishing a critical edition of this translation.² Nevertheless, it has its own interest. This article is a series of brief reflections on Trinity Hall 12, not as it relates to the manuscript tradition, but in its own right, as an artefact of the early fifteenth century.

The manuscript consists of eight quires of varying numbers of sheets, between four and thirteen per quire. The first quire, ff. 1–8, is entirely in parchment, the other quires being a mixture of both paper and parchment; in general, a parchment sheet enfolds a varying number of paper sheets in each of the subsequent quires. A folio missing from the second quire has been

¹ Full bibliographical details of these translations are to be found in N. H. Kaylor, *The Medieval Consolation of Philosophy: An Annotated Bibliography*, New York and London, 1992. The system of numbering these translations that we have adopted is that of A. Thomas and M. Roques, 'Traductions françaises de la *Consolatio Philosophiae* de Boèce', in *Histoire littéraire de la France* 37 (1938), 419–88, 543–47, rather than that of R. Dwyer, *Boethian Fictions: Narratives in the Medieval French Versions of the Consolatio Philosophiae*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1976. On their chronological sequence, see J. K. Atkinson, 'Manuscript Context as a Guide to Generic Shift: Some Middle French *Consolations*', in *Medieval Codicology, Iconography, Literature and Translation. Studies for Keith Val Sinclair*, Leiden, 1994, pp. 321–32. Critical editions of versions I (M. Bolton-Hall), II (J. K. Atkinson) and IX (B. M. Atherton) are lodged as PhD theses at the University of Queensland Library. An edition of V (J. K. Atkinson) should shortly appear in the series of the Beihefte of *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*.

² A critical edition of the translation is being prepared by Marcel Noest as a doctoral dissertation at the University of Queensland; the Cambridge manuscript has been rejected as either a base or a control manuscript.

inserted after the seventh quire, just after f. 106. The script is a quite rough *hybrida currens* of the fifteenth century; the ink is black and the texts are rubricated. The pages are ruled and the texts organised in ruled double columns varying in the number of lines per column from thirty-five to fifty-two. At the end of virtually every verse, a pen line extends the final letter of the line to the edge of the column; usually this is with a simple straight line, but occasionally the lines are squiggled on alternate lines, leaving the intermediate lines with no fillers at all. Hence, for the first six lines of rubrics on f. 1^v*b*, there are three squiggled lines to six lines of rubrics, and for the final eight lines of rubrics on f. 2^v*a*, there are four (Fig. 1).³ The scribe, who signs himself simply as .G. at a couple of points in the manuscript and once as .G. *dictus Lanielle*, completed the transcription of the third and last text, *La regale du monde* or *Le livre dez .iii. estas*, on the Eve of the Purification or Candlemas, the first of February 1407 (new style). Judging by the script and some of the spelling features, the texts were all copied by the same scribe, who would appear to come from the eastern or north-eastern areas of France, Lorraine or the Walloon region. At one stage the manuscript belonged to a 'damoysele, Mademoiselle de Quiercheville'.⁴ M. R. James suggests that the town could be Querqueville in the Department of la Manche on the English Channel.⁵ The manuscript was certainly in England by the sixteenth century since there is the name of the Englishman, Robert Hare,⁶ on f. 1, dated 1551. According to R. A. Dwyer,⁷ there is a vague possibility that the text found its way to England at a much earlier stage in its history, and that it was read by Charles d'Orléans, anywhere in the period from 1415 to 1461, during one of his long sojourns in England as a political prisoner/guest.

³ For Fig. 1 and other illustrations from Cambridge, Trinity Hall MS 12, see below, pp. 15–20.

⁴ This indication of ownership appears on the otherwise blank f. 145^v, in a different script.

⁵ Montague Rhodes James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity Hall*, Cambridge, 1907, pp. 14–32.

⁶ References to Hare are provided by R. E. V. Stuip in his article, 'Je meurs de soif et suy a la fontaine', in *Mélanges de linguistique et de littérature offerts à Lein Geschiere*, Amsterdam, 1975, pp. 25–36 (p. 27, n. 5).

⁷ R. A. Dwyer, 'Je meurs de soif auprès de la fontaine', in *French Studies* 22 (1969), 225–28.

The manuscript contains three principal texts: the French verse translation of the *Consolatio philosophiae* (X); a copy of the tragic romance of *La Chastelaine de Vergi*,⁸ and a little-known moral, religious text entitled *La regale du monde* or the *Livre de .iii. estas*.⁹ The first two texts stretch across the first six quires; quires 7 and 8 cover ff. 99–146. F. 99^r contains a full-page miniature depicting the Coronation of the Virgin; f. 99^v is blank. My own feeling is that the Coronation of the Virgin is to be seen rather as a conclusion to the set of miniatures surrounding *La Chastelaine de Vergi* than as a preface to the final text, *La regale du monde*, which begins on f. 100^r. I mention these details primarily to suggest that the manuscript is composed as a single unit. There is nothing in the style of the script, or in the colours and style of the miniatures in the final two quires, that would suggest a piece of separate confection.

Each of the texts is illustrated with vigorous but roughly drawn coloured miniatures, the purpose of which is to illustrate the accompanying text; they are contained within the columns and vary in height from between four lines to one whole column. Thus from f. 1^v to 87^r, for the *Consolacion*, there are no fewer than two hundred and fifteen such illustrations; from f. 90^r to 96^v, for the *Chastelaine*, there are sixteen; and from f. 100^r to 143^r, there are some ninety-nine. The surface covered by the illustrations is almost as extensive as that covered by the text. They are more than simple decorations. One may see them as co-terminous with the text, that is, text and illustration are best read together, each as an interpretation of the other. Occasionally the illustrations are accompanied by tags, in Latin or French, the better to identify characters or places. By way of example I choose three such scenes.

- F. 7^v (Fig. 2). We take first a tragic scene from the political life of Boethius who defended his friend Paulinus against the courtiers at Theodoric's court. Boethius calls the courtiers, who wished to devour

⁸ The Cambridge manuscript was unknown to R. E. V. Stuip in preparing his edition, *La Chastelaine de Vergi, édition critique du ms. B. N. f. fr. 375*, The Hague, 1970. He subsequently published a description of the manuscript in 'Un nouveau manuscrit de *La Chastelaine de Vergi*', in *Romania* 98 (1977), 108–20.

⁹ Earlier bibliographical references suggest that an edition was being prepared by J. C. Laidlaw. It appears not yet to have been published.

Paulinus' property, the *Palatinae canes*.¹⁰ In a quite concrete portrayal of the image, we see Boethius attempting to defend his friend Paulinus against three devouring dogs.

- F. 6^r (Fig. 3). Here we have scenes representing passages from Bk I, pr. 3.¹¹ On the top right we see representatives of the philosophical sects, *Epigurus* and *Stoicus*, rending the *tunica* of Philosophy. The French text reads:

Après ces gens autres estoient
Epigurus et Stoïcus ...
Mes bons vestemens derompoient.

(After these people there were others, Epicurus and Stoicus
[who] tore apart my good robes.)

On the bottom left we see a representation of the *carcer Socratis* ('Socrates' prison'). The *dux Atheniensis* successively beats off the disciples of Socrates who have come to plead for his release. The French text reads:

Le duc d'Athenes le fist prendre
Et le fist en prison mourir
Moy present ...

(The duke of Athens had him taken and caused him to die in
prison in my presence ...)

Finally in the bottom right we see *Zenon*, stripped to his shirt, with hands bound, being beaten by the cudgel-blows of his executioners. The French text reads:

Aussi Zenon fu tormentés
Pour l'öer vie vertuele.

(Zeno also was tormented for recommending a life of virtue.)

- F. 73^v (Fig. 4). The scenes here represent the last three of the labours of Hercules in the Boethian system, Bk IV, m. vii. On the left we see Hercules as a valiant knight killing Cacus who has stolen cattle and hidden them in a cave:

¹⁰ L. Bieler (ed.), *Anicii Manlii Severini Boethii Philosophiae Consolatio*, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina 94, Turnholt, 1957, Bk I, pr. 4, p. 8, sentence 13. The illustration is reproduced in P. Courcelle, *La Consolation de Philosophie dans la tradition littéraire*, Paris, 1967, Pl. 20 (1), and discussed by him on p. 76.

¹¹ Bieler, *Philosophiae Consolatio*, pp. 21–22, sentences 7–9. The scenes are reproduced in Courcelle, Pl. 63 (1–3), and discussed on p. 97. The translations which follow are, unless otherwise stated, my own.

Car a dure mort le mena
Et tous sez beufs en ramena.

(For he [Hercules] led him [Cacus] to a violent death and recovered all his cattle from him.)

On the top right we have the killing of the Erymanthian boar:

En la fin tant fiert et tant bat
Que ce sanglier tout mort abat.

(Finally he [Hercules] so strikes and batters that he strikes down this boar quite dead.)

On the bottom right we have a representation of Atlas supporting the heavens on his neck and shoulders:

Estoit en une region
Ou le ciel sur son col portoit.

(He [Atlas] was in a region where he bore the heaven on his neck.)

If we choose to talk about levels of text, then we might call the text itself level one, and these illustrations, level two. What is interesting about this manuscript is that there are two further levels of text and illustration.

Were one idly to pick up Cambridge, Trinity Hall MS 12 and to browse through it, one might be mistaken for thinking that one was dealing with an early fifteenth-century psalter. On f. 1^r is a full-page image of St Sebastian (Fig. 5). Sebastian is bound by his hands and feet to a shaft in the centre of an elaborate triple-arched canopy.¹² He is pierced with at least ten arrows; on either side is an elderly mean-looking archer with a long-bow.

Turning now to the end of the volume, one is struck by two full-page miniatures on ff. 144^r and 145^r.¹³ F. 144^r presents us with a full-page Crucifixion, showing both thieves, the Virgin and St John at the foot of the Cross, Longinus with his spear, and a man with a reed and a sponge. Two scenes from the martyrdom of St Katherine follow on f. 145^r (Fig. 6). Standing on the right in the upper picture is a nude St Katherine, crowned, between two wheels; she is accompanied by four executioners; a divine hand appears above her; and on her left the Emperor Maximian (or

¹² Gothic arches (single, double, triple and some multiple) are a feature of the majority of the full-page miniatures; the most noteworthy exceptions are two of the Visions accompanying the *Regale* (ff. 109^v and 111^r), described by M. R. James, *Catalogue*, pp. 29–30.

¹³ Ff. 143^v, 144^v, 145^v and 146 are all blank.

Maxentius), seated, looks on. In the picture below, Katherine, on the left, crowned, talks to a group of philosophers; on the right, before a throned Maximian, she kneels, finally about to be beheaded; above, two angels hold her soul in a cloth. A further browse through the volume would reveal a number of full-page miniatures of saints, primarily apostles, martyrs, and bishops or abbots, while others depict stories from the lives of Christ and the Virgin. As examples we select Sts Peter and Paul (f. 33^v: Fig. 7) and the Resurrection (f. 34^v: Fig. 8). In the latter scene, against the background of the recurrent three arches, we see Christ, centre, emerging from his tomb; in the foreground, three soldiers asleep; Christ is flanked by two kneeling angels; behind the tomb and clustered in the right-hand arch are the three Marys, witnesses of the Resurrection.

By using these sets of full-page religious miniatures as a criterion marking points of division in the manuscript, one would conclude that it contains seven texts. In fact it contains the five books of the *Consolacion* plus the other two texts already mentioned. As we shall see in a moment, there is a further sequence of five *ballades* which appears to link the *Consolacion* and the *Chastelaine*. The following pattern emerges:

St Sebastian

Consolacion, Prologue and Book I

Ballade I

Two sets of canopied saints:¹⁴ two Virgin-Martyrs, Apollonia and Margaret; two Holy Abbots, Anthony and Benedict

Palm Sunday (with the pilgrim St James most prominent amongst the twelve Apostles)

Consolacion, Book II

Ballade II

Epiphany

Four sets of canopied saints: Michael and Mary Magdalene; Denis and Barbara; Peter and Paul; James and John

Resurrection

Consolacion, Book III

¹⁴ It will be noted that elsewhere in the manuscript the canopied saints occur in sets of four. We may surmise that the misplaced folio from quire 2, which, had it been preserved, would have appeared at just this point in the manuscript, contained another two sets of canopied saints.

Four sets of canopied saints (eight further apostles, only Philip is missing): Bartholomew and Andrew; Simon and Jude; Matthew and James the Lesser; Thomas and Barnabas

Transfiguration

Consolacion, Book IV

Ballade III

Four sets of canopied saints: Stephen and Martin; Nicholas and Fiacre; Cosmas and Damian; Eloy and Genevieve

Nativity

Consolacion, Book V

Ballade IV

Four sets of canopied saints: Christopher and George; Dominic and Francis; Radegonde and Blaise; Bernard and Leonard

Anne and Joachim before the Temple

La Chastelaine de Vergi

Ballade V

Nativity of Our Lady

Two sets of canopied prophets: Isaiah and Jeremiah; David and Moses

The Chain of Intercession

The Coronation of the Virgin

La Regale du monde

Crucifixion

Two scenes from the life of St Katherine

At first sight it may seem that the miniatures of saints and scenes from the lives of Christ and the Virgin¹⁵ are somewhat at odds with the nature of the texts contained in the codex. As M. R. James states:

¹⁵ The title 'Chain of Intercession' in the above sequence is mine. The following description is based partly on that provided by James, *Catalogue*, p. 28 (the translations are mine): A rich arcaded building: above, God the Father in tiara, throned, surrounded by eight cherubs; in the scroll around the Father's head, a couplet: *Coment le pere begnement/ otroie au filz son proiement* ('How the Father favourably grants to the Son what He asks for'). At the Father's knees an angel on either side kneels; the verse in the scroll of the angel on the right reads: *Coment les angres sont liés* ('How the angels are bound [in permanent prayer and adoration?]); the couplet is completed in the scroll of the angel on the left: *Du lian d'omme qui est deliez* ('Of the bond of man who is unbound [not constrained?]'). At the bottom left, the Virgin, crowned, points to her heart; from her lips a scrolled couplet: *Come la vierge mere monde/ prie son filz pour tout le monde* ('How the ever Virgin Mother prays to her Son for the whole world'). Under the right-hand arm of her cloak kneels St Bernard with scroll: *Monstra te esse matrem sumat per te preces* ('Reveal yourself as the Mother; let Him accept prayers through you'). In the centre

The volume is very copiously illustrated, and in a very curious way. There are two sets of pictures: the one illustrates the text, the other consists of a series of full-page pictures (in nearly all cases) which are appropriate only to a religious book, and as I take it, must be copied from a psalter. Psalters usually had a series of preliminary paintings illustrating the Life of Christ, and the principal saints. All these pictures are by the same hand, they are extremely roughly drawn and coloured, almost no gold is used.¹⁶

What needs questioning is James' comment that these latter scenes are 'appropriate only to a religious book'. What kind of reading is obtained when this series of full-page illustrations, depicting saints and salvation scenes, is read in conjunction with the texts proposed in the codex? And what textual function, if any, may be attributed to the set of five *ballades* that punctuate and appear to link the *Consolacion* and the *Chastelaine*?

My starting assumption is that this presentation is deliberate, and even if we cannot enter fully into the intentions or fantasies of this scribe, we can accept that he has organised his text in such a way as to prompt us into essaying an enriched reading. To dismiss the miniatures as inappropriately set as does James, or to read the five *ballades* simply as *remplissage* ('page-fillers'), as does Stuijp in his edition of them,¹⁷ seems to me to cut short any

foreground an angel kneels, holding a lance and two scourges; above his head the Dove with scrolled couplet: *Ly saint esprit est envoie/ pour randre cl. [clairs?] lez desvoiez* ('The Holy Spirit is sent to make discerning [?] those who have lost the way'). On the right, Christ on the Cross, His left arm pointing to His side; from the fingers of His outstretched right arm, a scroll: *Coment le filz a dieu le pere/ pour le monde fait la priere* ('How the Son makes supplication to the Father for the world').

¹⁶ James, *Catalogue*, p. 14.

¹⁷ Stuijp, 'Je meurs de soif', p. 26. Nevertheless, the recommendations on table manners (six couplets), which appear on f. 96^v between the *Chastelaine* and the final *ballade*, might be interpreted as *remplissage*. They read as follows:

Se tu veulx estre bien courtois,	Garde ces regles en françois:
Lavez les mains devant disner	Et ainsy quant voudras souper;
Seoir te peux sans contredit	Ou lieu ou l'oste si te dit;
De pain, de vin, tu dois prendre	Se aultre viande dois actendre;
De tes ongles oste l'ordure,	Les avoir ors, c'est grant ordure;
Le morcel mis hors de la bouche	Entre gens est vilain reproche.

(If you wish to be truly courteous, observe these rules in French: wash your hands before dinner and whenever you wish to sup; you can sit down without objection in the place where your host tells you; if you must wait for other food, you should take some bread and some wine; take the dirt

further investigation and to be problematic. We might note that the scribe has no problem in leaving half-columns, columns and even whole folios blank from time to time. At the root of the problem lies the possibility that it is we who have largely lost a feeling for the all-pervading penetration of a Christian mythology into the interpretation of life-experiences, including the reading of any text whatsoever. The major myths in the history of salvation, as seen from such a perspective, are there to assert and provide the experience of an original, greater, more important reality through which the present life and work of individuals or of groups is to be seen, experienced and interpreted. The lives of the saints are simply exemplary manifestations of that profound spiritual reality. May we not read the Sebastian at the head of the volume, torn between the slings and arrows of misfortune, as some kind of symbolic representation of the martyr, Boethius, St Severinus? Yet Boethius was seen not only as a martyr, but also as a teacher-confessor. And it is in this light that we may read the final presentation of the martyr-teacher Katherine, patron saint of philosophers, maidens and teachers. In one of the final frames (Fig. 6), we note that a crowned Katherine proceeds at her trial to convert a group of court philosophers, much to the annoyance of the Emperor Maximian. Katherine was renowned for her intelligence and powers of persuasion. She may be seen as a fitting counterpart to Sebastian at the head of the codex. And the wheel of torture to which the martyr Katherine is subjected echoes the wheel of Fortune to which the martyr Boethius was originally subject (Fig. 9).¹⁸

In passing I may mention another set of miniatures in which the role of Boethius as a pre-eminent teacher is emphasised. The French translation of the *Consolatio*, in verse and prose (V), contained in MS Montpellier, Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire, Section Médecine, H. 43, is accompanied by six small miniatures, placed at the beginning of each of the five books of the *Consolation* and at the end of the text.¹⁹ Here, we observe a progression, from the first frame where Boethius appears as a sick figure lying prostrate

out of your nails, it is really disgusting to have them dirty; to take a piece of food from your mouth in company is a fault characterising a peasant.)

¹⁸ Although the Boethian wheel of Fortune, on f. 3r, is not a full-page miniature, it does precede and dominate the opening verses of the *Consolacion*.

¹⁹ Four of the miniatures of the Montpellier manuscript are reproduced by Courcelle, *La Consolation*, Pls 30 (1–2), 62 (2) and 119 (1), and are discussed by him on pp. 83, 96 and 197.

at one side, awaiting the administration of medicine from his doctor, Philosophy, to the final frame, where a fully recovered Boethius, standing centre-stage, dressed in a glorious robe of gold, engages in teaching a group gathered at his feet on his left. The parallel with the figure of the martyr-teacher Katherine at the end of the Cambridge manuscript is worthy of note. To have a series of martyrs and teacher-saints associated with the Boethian text may be seen, then, as part of an accepted tradition and so quite appropriate.

That these religious miniatures are to be associated in some way with the accompanying texts would seem to be supported by some of the internal images, drawn from traditional religious iconography, which accompany the *Consolacion*. Accompanying Bk I, m. v on f. 9^v (Fig. 10), the *O stelliferi conditor orbis* ('Creator of the starry heavens'), we have a representation of God, in a triple crown, seated on a rainbow in a ring of clouds. Then there is the whole-column illustration which accompanies Bk IV, m. ii, the Boethian account of the ascent of the soul to God couched in neo-Platonic language. (The Boethian terminology does not always seem entirely consistent with orthodox theology.) In the artist's conception and visual commentary on this, however, we have a far more specifically Catholic interpretation of the soul's ascent. The illustration on f. 56^r (Fig. 11) is described by James in the following terms:

At top, God and angels and souls, the soul winged touches the *vesica*²⁰ on which God is: below, bands representing the seven spheres. In the lowest are nude souls praying; below these, earth, and at the bottom, Hell with devils pouring liquid over souls in a cauldron.²¹

While it may be difficult to attach any immediately apparent significance to the non-chronological sequence of the Palm Sunday, Epiphany, Resurrection, Transfiguration and Nativity scenes, context suggests that the series is to be associated with the *Consolacion*. Furthermore, it is clear that the Marial sequence—the Conception, Nativity, Old Testament prophets,²² Chain of Intercession²³ and Coronation of the

²⁰ The *vesica* is a pointed oval figure frequently employed by early artists as an aureole enclosing the figures of Christ, the Virgin and so on.

²¹ James, *Catalogue*, p. 25.

²² Despite the rather curious scrolled messages associated with each of these Old Testament figures, which read, in order, *Forte est vinum; fortis est rex; forciores sunt*

Virgin—are to be associated in some way, yet to be fully defined, with *La Chastelaine de Vergi*. At the moment I incline to the view that none of these major full-page miniatures is to be associated with *La Regale du monde*:²⁴ the final Crucifixion and St Katherine scenes may be interpreted as a conclusion to the whole codex rather than simply to the *Regale*.

We turn briefly now to the fourth level of commentary, the five *ballades*. In his edition of these, Stuip makes no attempt to relate them in any way to the texts which they accompany, apart from stating that they have a simple function of *remplissage*. Surely it is worth attempting a reading of them as if they, like the series of illustrations within the texts, are an interpretative adjunct to the primary text. The first and third *ballades* occur in other collections, and the first has been variously attributed to Eustache Deschamps and Oton Grandson.²⁵

Ballade I occurs at the end of the first book of the *Consolacion*. The refrain is: *Monseigneur dit bien, il a droit* ('My lord speaks well, he is right'). The *ballade* contains the recommendations of a speaker to those who would succeed well in current times: flattery, yielding to all the winds of

mulieres; super omnia vincit veritas ('Wine is strong; the king is strong; women are stronger; truth overcomes all things'), we read these groupings—Isaiah and Jeremiah, David and Moses—as appropriate to the Marial sequence. While prophetic verses from each are traditionally associated with various feasts of the Virgin—for example, and in order, Isaiah 7: 14–15 and 11: 1–10; Jeremiah 18: 20 (Offertory of the feasts of both the Compassion of Mary and her Seven Sorrows); Psalm 44; Genesis 3: 15; Numbers 17—this grouping points towards the *Ordo Prophetarum*, or Procession of the Prophets, used in the Christmas office of Matins. As R. B. Donovan explains (*The Liturgical Drama in Medieval Spain*, Toronto, 1958, p. 17):

In the course of this [procession], various figures of the Old Testament were summoned to come forth and give testimony concerning the divinity of Christ. Jeremias, Daniel, Moses and others made an appearance.

²³ The Marial features of this miniature are characterised by a blue-robed Virgin Mary at the bottom left with St Bernard shadowing in the folds of her cloak (see above, n. 15).

²⁴ Internal to this text are two full-page chevaline Visions (ff. 109^v, and 111^r).

²⁵ Stuip, 'Je meurs de soif', p. 28, provides references for both *ballades* which we reproduce here. The first appears in G. Raynaud (ed.), *Œuvres complètes d'Eustache Deschamps*, Paris, 11 vols, 1878–1903, X, 1901, pp. xiii and xxi; in A. Piaget (ed.), *Oton de Grandson, sa vie et ses poésies*, Lausanne, 1941, pp. 250–51; and in *Le Jardin de Plaisance*, facsimile prepared by E. Droz and A. Piaget, Paris, 2 vols, 1910–24, f. ciii^r. The third *ballade* appears twice in the *Jardin de Plaisance* (ff. cvii^r and cxii^v) and in two manuscripts, London, Westminster Abbey MS 21, f. 27^v, and Paris, BN MS, f. fr. 1719 (no folio reference).

change, sycophantic agreement with those in authority, are the ways to success. Such is the custom of the court. The verses can easily be read as an ironic comment on Book I of the *Consolacion*, where Boethius, having begun, on Philosophy's advice, to chase away the flattering Muses, outlines his opposition to the flatterers and time-servers at Theodoric's court. The *ballade* is followed by fifteen verses (seven rhyming couplets plus one final verse) which give the lie to the cynical advice offered earlier: in these verses a young man is advised to avoid flatterers, the envious and the like, for frequenting them can only lead to sickness, a sickness which we know it is Philosophy's concern to remedy in the ailing Boethius.

Ballade II is placed at the end of the second book of the *Consolacion*. In this book, Philosophy, speaking in the voice of Fortuna, reveals dramatically to Boethius the dangers of placing trust in that lady, whose only constant is her inconstancy. The inconstancy and the unjustly negative attitudes of the lady to whom the second *ballade* is addressed suggest that, in these three stanzas, it is once again Fortuna that the writer is condemning under the guise of his lady. He has been badly treated by her in a way which he considers undeserved.

Trop me tenés pour nice et pour musart,
Et sy ne l'ay verrs vous pas deserry:
Tousdiz vous ai estey de bonne part
A mon pover dez que premier vous vy.

(You are too ready to consider me naïve and inconsiderate, and yet I have not deserved this from you: as far as I could I have always been well-intentioned towards you, from the first time I saw you.)

The Lady, on the other hand, is full of falsity and treachery. Her inner thoughts and outward looks never concur. The refrain is:

Sachiez de vray, je diray toute part:
'Je truis en vous loialté de regnart.'

(Know for a fact that I will say everywhere: 'I find in you the loyalty of a fox'.)

The importance of Lady Fortune's domination throughout the first two books is underlined by the prominent half-column illustration of Fortuna with her wheel with which Book I begins (f. 3^{ra}: Fig. 9).

Between Books IV and V we find the third *ballade*. Here the speaker places himself in the total obedience of a Lady who appears as his only hope. While waiting for her Pity, he exclaims: *Je meurs de soif aupres de la fontaine* ('I am dying of thirst right beside the fountain'). Access to the Lady

is made difficult by False Language, Jealousy, Refusal and *Dangier*, a term which I would render in the context as 'capricious will' or 'the misuse of free will'. Remember the final words of Philosophy at the end of Bk IV, m. vii:

Ite nunc, fortes, ubi celsa magni
ducit exempli uia. Cur inertes
terga nudatis? Superata tellus
sidera donat.

(Go now, ye strong, where the exalted way/ Of great example
leads. Why hang you back?/ Why turn away? Once earth has been
surpassed,/ It gives the stars.)²⁶

Certainly the transition from Book IV to V requires a shift to a new mode of argument and presentation in which the thought-patterns only achieve their goal if they are accompanied by a more quiet and centred assiduity, more trust and loyalty, and a longing for the programme of transcendent perception hinted at in the text up to that point. It is not improper to see either Boethius or the anxious reader, dying of thirst beside the promised fountain, as an image appropriate to the entry into Book V.

In the fourth *ballade*, which completes the *Consolacion*, the speaker sees himself as suffering a martyrdom under the attacks of *Dangier*—that is, False Power or the misuse of free will—and of false liars who stretch their bows against him. In all the worst of his sufferings, both night and day, his only hope, and his only pleasure, are in his Lady, Love, and his trust is in her care for him: he knows that, through holding to her, he will be delivered from his martyrdom. The last verse reads:

Ainsy toujours pourra amourex vivre.

(Thus will he be able to live always in love.)

The imagery of the martyrdom for Love under the arrows of Falsity and Misfortune must inevitably take us back to the miniature of St Sebastian at the head of the codex. Boethius, although winning the consolation of Philosophy, was nevertheless martyred.

Finally, how are we to interpret the fifth *ballade* at the end of the *Chastelaine*? It is peopled with the allegorical personifications found in the *Roman de la Rose*: *Dangier*, *Bel Accueil*, *Pitié*, *Honte*, *Paour*, *Joieuse*, *Doubx Espoir*, *Haine* and *Fauceté*. It is true that the *Chastelaine* is a tale of

²⁶ Translation by V. E. Watts, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, Harmondsworth, 1969, p. 146.

tragic love in which true lovers die: the Chatelaine dies through profound grief at having had the secret of her love betrayed, while her lover dies by his own hand, of a sword-wound which he inflicts on himself, through grief and shame at having been forced to betray the secret of their love. They are, then, martyrs to Love. If this final *ballade* is to be read with *La Chastelaine*, and in a sense we have little choice but so to do, then it may be understood as a cry from a languishing lover. Although he is by the fountain, he is dying of thirst;²⁷ yet Sweet Hope and Fair Welcome may bring him comfort. Unlike his counterpart in *La Chastelaine*, the lover of the *ballade* hopes to escape *Dangier* and find the means to stay alive, reach safe harbour and receive *confort*.²⁸ The *envoi* expresses this hope:

Prince, sy pry ma dame treshaultaine
 Qu'el laist venir le ruissel a bon port:
 Malgré Dangier je ystrai de ceste paine
 Se Bel Acueul me veult donner confort.

(Prince, so I pray my very noble lady that she may allow the stream to arrive safely at harbour; in spite of constraining power, I shall come forth from this suffering, if Fair Welcome choose to grant me comfort.)

The full-page miniature of the Nativity of the Virgin which appears on the page facing these verses adds at least one extra level of meaning to the words, *ma dame treshaultaine*, in the verses just cited: one senses the ultimate mercy that may be shown by her.

The five *ballades* and the full-page miniatures of saints and salvation scenes, reminiscent of psalter illuminations, offer us, I suggest, two levels of reading over and above the two already offered by the texts and their accompanying illustrations. What I have tried to demonstrate, via this brief description of some aspects of Cambridge, Trinity Hall MS 12, is an intertextual way of reading the codex, allowing it to be seen as a quadrupled set of verbal and visual readings, intertwined with one another. The three written texts, the illustrative miniatures which form a kind of visual running commentary on scenes and points of historical, geographical and

²⁷ The fourth and the fifth *ballades* both use the image of the lover dying of thirst beside a fountain.

²⁸ One of the meanings attributed to the Old French word *confort* is 'consolation'; various manuscripts containing translations of the *Consolatio* bear the title of *Li livres de confort*.

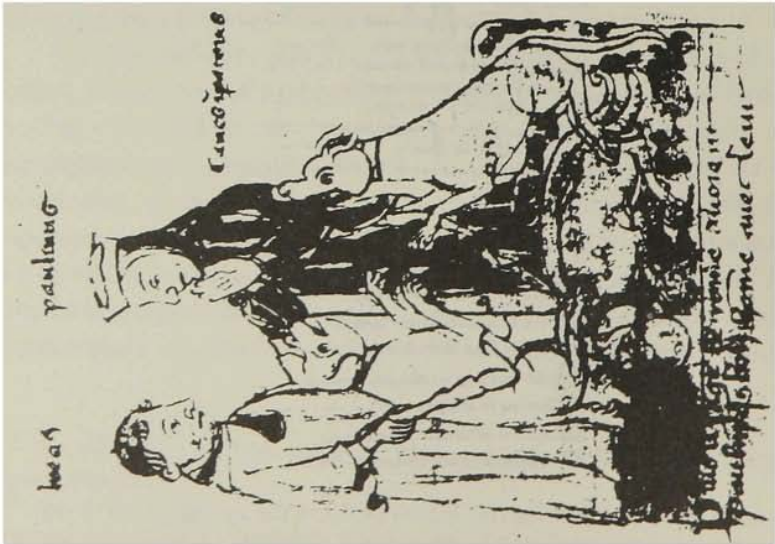


Fig. 2. F. 7^v



Fig. 3. F. 6^r

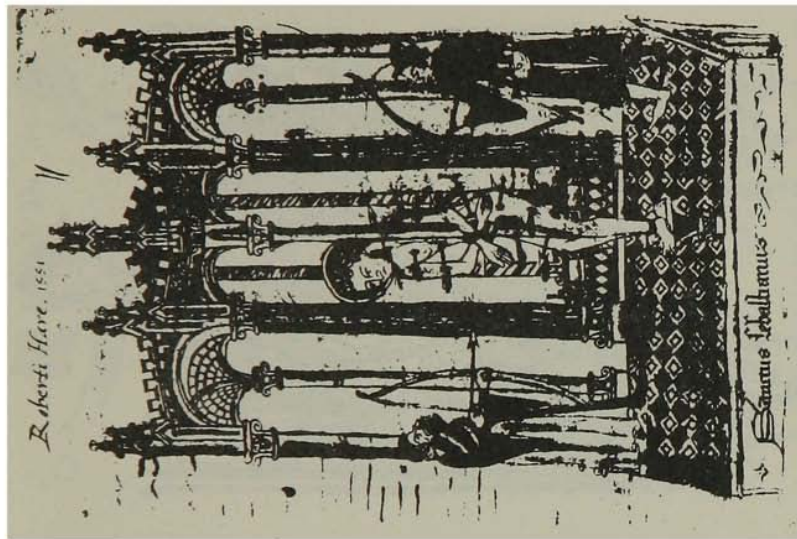


Fig. 5. F. 1^v

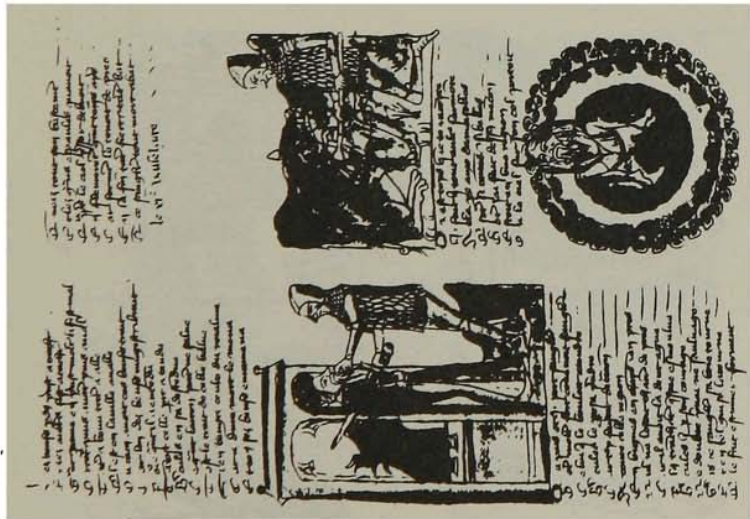


Fig. 4. F. 73^v

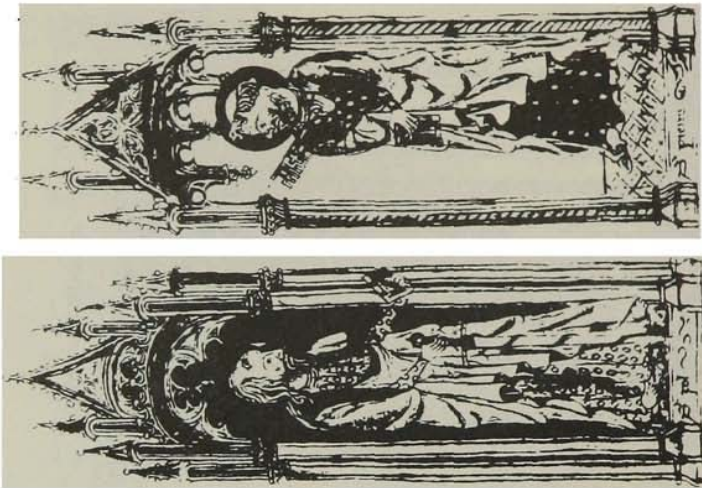


Fig. 7. F. 33^v

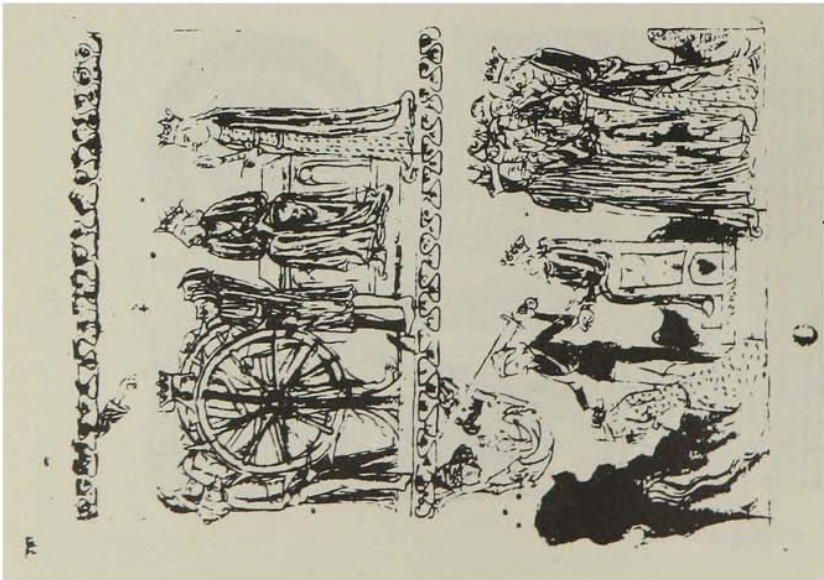


Fig. 6. F. 145^r

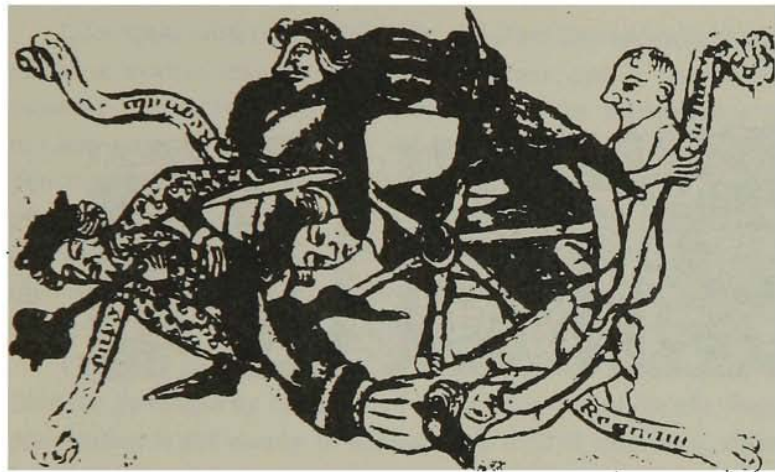


Fig. 9. F. 3^{ra}

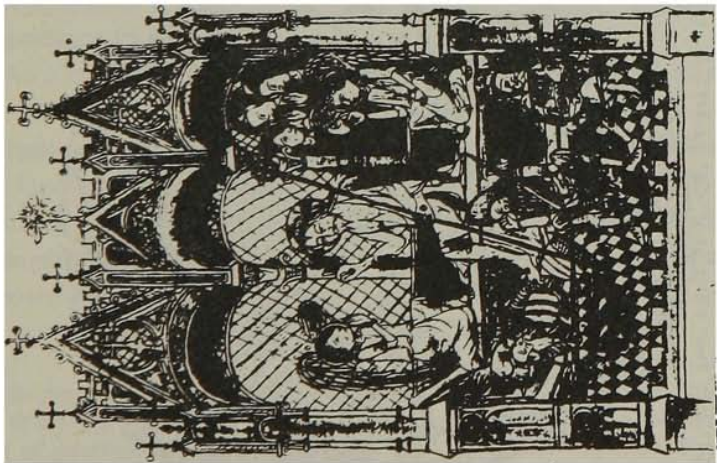


Fig. 8. F. 34^v



Fig. 11. F. 56^r

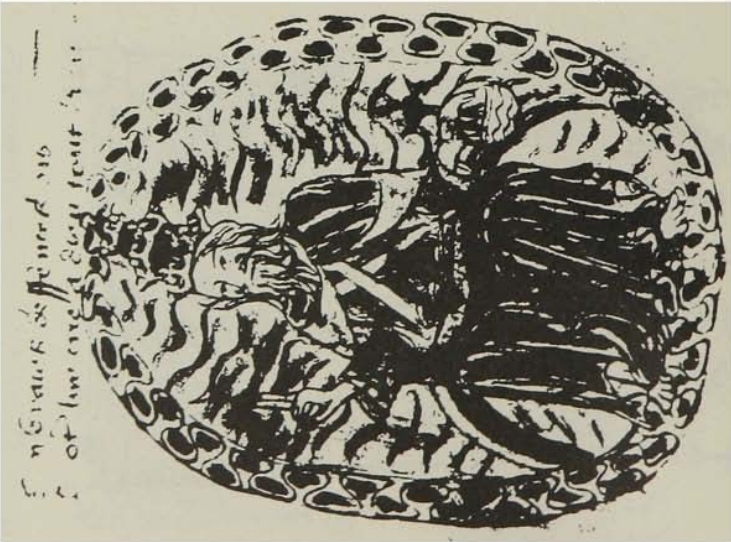


Fig. 10. F. 9^v