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The Rhetoric of Fifteenth-Century Historiography: The *Mémoires* of Olivier de
La Marche

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Olivier de La Marche presenting his *Mémoires* to Philippe le Beau
Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français, 2868, fol. 5^r

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Introduction

It is common practice to begin a study such as this with a definition of those terms which the reader may find problematic. This practice becomes all the more necessary in the case of the current thesis. A study of rhetoric could be seen as one of the great hostages to fortune of literary analysis since, in commenting upon the argumentation of others, it invites criticism of its own arguments in the same terms. This is an inevitable consequence of my chosen field of investigation and one which is not entirely unwelcome – all academic writing is polemical and polemic should be subject to careful scrutiny. Nevertheless, if this particular piece of academic polemic is to be examined with especial care by virtue of its subject matter, it is natural that I should want to limit the scope of potential criticism by stating what I mean when I use terms such as ‘rhetoric’ and ‘historiography’ and, conversely, what terms I use to refer to the human characters in my narrative.

Of these joint aims, the latter is that which requires the least explanation: my main concern has been for consistency, despite the vagaries of fifteenth-century orthography. I have therefore preferred Lalaing to Lalain, Commynes to Commines and George Chastelain to Georges Chastellain.¹ In writing of the dukes of Burgundy, I have used French rather than English honorifics, Philippe le Bon, Philippe le Beau and, perhaps more controversially, Charles le Hardi. In this last choice, I have followed Jean-Marie Cauchies, who points out that French is the only language to have popularized a more pejorative alternative, *Téméraire*, and that this has frequently served French

¹ In most such cases I have relied on what appears to be the dominant current practice and on personal preference to choose between alternative orthographies. In the case of George Chastelain I have followed Graeme Small (*George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy: Political and Historical Culture at Court in the Fifteenth Century*, (Woodbridge: Royal Historical Society, 1997), p. 3, n. 16), who bases his opinion on the author’s signature. I have, however, not followed Small’s practice of modifying references to the standard edition of Chastelain’s work to fit with his chosen orthography, nor have I altered references to works by Commynes when they were published under the name of Commines.

nationalist or pseudo-psychological ends.¹ Olivier de La Marche, whose work forms the principal focus of this study, is frequently accused of irrational partiality in favour of his master – often by those who themselves use the pejorative epithet. One of the concerns of this thesis will be to examine the extent to which La Marche is an unreserved partisan of the last Valois duke and I wished to remove this discussion as far as possible from the preconceived ideas which have been supported by the use of *Téméraire*. In the circumstances, I felt ‘Hardi’ to be more neutral – the equivalent of the English ‘Bold’, Dutch ‘Stout’ or German ‘Kühn’.

A search for linguistic equivalence is also at the heart of the terminological difficulty surrounding the use of the word ‘historiography’ in my title. I use it with its English sense of the methods and presentation of writing history and not with the sense of the French equivalent ‘historiographie’, defined by the *Petit Robert* as the work of a ‘historiographe’, a writer appointed to produce the official history of an era. The divergence in meanings of the two etymologically related terms is all the more confusing in the context of this current survey for, as will be seen, La Marche’s relationship to the official histories of his period is critical in determining how we should read his historiography. It is therefore important to realize that my use of the term ‘historiography’ does not presuppose an official relationship to the Burgundian court. There are, however, ambiguities in the English usage, which I have not eliminated from my discourse. Thus, when I speak of a ‘work of historiography’, this is equivalent to a ‘work of history’, viewed as a piece of writing, however, a study of the historiography of a period is a study of the historical writing produced in that period and not one of its history. ‘History’ and ‘historiography’ are related terms and they are sometimes interchangeable, but they are not synonyms.

¹ Jean-Marie Cauchies, *Louis XI et Charles le Hardi: De Péronne à Nancy 1468-1477: Le Conflit*, Bibliothèque du Moyen Âge, 8 (Brussels: De Boek, 1996), especially the section entitled ‘Charles de Bourgogne: Hardi ou téméraire?’, pp. 147-59.

If the definition of historiography is the question which has preoccupied most of those who have engaged with the title of the current thesis, rhetoric is the term which has caused me the most concern. The fact that it has been used with a variety of meanings – some very closely related but others wildly different – for something approaching two and a half millennia, means that its meaning in a given context cannot be taken for granted.¹ What La Marche and his contemporaries viewed as rhetoric cannot be brought to bear on the question as the term was applied almost exclusively to poetry. Thus Jean Molinet opens his ‘Art de rhétorique’ with the statement ‘Rethorique vulgaire est une espece de musique appellée richmique, laquele contient certain nombre de sillabes avec aucune suavité de equisonance, et ne se peut faire sans diction, ne diction sans sillabes, ne sillabe sans lettres’, and the rest of the work is devoted to the construction of different sorts of verse.² However, there was a medieval tradition of prose writing subject to rules developed from classical rhetoric and, as Chapter Three of the present thesis will demonstrate, many of the prose writers of the Burgundian court have been called *rhétoriqueurs* after the fact.³ Even so, as Douglas Kelly has pointed out, evaluating medieval literature purely in terms set out by contemporary treatises ignores other influences which shaped literary practice.⁴ Thus, the focus of the study

¹ The best and most succinct summary of the usage of the term rhetoric, together with a description of the principal practices of classical and medieval rhetoric is to be found in Roland Barthes’s ‘L’Ancienne Rhétorique: Aide-mémoire’, in *L’Aventure sémiologique* (Paris: Seuil, 1985), pp. 85-181 (first published in *Communications*, 1968). However, this does not give a full indication of how Barthes himself understands the term. Michael Moriarty, in ‘Rhetoric, Doxa, and Experience in Barthes’, *French Studies*, 51.2 (April 1997), 169-82, goes some way to redressing the balance, analysing the development of the concept of classical rhetoric in Barthes’s writing, without examining the author’s special use of the term in a non-classical sense.

² Jean Molinet, ‘L’Art de rhétorique’ in *Recueil d’arts de seconde rhétorique* ed. by M. E. Langlois (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1902), pp. 214-52 (p. 216).

³ This would appear to be the assumption of Theo Venckeleer: ‘Olivier de la Marche, Chroniqueur et/ou Rhétoriqueur?’ in *La Grande Rhétorique: Hommage à la mémoire de Paul Zumthor, Actes du colloque international Université McGill, Montréal, 5-6 octobre 1992*, ed. by Giuseppe Di Stefano and Rose M. Bidler, *Le Moyen Français*, 34 (Montréal: Ceres, 1994), pp. 217-27 which evaluates La Marche’s *Mémoires* in terms of the prose style of his court contemporaries. In fact, Venckeleer’s approach is closer to that elaborated in the opening chapter of the present thesis, subjecting portions of the *Mémoires* to stylistic analysis.

⁴ Douglas Kelly, ‘Topical Invention in Medieval French Literature’, in *Medieval Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Medieval Rhetoric*, ed. by James J. Murphy, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 231-51 (pp. 232-33).

which follows will not employ the technical vocabulary of the medieval and classical handbooks of rhetoric, comparing their strictures to La Marche's usage. This would certainly be a fruitful field of research, but would serve to restrict the scope of the study to those figures described in the treatises. Moreover, as Bernard Lamy, the seventeenth-century author of such a treatise, points out, 'Le nombre des Figures est infini. Chaque Figure se peut faire en cent manières différentes', that is to say that any study should be descriptive rather than prescriptive because practice can always imagine rhetorical figures which theoreticians have not described.¹ The rhetoric examined in this thesis, therefore, is rhetoric in a sense which is both its colloquial modern acceptance and the earliest classical usage: it is an examination of what La Marche's *Mémoires* say and how they say this. This definition is in accordance with modern theoreticians who have described rhetoric as 'discursive techniques allowing us to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the theses presented for its assent.'² However, it also fits with Aristotle's description of rhetoric as being the discourse employed to 'criticize or uphold an argument', a discourse used by everybody, and not merely those who are trained in the art.³ It is not, therefore, necessary to examine the formal rules set out in books of rhetoric to construct a rhetorical discourse and, in the case of La Marche, whose education probably did not extend beyond the village school, I believe that it is

¹ Bernard Lamy, *La Rhétorique ou l'Art de parler*, 4th edn, 1699, quoted in Michel Charles, *Rhétorique de la lecture* (Paris: Seuil, 1977), p. 156.

² Chaïm Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. by John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969; paperback ed. 1971), p. 4, italics in the original. [originally published as *La Nouvelle Rhétorique: Traité de l'argumentation* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958)] There is, of course, another, more pejorative modern use of 'rhetoric', commonly accompanied by collocates such as 'empty' and 'hollow' and arising from what Peter France describes as the decorative ideology of rhetoric – the idea that the purpose of rhetoric is to create a literature which is in itself impressive: Peter France, *Racine's Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), pp. 8-24. Whilst this has not entirely passed out of usage, I believe that subsequent literary studies – France's included – have done much to rehabilitate the term and I would contend that my more neutral reading is now more common.

³ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I, I, 1, this translation from Aristotle, *The 'Art' of Rhetoric*, ed. and trans. by John Henry Freese, Loeb Classical Library, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926; repr. 1994), p. 3 'all men in a manner have a share of both [rhetoric and dialectic]; for all, up to a certain point, endeavour to criticize or uphold an argument, to defend themselves or to accuse. Now, the majority of people do this either at random or with a familiarity arising from habit. But since both these ways are possible, it is clear that matters can be reduced to a system, for it is possible to examine the reason why some attain their end by familiarity and others by chance; and such an examination all would at once admit to be the function of an art.'

more productive to consider his discourse and its argumentation on its own terms, rather than applying a set of preconceived linguistic and topical categories.

I deliberately speak of the rhetoric of La Marche's historiography, rather than the rhetoric of La Marche himself, because I do not wish to suggest that the arguments presented by the *Mémoires* are in all cases a result of the author's conscious polemic. Memory constructs its own narratives which may not fit with what actually happened and it is possible that La Marche was not aware, particularly when he was writing at a remove of nearly thirty years, of the deformations of his subject matter perpetrated by his text.¹ This is not to say that I am employing Roland Barthes's definition of rhetoric as a property inherent in literary writing, equivalent to the literarity of the Russian Formalists or Roman Jakobson's poetics.² Barthes himself does not always use the term in this sense and to restrict consideration of rhetoric to properties inherent only to the literary text would be to ignore the subtle interplay between authorial intent, unintended textual effect and interpretation which, for me, make up the rhetoric of a work and which will be the subject of the study which follows.

¹ Much work has been done on the unreliability of memory and the deformations inherent in the retelling of a narrative. In his article, 'Powerful Evidence for the Defence: An Exercise in Forensic Discourse Analysis' in *Language and the Law*, ed. by John Gibbons (London: Longman, 1994), pp. 414-27, Malcolm Coulthard cites the complete identity of statements made by a defendant in the Birmingham Six trial as an indication that one of the statements was copied from the other, rather than resulting from a new interview with the police. This is because 'memory, even of verbal events, is not normally stored in verbal form. What people remember is the gist of what was said, which means that each retelling requires a re-coding in verbal form, with the result that slight differences occur each time' (pp. 420-21). Whilst Coulthard goes on to say that such differences are 'usually insignificant in terms of content', he acknowledges that this is not always the case, and work in the field of psychology suggests that the content of memories is more frequently altered in the retelling than most people are prepared to believe.

² Roland Barthes, 'L'Analyse rhétorique', in *Le Bruissement de la langue (Essais critiques IV)* (Paris: Seuil, 1984), pp. 133-39 [Originally published 1967 *Littérature et Société* (Brussels: Institut de sociologie de l'Université libre de Bruxelles)].

Putting a Date to the *Mémoires*

Olivier de La Marche began writing his *Mémoires* in around 1472 and continued work until shortly before his death in 1502. This statement, which forms the starting-point of the present thesis, has been the constant refrain of scholars studying the *Mémoires* and has, in fact, been the main conclusion of a number of studies. It might, therefore, seem foolhardy to place such an assertion at the beginning of a thesis devoted to La Marche, as there might seem to be little more to say. However, the ends to which this information has been used have changed significantly in recent years and any discussion of the rhetoric of La Marche's *Mémoires* must now begin with an exploration of when those *Mémoires* were written. Initially scholars who pointed out that the *Mémoires* had been written over a period of thirty years did so because they believed that this explained the chronological confusion of some sections of the work. Indeed it is true that the sections displaying the greatest degree of confusion seem to have been written at the greatest remove from the events described. However, recent studies, principal amongst them a doctoral thesis by Alistair Millar, have pointed out that much of La Marche's *Mémoires* were written after the death of Charles le Hardi, the last Valois Duke of Burgundy. La Marche has traditionally been considered as a writer of the Valois court, along with men such as George Chastelain who occupied the position of *indiciaire*, paid chronicler of the court. Chastelain's commission demonstrates the importance placed by the Valois dukes on literary patronage, and particularly on historiography. La Marche's *Mémoires* had been read in this context as representative of a complementary genre of semi-official historiography, reflecting the generalized court interest in the writing of history but independent of direct political patronage. Independent, but not innocent of it, as La Marche's prominent position in the Valois court, *maître d'hôtel*, made him one of the key directors of court ceremonial. His *Mémoires* were thus read as part of the presentational strategy of the court: propaganda

for the Valois dukes and their deeds. The realization that the work was begun very close to the end of the Valois period, and that much of it was written under the Habsburg dukes, casts doubt upon this interpretation and prompts us to ask how much the work can be read as Habsburg rather than Valois myth-making. Given that La Marche retained his former position of *maître d'hôtel* in the Habsburg court, it does not seem implausible that his *Mémoires* should have been used in the service of Habsburg propaganda. This new approach to La Marche's work can be tied to a similar shift in the way that scholars interpret the work of George Chastelain. Chief amongst those proposing a reinterpretation of Chastelain's work is Graeme Small who argues against previous readings of Chastelain's *Chronique* as an uncompleted work and instead attributes its fragmentary nature to selective readings and copyings on the part of subsequent readers.¹ The *Chronique* as we know it is, therefore, also partly a product of political and dynastic interests of the Habsburg period, painting a picture of the Valois court which is filtered through later sensibilities. This raises the question as to how far the modern perception of the Valois court was the creation of the Habsburg period, questions which any examination of the rhetoric of the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche must bear in mind.

Beyond these wider questions of political propaganda, it is important that each section of the *Mémoires* be situated as precisely as possible, in order to determine what concerns may have shaped its composition. I have called La Marche's work 'semi-official' historiography, because the author was not directly commissioned to write it. However, as this thesis progresses, it will become apparent that some sections do appear to have been written in response to an official request, while others were written with a patron in mind, and yet others used official material for their sources. Such sections will inevitably be shaped by the presentational concerns of the patron for whom they were

¹ Graeme Small, *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy: Political and Historical Culture at Court in the Fifteenth Century* (Woodbridge: Royal Historical Society, 1997).

composed or the official material which provided their content. It should also be recognized that other sections, which are not directly shaped by the political circumstances in which they were written, will nevertheless bear the imprint of the author's concerns at the time of writing, and this may have a consequence on his presentational rhetoric.

Talk of the authorial rhetoric, however, raises the question as to how far it is possible to distinguish the author's presentation from that of the people who subsequently conveyed his message: scribes, editors, publishers and translators. In the hands of these men and women, La Marche's work has undergone a number of changes, including modification for political reasons, anthologization and abridgement, which have all had their impact upon the rhetorical force of the *Mémoires*. In order to establish as precisely as possible when each section of the work was written, it is necessary to examine these changes, to see whether the author's original text can be identified and to determine what indications this text gives as to its date of composition.

The History of a History

The purpose of this study is to trace Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires* back to their origins; and so it seems logical to begin by examining the most recent edition of the work and the sources which it incorporates and to follow the story back to the source from that point. This methodology seems all the more justified when it is realized that the print tradition has very little interaction with the manuscript tradition: only two published editions make direct use of manuscript sources and both these appear to base the greater portion of their text upon the same source manuscript. It was, therefore, the first edition that determined which manuscript was to be used as the base and this point was thus crucial in the development of the rhetoric of the *Mémoires*, fixing the text and determining the way in which it subsequently evolved. Most readers who encounter the

Mémoires of Olivier de La Marche do so in a printed edition, with a structure (divisions of books, chapters, rubrics and even sentences) belonging to the print tradition and possibly having very little to do with the author's original conception of his work. Indeed some editors have recognized this by detailing the constraints imposed by the print tradition in their prefaces. Ease of reference between editions seems to have been the factor which induced many editors to maintain the chapter divisions in the main body of the text which were established by the first printed edition and which are not found in manuscript versions of the text.¹

The most recent 'edition' of La Marche's *Mémoires* certainly has taken this approach, although for reasons which are not exactly the same as those which have informed previous editors. The 'edition' in question is one which I have prepared specially for the purposes of this thesis and which takes the form of the 1883-88 Beaune and d'Arbaumont edition converted to electronic format.² To Beaune and d'Arbaumont's text, I have added textual tags suitable for interrogation using the text analysis program Tact.³ These tags identify volume, chapter and page numbers from Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition as well textual divisions marking such items as rubric, direct speech and earlier documents incorporated into the text of the *Mémoires*. Further tags mark variant readings in the manuscripts of the *Mémoires*, although considerations of time mean that the manuscripts have been consulted with a view to determining whether there are substantial differences between them, and no attempt has been made to identify every single point at which manuscript readings diverge. In

¹ For a discussion of the chapter divisions in the 'Introduction' to the *Mémoires* and of how they have been established, see below.

² Olivier de La Marche, *Mémoires*, ed. by Henri Beaune and Jean d'Arbaumont, 4 vols (Paris: Société de l'Histoire de France, 1883-88). Hereafter all references to this edition will appear as 'La Marche'. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dawn Ebrell, Steve Malcolm, Anita Hunter and Sylvia Tynan for the assistance they have given me in preparing the electronic edition of La Marche's *Mémoires* and the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Hull, for obtaining for me the microfilms of the manuscripts whose texts I have incorporated into the electronic edition.

³ For a description of Tact and of the process used to mark up texts for analysis, see Ian Lancashire and others, *Using Tact with Electronic Texts: A Guide to Text-Analysis Computing Tools* (New York: MLA, 1996).

practice this has meant that variants have only been examined where Beaune and d'Arbaumont signal a variant reading, or where the variant occurs at a structurally significant position in the manuscript: such as at the beginning or end of a paragraph or page.

My electronic edition of the *Mémoires* also incorporates four authorial textual divisions, which I have tagged as 'intro' '[book] 1', '[book] 2a' and '[book] 2b'. This points to a confusion in the structure of the text which is in part a product of the print tradition, but which is also a consequence of the long period over which the *Mémoires* were actually composed. The opening section of the work is marked by all modern editions as the Introduction and is of an entirely different character from the other books of the *Mémoires*. Dedicated to Philippe le Beau, the ten-year-old heir to Habsburg Burgundy and La Marche's pupil, it sets out Philippe's inheritance, beginning with the supposed pre-Christian origins of the lands he rules over and progressing to a description of the careers of Philippe's immediate ancestors. The section refers to itself not as the introduction at all but as Book One of what La Marche proposes will be the three books of his *Mémoires*. Michael Zingel has dated the greater part of the book using internal evidence to between 1488 and 1491. However, he argues that the final chapter was written much later, some time after the death of Charles VIII in 1498.¹ The late 1480s seem to mark a turning point in the composition of the *Mémoires* when La Marche returned to his work, after a period of over a decade and in radically different political circumstances, and decided to complete it. This completion implied a total redefinition of the purpose and audience of the *Mémoires*. Initially defined as a private enterprise that would distract the author from the sin of sloth, they now became a public

¹ These dates are taken from Michael Zingel, *Frankreich, das Reich und Burgund im Urteil der burgundischen Historiographie des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Vorträge und Forschungen, Sonderband 40 (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1995), pp. 200-201.

document intended to educate the young Philippe le Beau.¹ It is thus not surprising that the subject matter of this new Book One should differ considerably from that of those parts of the *Mémoires* written earlier. In his original prologue to his work, La Marche had undertaken to include only material of which he had first-hand knowledge, except in those circumstances where the relation of events which he had not experienced directly was necessary to explain things which he had:

Et n'entends pas de couchier ou d'escripre de nulles matieres par ouy dire, ou par rapport d'aultruy, mais seulement toucheray de ce que j'ay veu, sceu et experimenté; sauf toutesvoies que pour mieulx donner à entendre aux lisans et oyans mon escript, je pourray à la fois toucher pourquoy et par quelle maniere les choses advindrent et sont advenues, et par quelles voyes elles sont venues à ma congnoissance, affin qu'en eclarcissant le paravant advenu, l'on puist mieulx entendre et congnoistre la verité de mon escript. (La Marche, I, 184)

This is a very different project from the one seen in the 1488-91 Book One, in which La Marche traces the origins of Austria and France back to what he claims are Trojan founding fathers.

What is perhaps more surprising is that the sections of the *Mémoires* which were written prior to this new Book One, but which follow it in most manuscripts and printed editions, were not revised to fit in with La Marche's new conception of his work. Thus, the 1488-91 Book One is followed by a section dealing with events between 1435 and 1445 which ends with the words 'Et sur cette saincte et bien heurée saison de paix et d'union je feray fin en mon premier livre, qui contient dix ans'. The following chapter opens with an explicit statement that this is the opening of the second book.² For this

¹ The private nature of the initial project of the *Mémoires* is evidenced by La Marche's 'je donccques tanné, annuyé de la compaignie de mes vices, et desireulx de reveiller vertuz lentes et endormies, ay empris le faiz et la labeur de faire et compiler aucungs volumes, par maniere de memoires, où sera contenu tout ce que j'ay veu de mon temps digne d'escripre et d'estre ramentu' (La Marche, I, 183). The public focus of the project as defined after 1488 is, on the other hand, apparent from the pronouncement that occurs at a similar juncture in the introduction to the new Book One when the author addresses Philippe le Beau 'pour l'acquit de ma leaulté, l'amour que j'ay à vous, et [afin] que le service que je vous doy soit et demeure plus longuement en vostre vertueux souvenir, je me suis resolu de labourer et mettre par escript certaines memoires abregées, esquelz j'espoir que vous lirez et pourrez veoir par mes escrips trois parties qui seront à la haulteur de vostre seignourie exempleire, miroir et doctrine, utiles et profitables pour le temps advenir' (La Marche, I, 10).

² La Marche, II, pp. 63, 64.

reason I decided to tag the 1488-91 Book One not as '[book] 1', which is what it claims to be, but as 'intro', which is how it is marked by Beaune and d'Arbaumont and other editors of the print tradition. The separation between '[book] 2a' and '[book] 2b' arises from a similar confusion which appears to be a product entirely of the print tradition. As has been demonstrated, the division between the first and the second books is clearly indicated in the text. However, Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition, upon which my edition is based, does not mark a division between two books at this point and the chapter numbers run sequentially across this textual break. Another break, however, occurs, accompanied by a new sequence of chapters and by editorial rubrication but not textual comment, after the death of Philippe le Bon (La Marche, II, p. 62). Beaune and d'Arbaumont signal this discrepancy between text and editorial apparatus when they write that 'bien que La Marche n'ait point expressément réservé cette dénomination aux deux dernières parties, nous la leur avons donnée, comme l'avait déjà fait Denis Sauvage, afin de mieux marquer la différence de rédaction et pour la plus grande commodité du lecteur' (La Marche, IV, p. civ). In this, we can identify a discrepancy between the rhetoric of the print tradition and that of the author's text. While La Marche seems to have structured his text on strictly chronological principles (so that a section ends with the passing of a decade), his first editor, Denis Sauvage, and all subsequent editions in the print tradition, have structured it according to what Sauvage regarded as La Marche's intentions as expressed in his 1488-91 Book One. Sauvage's decision, prompted in part by the confusion of his source manuscript, bears no discernible relation to La Marche's plan as set out in his Book One but does fit in with a perception of historical periodization.¹ The death of Philippe le Bon and the succession of his son

¹ La Marche's 1488-91 Book One (La Marche, I, 11-13), says that the first book will set out Philippe's genealogy, the second will show him how his family came to inherit the lands held by his grandfather, and the third will detail La Marche's personal experience in the household. This bears little resemblance to the division identified by Denis Sauvage. Nevertheless, *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche, Premier Maistre d'hostel de l'archeduc Philippe d'Austriche, Comte de Flandres: Nouvellement mis en lumière par Denis Sauvage de Fontenailles en Brie, Historiographe du Treschrestien Roy Henry,*

Charles le Hardi to the duchy and county of Burgundy seems to mark the end of an era for the editors of the print tradition, and they feel obliged to reflect this by introducing textual divisions which are not part of the medieval text. My decision to label these textual divisions as '[book] 2a' and '[book] 2b' is an attempt to reconcile these two traditions, recognizing that the author's text treats the two sections as one, while in the experience of most modern readers they form two separate entities.

My edition differs from the others described in this chapter inasmuch as it has been produced as a research tool and does not have an audience in mind. Its principal purpose of is to provide the means whereby La Marche's text may be analysed linguistically. One of the aims of this analysis is to refine that understanding of precisely when the *Mémoires* were written which can be gained by reference to datable historical facts. The results of this examination are reproduced below.

A Charming Edition

The edition of La Marche's *Mémoires* which preceded my own resembles it in that it too did not find an audience. However, in this case an audience was clearly envisaged although the edition was never published.¹ It exists in sixteen volumes of typescript,

second de ce nom. (Lyon: Guillaume Rouille, A l'escu de Venise, 1561), p. 162 refers in a marginal note to annotation 7 in the back of the volume which reads 'Il y auoit ainsi en l'Exemp. *Je feray fin en mon premier liure qui contient dix ans commenceant lan xxxv. & finissant lan xlv.* Puis aioustoit la deuisse *Tant a souffert la marche: & apres mettoit ainsi en tiltre, Tiers Volume, le commençant par tels mots, Continuant ma matiere commenee ie reprens & rentre en mon second volume en lan de nostre Seigneur 1446: desquels passages de contradiction, avec autres raisons, i'ay pris occasion de ne point prendre, pour premier liure des Memoires, ce que i'ay nommé Introduction: combien qu'à la fin d'icelle, apres la deuisse, il eust en tiltre, Second volume de la marche.* l'en ay semblablement esté meü, avec ce que le nombre des annees & la quantité des matières m'y a semons, à faire continuer le Chap. 14 de ce present Volume, sans faire separation de liures, iusques au temps que nous auons promis par la Preface d'icelle Introduction.'

¹ In this respect it follows in a tradition of works on La Marche which were either never published or which were intended to form part of a series of collected works that never came to fruition. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek ms 71 D 58, reproduces a lecture given to the Académie des sciences et belles lettres in Brussels, which, it makes clear, should have been published in the *Mémoires de l'Académie*, were it not for the invasion of the Low Countries by France in 1794. The volume *Traité du duel judiciaire: Relations de pas d'armes et tournois*, ed. by B. Prost (Paris: Léon Willem, 1872), which contains La Marche's *Livre de l'advis de gaigne de bataille*, was, as its editor makes clear in his introduction, intended to be 'le volume d'essai de mon édition des Œuvres complètes d'Olivier de la Marche'. Similarly, as will be demonstrated below, Henri Stein proposed an edition of La Marche's *Mémoires*, based on an amalgamation of several manuscripts, which never saw the light of day, and the

bearing hand-written corrections, in the British Library in London.¹ It does not bear a date but the catalogue of the library places it around 1930. The work of Georgina Grace Stuart and Dorothy Margaret Stuart, it is a translation into English of the *Mémoires*. Quite whom the translators intended to reach with this work is unclear; their introduction is peppered with quotations in the original French from authorities on Olivier de La Marche such as Henri Stein. However, the very fact that they have chosen to translate the work into English suggests that they did not expect their audience to read French. Their translation itself seems to suffer from the same problem: confusing French and English vocabulary and the occasional archaic expression which sits uneasily with the English of the 1920s.² The edition remains interesting, however, for two reasons: the features which the translators present as significant and which they give as grounds for reproducing La Marche's work, and the source which they use to establish the text of their edition. The first can be summed up in their judgement that:

In the Chronicles of Chastelain, Monstrelet, Commines, Le Maire, and other distinguished historians, we have ample and valuable information regarding the Burgundian Court and nation at that time, but, precious as their writings are, they can never have the worth and charm of the Memoires of Messire Olivier de la Marche.³

The word 'charm' recurs throughout Stuart and Stuart's introduction and it is clear that they regard the *Mémoires* as a picaresque curiosity. Indeed, the love of the picaresque seems to have governed the translators in choosing which edition to base their translation on. They explain that 'the best modern edition' is that of Beaune and

1785 edition of the *Mémoires* appears ultimately to have been excluded from the series of which it was to be a part. It is an interesting question why an author whose literary talents have never been rated particularly highly, even by his most ardent partisans, should nevertheless exercise such an enduring attraction for generations of scholars, and why this attraction should not extend to publishers.

¹ *The Memoirs of Messire Olivier de la Marche*, translated with an introduction and notes by Georgina Grace and Dorothy Margaret Stuart, London, British Library, Typescript, 09073.e.3, 16 vols (1930?).

² It would be easy to labour the point, but two examples will suffice: names are sometimes rendered in French and sometimes in English and, in the case of John of Portugal (whose Portuguese name was João in any case), both John and Jehan are used, *The Memoirs of Messire Olivier de la Marche*, p. 114 (vol. 3) and p. 115 (vol. 4). For a use of archaic/ gallic idiom, see p. 163 (vol. 3) 'Certes, my lord, your descent in this quarter is most illustrious, and I find that your ancestors contracted brilliant alliances in marriage.' (Et certes, monseigneur, de ce costé de Bourbon, vous estes noblement yssus. Et treuve que vos ancessours d'icellui costé se sont tousjours haultement alyez par mariage.', La Marche, I, 153.)

³ *The Memoirs of Messire Olivier de la Marche*, p. 2.

d'Arbaumont (the one upon which I have based my electronic edition) but dismiss it as 'neither perfect nor complete, in spite of its other excellent features, so this present work may claim to be the first entire and undiminished version published since the earlier half of the seventeenth century'.¹ Given their misgivings about Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition, it might be expected that Stuart and Stuart would choose to base their translation on the first edition, that of Denis Sauvage, who established the text for the subsequent three hundred years and fixed the structure of books, and to some extent chapters, which is still used today. However, they instead opt to translate a later edition of the same text, that of 1567, with editorial comments by Jean Lautens de Gand. Of this latter, they write:

He is a painstaking commentator, but a somewhat acrimonious critic, and the zeal with which he defends the citizens of Bruges and Ghent against the aspersions cast upon them by the prejudicial chronicler makes it surprising that his remarks should have been permitted to appear in a volume published 'Avec privilège royal' under the despotic rule of Philip II.²

The image of an editor with Flemish nationalist sympathies engaging with a text with a notorious anti-Flemish bias is clearly one which Stuart and Stuart found arresting; all the more so because this juxtaposition seems to have been sanctioned by the French crown in the sixteenth century. This attitude to the text seems to be in keeping with their view of its curiosity value implied by the repeated use of the word 'charm' in their introduction.

Stuart and Stuart's translation, is, therefore, a whimsical presentation of the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche; however, despite the translators' fondness for Jean Lautens's radicalism, their edition departs from the structure of its source edition in a way that points to a difference in editorial practices between modern editors and their sixteenth-century predecessors. Like Denis Sauvage's edition which preceded it, that of Jean Lautens de Gand is not broken up into paragraphs within the chapters. Stuart and

¹ *The Memoirs of Messire Olivier de la Marche*, pp. 23-4.

² *The Memoirs of Messire Olivier de la Marche*, p. 23.

Stuart seem to have decided that the modern reader needed paragraph breaks, and have introduced these into Sauvage's text. Often these paragraphs are very short, in direct contrast with the long passages of text that confront the reader of Jean Lautens de Gand's edition.¹ As Stuart and Stuart did not refer to a manuscript in the preparation of their edition, their decision to break the text up into paragraphs must stem from their apprehension of the needs or expectations of their readers. It may seem to be a trivial change to make, but it is one which significantly alters the reader's perception of the rhetoric of the text. Textual analysis often proceeds by an examination of each paragraph in turn and critical readers often rely on the indications provided by paragraphs to determine authorial views of what constitutes a change of subject. It therefore comes as a surprise to learn that these indications were absent from earlier printed editions of the work, and are the result of editorial rather than authorial decisions, subject to fashions which dictate, for example, that, while books in the sixteenth century do not need paragraphs within chapters, those written in the 1920s do. The sixteenth-century decision not to include paragraphs is as much a matter of editorial choice as is the 1930 organization of the text into paragraphs: as will be seen below, the manuscript upon which Denis Sauvage based his edition is divided into paragraphs as are all the other manuscripts of the *Mémoires*.

Beaune and d'Arbaumont: A Manuscript Reading?

The edition produced by Henri Beaune and Jean d'Arbaumont for the Société de l'Histoire de France in 1883 has a different relationship to the texts of earlier editors than the two editions discussed thus far. In the case of my edition and that of Stuart and Stuart, the text of the *Mémoires* used had already been established by an earlier editor. Beaune and d'Arbaumont's text is one which they claim that they have established themselves after examination of manuscript sources. In doing this, they selected two

¹ Volume 5 of *The Memoirs of Messire Olivier de la Marche*, ends with the single sentence, 'It befell as you shall hear', which forms an entire paragraph (p. 267).

manuscripts to serve as base manuscripts, both from the fonds français of the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris: fonds français 2868 and 2869. The second of these, which is also believed to be the manuscript used by Denis Sauvage in preparing the first printed edition of the *Mémoires*, is described by Beaune and d'Arbaumont as being a copy of La Marche's autograph text. They base this conclusion on the fact that it is 'une copie presque contemporaine et faite pour un allié de sa famille', having been owned by a descendant of La Marche's maternal uncle.¹ The argument whereby they link the manuscript to La Marche's family is, however, somewhat circuitous and merits quotation in full:

Denis Sauvage, qui s'en est servi pour son édition de 1562, déclare qu'il a tiré cet 'exemplaire escript en papier, et en bonne et belle lettre, mais sans vray ponctuation à la mode du temps passé,' de la 'librairie de la noble maison de la Chaux, en la comté de Bourgogne.' Ainsi que l'indique en effet une note placée sur la garde, ce ms. est sorti 'du château de Pérès appartenant à M. le comte de Saint-Amour.' Qu'était-ce que la maison de la Chaux? L'oncle maternel d'Olivier, Jacques Bouton, avait épousé Antoinette de Salins-la-Tour, fille du seigneur de Poupet, dont certains descendants prirent le nom de seigneurs de la Chaux. Celui qui le porta plus particulièrement fut Charles de Poupet, chevalier, seigneur de la Chaux, Crèveœur, Roches, Bayne et Malarcé, chambellan et premier sommelier de corps du roi de France Charles VIII, puis nommé chambellan de l'archiduc Philippe d'Autriche in 1500, demeuré en la même qualité au service de Charles-Quint et dont le fils Jean, aussi gentilhomme de la chambre de cet empereur, posséda longtemps le ms. 2869. Les Poupet étaient donc proches alliés des La Marche, et l'on ne saurait s'étonner qu'ils aient tenu des enfants d'Olivier une copie de ses *Mémoires*, revue d'ailleurs et corrigée selon le vœu que celui-ci exprime dans son *Introduction*. (La Marche, IV, pp. cv-cvi)

The way in which the reference to the comte de Saint-Amour on the manuscript serves as proof of its provenance is never explained by Beaune and d'Arbaumont, nor is it clear on what grounds the editors conclude that Poupet was the owner of ms f fr 2869. Indeed, the reader is left with the impression that the editors of the 1883 edition are relying on the indications supplied by the editor of the 1561 edition as to its provenance, and are following his judgement in selecting this as the manuscript to use. There is a

¹ La Marche, IV, pp. cv-cvi.

further problem with using ms f fr 2869 as the base manuscript for an edition of La Marche's *Mémoires*. Although Beaune and d'Arbaumont do not mention it in their description of the manuscript, its opening pages have been damaged and the first sixteen folios have holes in one of the bottom corners obscuring some of the words of the text. Henri Stein, writing at a period exactly contemporary with the publication of Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition (three of the four volumes had appeared when Stein's work went to press), points out this damage to the manuscript.¹ In Denis Sauvage's 1561 edition, the editor supplies a diplomatic transcription of the manuscript to demonstrate the extent of the difficulty he had in preparing the edition, given the absence of punctuation in the original. This transcription suggests that, if this is indeed the same manuscript as was used by Sauvage, the damage which the manuscript had suffered by the end of the nineteenth century had not occurred when Sauvage used it.² Beaune and d'Arbaumont thus had practical reasons for choosing to base the text of the introduction in their edition on another manuscript, but the reasons which they cite for doing so do not draw attention to this and are based on the perceived provenance of the manuscript. They acknowledge that the text of the manuscript they use, BN f fr 2868, is not perfect, and that they have filled in the gaps it leaves with reference to BN f fr 2869. However, they argue that it is the best manuscript upon which to base an edition

parce qu'il est évidemment le plus ancien (sa date remonte au moins à 1495) et que son exécution luxueuse, en harmonie avec la qualité de la personne à laquelle il devait être offert, révèle l'attention, la vigilance qui ont présidé à sa confection. Quoiqu'il renferme certaines lacunes et des erreurs de copiste, on peut vraisemblablement supposer qu'il a été écrit sous les auspices, si ce n'est même sous la dictée de La Marche. (La Marche, IV, p. cv)

BnF, f. fr. 2868 deserves our attention, Beaune and d'Arbaumont argue, because it is the oldest surviving manuscript of La Marche's *Mémoires* and must, therefore correspond most closely to the author's intended presentation of his work. There is some merit in

¹ Henri Stein, *Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon* (Brussels: Hayez, 1888), p. 129, 'Copie assez bonne, un peu endommagée au commencement'.

² *Les Mémoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche*, ed. by Sauvage, introduction, [unnumbered folio], p. ii.

the argument: throughout the introduction La Marche makes reference to pictures of coats of arms which are to be found on the same page. This is necessary as the history of Philippe's family is told through the development of the family coat of arms.¹ BnF, f. fr. 2868 is the only one of the surviving manuscripts of La Marche's *Mémoires* to contain any illustration, or space for illustration beyond illuminated capitals, and it does contain depictions of the coats of arms to which the text refers. This suggests that it corresponds to the way in which La Marche wished to see his work presented. However, the use of ms f fr 2868 in an edition is not without difficulties, not least of which being that, unlike other surviving manuscripts of the work, it only contains the Introduction/ 1488-91 Book One of the *Mémoires*. Moreover many of what Beaune and d'Arbaumont have identified as lacunae in the manuscript are in fact variant readings which are unique to BnF, f. fr. 2868, suggesting that, while it may be the oldest surviving manuscript of the *Mémoires*, it is not necessarily the most popular surviving version of the text nor the most complete.²

The chapter headings which Beaune and d'Arbaumont reproduce in their edition of the Introduction are also unique to BnF, f. fr. 2868 and this makes their edition the only one which does not follow the structure of the print tradition established by Denis Sauvage. This means that there are more chapters in Beaune and d'Arbaumont's Introduction than in previous editions of the *Mémoires*. This structural difference between this edition of the *Mémoires* and those which preceded it can be linked to the

¹ An instance of this can be found in La Marche, I, 29: 'les enfans dudit conte, qui depuis furent seigneurs de Mylan, portent en leurs armes d'argent à ung serpent et l'enfant marrissant, en la maniere dessus blasonnée, et comme l'en peut veoir par le blason', and there are repeated references to coats of arms depicted throughout the introduction.

² An instance of variant readings in BnF, f. fr. 2868 can be seen in Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition I, 11, which gives a sentence as 'non pas pour vous donner gloire, orgueil ou outrecuidance par votre royale [et noble] naissance', indicating that the words in brackets are variant readings. In fact this 'variant' occurs in all the manuscripts of the *Mémoires* that I have examined with the exception of Beaune and d'Arbaumont's source manuscript, BnF, f. fr. 2868 fol. 6^r. Cf. BnF, f. fr. 2869 fol. 2^r, BnF, f. fr. 23232 fol. 1^v, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, II 1044, fol. 2^r, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 10999 fol. 2^r, Lille, Bibliothèque Municipale ms 794, fol. 1^v, Antwerp, Musée Plantin, ms 141, fol. 1^v. It should also be remembered that Beaune and d'Arbaumont date BnF, f. fr. 2868 to 1495, whereas textual evidence suggests that La Marche continued to work on his *Mémoires* until at least 1501 (see below). This raises the possibility that BnF, f. fr. 2868 may represent an earlier redaction of the text not reproduced in other manuscripts of the work.

same impulse to break up the text into smaller sections which leads Beaune and d'Arbaumont, like Stuart and Stuart who followed them, to use paragraphs within their chapters. That it is attributable to such an impulse rather than to following the structure of the base manuscript to the letter can be demonstrated by the fact that the rubrics for chapters 25-28 of Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition do not appear in ms f fr 2868. Nor, except in the case of chapter 27, is there any indication that rubrics were intended in these places and for chapter 27 those indications are ambiguous.¹ In the main body of the *Mémoires*, for which Beaune and d'Arbaumont follow Sauvage in using ms f fr 2869, the chapter headings are those introduced by Sauvage. This in itself presents problems; on four occasions, Sauvage's chapter headings intervene in the middle of what are paragraphs not only in his source manuscript but in every other surviving manuscript of the *Mémoires* which reproduces the relevant section of text.² Sauvage, as we have seen, does not recognize the paragraph as a textual division in his edition, and we can speculate that he therefore did not pay a great amount of attention to paragraph breaks in his transcription. However, Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition does respect, by and large, the textual divisions marked by their source manuscripts

In these cases the desire to preserve the structure of the *Mémoires* as established by the print tradition has overridden the concern to establish a text with reference to manuscript evidence and this is in keeping with Beaune and d'Arbaumont's stated intentions. However, in some other instances it seems that Beaune and d'Arbaumont

¹ BnF, f. fr. 2868 fol 60^v ends its first column with an illustration and the following column (where Beaune and d'Arbaumont add their rubric), opens with two blank lines. This is the only instance in the manuscript of a column beginning with lines left blank. However, it is also the only instance where a column ends with an illustration. Illustrations occur mainly at the end of chapters, but not exclusively so and thus we can conclude little from the manuscript evidence.

² The chapters in question are book 1, chapters 11, 13 and 18 and book 2, chapter 2; *Les Mémoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche*, ed. by Sauvage pp. 146, 158, 186, 336. In the last instance the sentence which follows Sauvage's chapter break, 'Et le duc de Bourgoingne, qui avoit faict douze cens lances, ordonna ses cappitaines et se mist aux champs' is preceded in BnF, f. fr. 2869, as in BnF, f. fr. 23232, BR, II 1044 and Lille, Bibliothèque Municipale 794, by a lower-case e, suggesting that the scribes did not see this as a textual break of any sort, let alone one of such significance as to be marked with rubrication.

have followed Sauvage's reading of the text, despite clear palaeographical evidence that it is incorrect. One of the most striking instances of this occurs where we read:

Et fault bien cognoistre que vertu avoit le commun cours, quant le pere, la noblesse et le peuple, povoient refrener leurs courages et n'estre parcial pour leur [propre] Roy apparant. Et doubte et croy qu'aujourd'huy, là ou ailleurs, raison auroit peu de lieu devant la volenté en tel cas, et toutesfois se fut tele vertu monstrée que le recit en est honnourable (La Marche, I, p. 63)

In my edition, however, we find

Et fault bien cognoistre que vertu avoit le commun cours, quant le pere, la noblesse et le peuple, povoient refrener leurs courages et n'estre parcial pour leur <tt BParHLAvar> propre <tt main> Roy apparant. <newsen SL> <samesen IParHA> Et doubte <newsen IParHA> <samesen SL> et croy qu'aujourd'huy, là ou ailleurs, raison auroit peu de lieu devant la volenté en tel cas, et toutesfois se fut tele vertu monstrée que le recit en est honnourable.

The tags indicate that in all the manuscripts except ms 2869, Sauvage's source manuscript, and Lille, Bibliothèque Municipale ms 794, but including ms 2868 (here referred to using the *siglum* *I*), which is Beaune and d'Arbaumont's ostensible source at this point, 'et doubte' forms part of the same sentence as 'Roy apparent' while the next sentence begins 'Et croy qu'aujourd'huy'.¹ As Denis Sauvage points out in his preface to his edition of the *Mémoires*, punctuation in the fifteenth century is an inexact art. Nevertheless it is unusual to find an instance such as this where a number of manuscripts are in agreement on the use of a capital initial letter, particularly when the 'et' that precedes it is not thus marked. It must also be remembered that the use of accents in the manuscripts of the *Mémoires* is virtually non-existent and I would, therefore, propose an alternative reading of the passage which takes the evidence of the extraordinary coincidence between the manuscripts into account:

Et fault bien cognoistre que vertu avoit le commun cours, quant le pere, la noblesse et le peuple, povoient refrener leurs courages et n'estre parcial pour leur [propre] Roy apparent et doubté. Et croy qu'aujourd'huy, là ou ailleurs, raison auroit peu de lieu devant la volenté en tel cas, et toutesfois se fut tele vertu monstrée que le recit en est honnourable.

¹ The *sigla* used to designate the various manuscripts consulted in my edition of the *Mémoires* are explained below.

Beaune and d'Arbaumont, in keeping with the conventions of presenting medieval texts in serious scholarly editions which, from the nineteenth century, have demanded that reference be made wherever possible to a source manuscript have, nevertheless, preserved the readings of earlier printed editions. The fact that Denis Sauvage should have produced this reading is understandable: the manuscript BN ms f fr 2869, which he used as the source for his text, is one of only two manuscripts which clearly have a sentence break where he indicates that one should be. However, if there were any point in Beaune and d'Arbaumont's selecting another manuscript for their edition, it should surely be that readings found in this manuscript should be preferred – particularly where their manuscript agrees with the majority of the other manuscripts of the *Mémoires*. The fact that this is not the case suggests that Sauvage's edition was a point of reference for Beaune and d'Arbaumont in establishing their text. This is hinted at in one of the criticisms which Henri Stein makes of Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition:

Ces derniers éditeurs ont eu le tort de n'utiliser que les deux manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, sans s'inquiéter de savoir s'ils n'en trouveraient pas ailleurs qui fussent dignes d'être consultés; en outre ils ont reproduit dans leurs notes les variantes apportées par Denis Sauvage dans son édition défectueuse de 1562: travail fort inutile à mon sens, et peu digne d'une œuvre d'érudition.¹

As far as Sauvage's influence is concerned, Stein's comments seem to be directed purely at the practice adopted by Beaune and d'Arbaumont of signalling variants between their own text and that found in Sauvage's edition (and in fact other printed editions, to which they also refer). However, as we have seen, Beaune and d'Arbaumont go beyond this and in fact incorporate Sauvage's reading of the text into their own version of the *Mémoires*, even where this differs from the text of the base manuscript to which they refer. Similarly in the main body of the *Mémoires*, where the same manuscript, f fr 2869, is claimed as the source for both editions, Beaune and

¹ Stein, *Olivier de La Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, pp. 133-34.

d'Arbaumont sometimes give Sauvage's variant readings or corrections of that source manuscript as the definitive text of the *Mémoires*, without commenting on the fact that these depart from the manuscript on which they claim to rely. Such an instance can be seen in a passage which, in Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition reads:

Je doncques Olivier, seigneur de la Marche, chevalier, conseilier, maistre d'hostel, et capitaine de la garde de très hault, vertueux et victorieux prince Charles, premier de ce nom, par la grace de Dieu duc de Bourgoingne, de Lotrich, de Brabant, de Lembourg, de Lucembourg et de Gueldres, conte de Flandres, d'Artois et de Bourgoingne palatin, de Haynnault, de Hollande, de Zeellande et de Namur, marquis du Saint Empire, seigneur de Frize, de Salins et de Malines, *leur ayderay à mon pouvoir*, louhant et graciant mon redempteur Jesus Crist et sa glorieuse mere qui m'ont donné et impartey leur grace, et especialle misericorde, dont je suis venu jusques au milieu de la voye et du chemin, terminé par le tour de nature, selon le cours de la vie presente. (La Marche, I, 185)

The phrase which I have reproduced here in italics is not only absent from ms f fr 2869 but also from all the other surviving manuscripts of the *Mémoires* in which this passage occurs. It is, however, present in Sauvage's edition of the work and Beaune and d'Arbaumont reproduce it without comment.¹ Sauvage states quite openly that he has had to modify La Marche's text to correct infelicities of style and this appears to be an instance of this practice.² However, Beaune and d'Arbaumont discount all possibility of influence by the earlier printed edition over their work, insisting that their edition is based entirely on their selected manuscripts, as Sauvage's text is unreliable.³ If this were the case, it would be impossible to explain how the variant quoted above, which is present only in previous printed editions of the work, could have found its way into their edition. The fact that it has suggests that, despite the editors' stated methodology,

¹ *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche*, ed. by Sauvage, p. 74.

² *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche*, ed. by Sauvage, préface: 'Touchant son stile (auquel ie luy ay laissé quelques manières de parler, & certains mots de son siècle, & du creu de son païs, pour difference du vray François avec le Bourguignon) ie l'ay trouué assez passable, quand il a suyui son naturel: mais le voulant farder, & agencer d'artifice, il ségaroit tellement, que l'on ne pouuoit tirer construction de ce qu'il vouloit dire: en sorte qu'il m'a souuent esté besoing de luy aider à s'expliquer'.

³ Beaune and d'Arbaumont say of Sauvage that 'il a beaucoup altéré le texte sous prétexte de le rendre plus clair' and that 'nous avons dû en conséquence scrupuleusement rétablir ce texte en consultant exclusivement le ms. 2869 pour les *Mémoires* proprement dits et en le rapprochant, pour l'*Introduction*, du ms. n° 2868, moins complet sans doute, mais plus ancien et qui donne, semble-t-il, [...] la rédaction primitive de l'auteur.' (La Marche, IV, p. cvii).

Sauvage's edition, and not manuscript f fr 2869, has been the primary source for some passages of the 1883 edition. The editors acknowledge that they have read Sauvage's text and that they have 'pris soin d'indiquer dans les notes les additions, changements, corrections ou lacunes de l'édition Sauvage et celles qui l'ont suivie'. In the course of such a procedure, which demands that a transcription be compared with a printed edition, the temptation to follow the reading of the printed edition, – as opposed to merely noting the differences between the two – is great and appears to have been one which Beaune and d'Arbaumont were unable to resist. Indeed, on occasions Beaune and d'Arbaumont's desire to underline the separation between their own edition and those of the earlier print tradition leads them to do an injustice to the comprehensiveness of Sauvage's edition, suggesting that it omits details which are in fact present in his edition. Thus the editors suggest that, in all previous editions, the phrase 'et dont d'iceulx chappitres la teneur s'en suit' has been omitted from the account of the *Pas d'armes de la Pélerine* (La Marche, II, 129, n. 1). In fact Sauvage acknowledges that these words are present in his base manuscript but, because the promised rules of engagement are not included, he relegates them to a marginal note.¹ In this instance it is, therefore, entirely possible to reconstruct the contents of Sauvage's source manuscript and Beaune and d'Arbaumont's criticism seems to be intended more to stress their separation from the earlier print tradition than to rectify any mistake of that tradition. Were this really Beaune and d'Arbaumont's concern, they could have drawn their readers' attention to a passage which occurs on the very same page. In my edition it reads

et fut baillié jour à luy et au seigneur de Haulbourdin, qui se nommoit en ceste partie encores le chevalier de la belle Pelerine, en continuant l'emprins de son pas, tenu emprès Sainct Omer, comme il est cy dessus escript. <tt SLAvar> et baillé et ordonné icelluy jour ou <tt ParLvar> <tt Hvar> et fut baillié et ordonné dicelluy jour ou lieu de <tt main>

¹ *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche*, ed. by Sauvage, p. 190 'Il y auoit ici, & diceux chapitres la teneur sensuyt, mais il n'en dira pas vn mot'.

The source text for my edition is that of Beaune and d'Arbaumont and so the fact that the phrase 'et baillé et ordonné icelluy jour ou ...' appears as a variant, indicates that it has not been included in their version of the text, despite the fact that it appears in ms f fr 2869 (here referred to using the siglum *S*), which Beaune and d'Arbaumont claim is their source. Indeed, they do not even draw attention to this 'variant' in a footnote, despite the interesting light which it throws on the state of completion of the *Mémoires* and the way in which the author – or perhaps the scribe – worked. The fact that the phrase does not occur in Sauvage's reading would seem to be all the stronger a reason for its inclusion in Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition, always ready to point out the deficiencies of the foregoing tradition. However, as this chapter has demonstrated, Beaune and d'Arbaumont have more of a debt to this print tradition than they would like to acknowledge, and one is tempted to ask whether they did actually refer to this passage and others in ms f fr 2869, or whether they relied on Sauvage's version to a greater extent than they would have their readers believe.

Elsewhere Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition departs from the text of both their source manuscript and that of the foregoing print tradition and this may be what Stuart and Stuart were referring to when they said that the 1883 edition was not complete. Most frequently these departures can be easily explained by simple errors such as *sauts de même à même*. Thus, for example, the passage

Le Roy de France avoit assemblé à Paris grosse armée et grans gens d'armes, et les estoit allé querir jusques en Normandie; et par une noyre nuyct envoya les francz archiers normans faire ung tranchis garny d'artillerie tellement, qu'il batoit du long de la riviere et du travers, et se pouvoit on tenir à grant paine à Conflans. (La Marche, III, 22)

has in Sauvage's edition and ms 2869 (and all but one of the other manuscripts) the phrase 'tranchiz sur la riviere, et estoit icelluy' between 'ung' and 'tranchiz'. Elsewhere, it seems that Beaune and d'Arbaumont have omitted such passages in their transcriptions and wish to query their presence in Sauvage's edition. Thus they place

square brackets around the phrase ‘ceux du val de Cassel qui luy furent rebelles. Il’ which occurs between two instances of the word ‘subjuga’, despite the fact that it not only appears in their source manuscript (in this instance f fr 2868) but also in all other manuscripts of the *Mémoires* and in Sauvage’s edition.¹

A number of criticisms can thus be made of Beaune and d’Arbaumont’s use of manuscript and printed sources. Stein, however, criticizes them not only for the way that they handle these sources but for the way in which they select them in the first place. He hints that their selection of source manuscripts has been influenced more by considerations of geography than by those of textual suitability. Stein himself proposes an amalgam of several manuscripts to reconstruct the text of the *Mémoires*:

Selon nous, une bonne édition des Mémoires devrait être faite d’après le ms. n° 2868 de la Bibliothèque Nationale (pour l’introduction), et d’après le ms. de la Bibliothèque de Valenciennes (pour la fin du Livre II). Pour combler la lacune, on se servirait conjointement du ms. n° 329 de la Bibliothèque de Lille, de la copie du Musée Plantin, et du ms. n° 2869 de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris.²

The relative claims of the five manuscripts Stein proposes as sources will be discussed below, but it will be acknowledged that his proposed methodology of consulting five different manuscripts in four different towns is demanding, particularly in an era before microfilms made possible remote access to manuscripts. The constraints which geography placed on the selection of source manuscripts for previous editions are never explicitly acknowledged. Nevertheless, it may be assumed that this was a factor, and this must be borne in mind when commenting on the choices made by editors.

Beaune and d’Arbaumont: A Historical Reading

Beaune and d’Arbaumont do not present their choice of manuscripts as the result of geographical considerations. In fact, they do not discuss the practical constraints on the preparation of their edition except in one respect. Beaune and d’Arbaumont’s edition

¹ La Marche, I, 102, *Les Mémoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche*, ed. by Sauvage, p. 38.

² Stein, *Olivier de La Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, p. 131.

was published by the Société de l'histoire de France and, as part of their commission for the society, they were required to include in their edition the official text of the Treaty of Arras, rather than the copy which is found in La Marche's *Mémoires*.¹ They stress that there is very little difference between this official text and that found in the *Mémoires*, but the tone of their explanation as to why they chose to use the text that they did and not that found in their source manuscript suggests that it was a decision which they felt was forced upon them.² The incident demonstrates that the influence of patronage was not merely a feature of the manuscript age but that it continued to shape texts even after they were presented in printed editions. It also illustrates the primary role envisaged for the 1883 edition of the *Mémoires*: namely as a historical document which provided concrete and verifiable evidence about the events it describes. In the light of this perception, those who produced this edition felt that it was justified to use the official text of the Treaty of Arras; presumably because they believed that this would make the edition a more valuable resource for historians. The differences between the two texts really do appear to be minimal (on two occasions the text of the treaty as it appears in the *Mémoires* uses 'trespas' in place of Beaune and d'Arbaumont's 'déces' and the phrase 'qu'il appartiendra' is used rather than qu'il appartient).³ However, this only underlines the question of the clash between the ideals of fidelity to a historical source and fidelity to a manuscript source for a text. Had the Société de l'histoire de France decided to reproduce the version of the Treaty of Arras found in manuscript BN ms f fr 2869, its edition of La Marche's *Mémoires* would not have differed significantly from the version we see today. Paradoxically, however, this fact may actually confirm the 1883 editorial decision, for it demonstrates that La Marche and subsequent scribes took great care to reproduce the official text of the

¹ The Treaty of Arras can be found La Marche, I, 207-238. The text used by Beaune and d'Arbaumont is from a manuscript bearing the royal seal, Archives de la Côte-d'Or, B11901 (La Marche, I, 206-7 n. 1).

² La Marche, I, 206-7, n. 1 and IV, p. cix.

³ La Marche, I, 221, 222, 229.

Treaty of Arras in the *Mémoires* and that they too intended to provide a version which was as close to the original text as possible.¹ Given that this was the case, can the Société de l'histoire de France be criticized for taking this care to its logical conclusion and referring back to an official version of the text? If this argument is accepted we should, however, recognize that the Treaty of Arras is not the only historical document – nor even the only treaty – to be incorporated into Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires*. The work also contains the text of the Treaty of Soleuvre signed between Charles le Hardi and Louis XI in 1475, which provided for a nine-year truce between the two powers.² In reproducing this text, Beaune and d'Arbaumont acknowledge the existence of other manuscripts:

Il en existe deux copies du temps conservées, l'une aux Archives de la Côte d'Or (B11910), l'autre aux Archives de la ville de Dijon, sur lesquelles nous avons pris soin de les collationner, ce qui a permis d'y faire plusieurs corrections importantes. (La Marche, III, 214 n. 4)

When they came to the Treaty of Soleuvre, therefore, Beaune and d'Arbaumont corrected the version given in La Marche's *Mémoires* with reference to other manuscripts, but they did not substitute the official version for La Marche's version, as they had done in the case of the Treaty of Arras. This is because neither of the versions identified by Beaune and d'Arbaumont is an official version, bearing the signatures or official seals of the signatories, and the other known copies of the text are similarly unofficial.³

¹ In saying this, I presuppose that it was La Marche's intention – and not that of a later compiler – to include this document in its current form in his *Mémoires*. As will be seen below, there is some doubt whether this is always the case with the documentary material which is included in the work – particularly when one considers the instance of the Banquet of the Pheasant. However, I do not believe that there is anything in the way that the Treaty of Arras is presented which suggests that it is a later addition to the *Mémoires*. Indeed, as I shall argue in the second chapter of this thesis, it seems that the inclusion of the Treaty of Arras in what was originally the earliest section of the *Mémoires* is central to Olivier de La Marche's presentation of himself and his involvement in public life.

² La Marche, III, 214-34.

³ I am indebted to Gérard Moyse of the Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or and E. Lochot of the Archives municipales de la ville de Dijon for this information. A list of the known copies of the text of the Treaty of Souleuvre can be found in S. Dünnebeil's edition of Henri Stein's *Catalogue des actes de Charles le Téméraire (1468-1477): Le Conflit* (Brussels: [n.p.], 1996), pp. 116-17. This list omits Archives de la Côte d'Or, ms, B11910, and the manuscript in the Bibliothèque Municipale de la ville de Dijon, despite including a mention of the Beaune and d'Arbaumont edition of the *Mémoires*, which refers

The attention which the 1883 editors paid to the treaties incorporated into La Marche's text demonstrates the way in which La Marche's *Mémoires* were treated as a historical source – indeed this is implicit in the decision to include them in the volumes of the Société de l'histoire de France. It is also apparent from the critical apparatus with which the *Mémoires* is surrounded, which is more extensive than that found in any other edition of the work. As noted, Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition comprises four volumes, three of which contain the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche. The remaining volume contains a biography of the author, a bibliography detailing manuscripts and previous editions (both of the *Mémoires* and of his other works), and a selection of 'pièces annexées'. As the phrase suggests, these are works by La Marche which have been selected because they are felt to complement the *Mémoires*, and they are almost exclusively works dealing with court ceremonial: describing it (as in *L'estat de la maison du duc Charles de Bourgoingne, dit le Hardy*), prescribing how it should be conducted (*Advis des grans officiers que doit avoir ung roy et de leur pover et entreprise* and *Espitre pour tenir et celebrer la noble feste du Thoison d'Or*), or detailing specific events which took place in the Burgundian court (*Traictié des nopces de Monseigneur le duc de Bourgoingne et de Brabant* and *Mémorial de la fête de la Thoison-d'Or tenue à Bois-le-Duc en 1481*).¹ Other works by La Marche which do not have this documentary character: his allegorical poems *Le Chevalier délibéré* and *Le Parement et triumphes des dames*, and his other shorter poems, do not find a place in this edition, which places emphasis almost exclusively on La Marche as historiographer.² The same emphasis can be identified in the *table analytique* with

to both manuscripts. However, all the contemporary manuscripts catalogued are, like B 11910 and Dijon A.12.27, unsigned and unsealed copies.

¹ There is one other document included in this selection: a brief letter from La Marche to the Comte de Nevers, in which La Marche informs the count that 'les materez dont nous parlamez vous et moi sont à ce mené par desà que s'a nous ne tient la matere prendra bonne ysue'. La Marche, IV, 146.

² This despite the fact that Henri Beaune, who puts his name to the bibliographical survey of La Marche's work, argues for the publication of an earlier version of *Le Parement et triumphes des dames* from that already published (a version to be found in Paris, BnF, fonds français, 25431, which does not contain the work of 'Pierre Desrey, de Troyes, un arrangeur de mauvais goût, qui a profondément remanié et altéré

which the edition ends and in the notes which frame La Marche's text itself. The *table analytique des matières* is not, as its title might suggest, a thematic index to the *Mémoires*, except in a very limited sense. Most of its entries refer to proper names: of people, towns or nations. Some themes which are significant in the work are present; there are entries for *joutes*, *Cordelliers* and the *Toison d'or*, all of which abound in the *Mémoires*, but this is not always the case. *Pas d'armes*, which regularly take place in La Marche's account of the court, do not have a separate entry, but are included under the collective heading of *joutes*. *Fêtes* and *banquets*, which, for many critics, characterize La Marche's writing, are entirely absent. The footnotes too tend to concentrate on the historically verifiable content of La Marche's *Mémoires*, putting dates to the events described or detailing the differences between La Marche's account and that found in other documents, and sometimes this emphasis seems to be to the detriment of the thematic content.

One example of the frustration this can create for someone approaching the *Mémoires* from a more literary perspective occurs in La Marche's description of the fall of Luxemburg. In this we read of the entry of the Burgundian soldiers into the city:

Et quant vint à l'entrée du marchié, à une vielle tour qui fait porte, ilz trouverent un peu de resistance de pierres et de cailloux. Mais incontinent marcherent les Bourguignons au marchié. Et advint que le prevost de la ville, et l'ung des pires contre la duchesse douaigiere, quant il ouyt l'effroy, il saillit en son pourpoint, un espieu en sa main, et vint baudement rencontrer ung chevalier de Picardie, nommé messire Gauvin Quieret, seigneur de Druel, moult vaillant chevalier, et qui estoit des premiers sur le marchié. Le Lucembourgeois enferra ledit messire Gauvin au bras senestre, et luy persa le bras, et le tint longuement enferré contre une muraille; mais il fut secouru, et l'homme tué; et demoura mort ledit prevost sur le marchié, et entraîné par une truye, qui le devora. Et ne veiz homme mort que luy. Et disoit on que c'estoit celluy qui plus estoit cause de la rebellion faicte contre ladicte duchesse, et le tenoit on pour punicion divine. (La Marche, II, 38-9)

This story of the provost consumed by the pig is striking, particularly when accompanied by La Marche's suggestion that this was the only fatality of the encounter,

le poème d'Olivier en y ajoutant des passages tirés de l'Écriture sainte'. It thus seems that the editors of the 1883 edition were not hostile to La Marche's poetical works but rather excluded them from their edition with the aim of preserving the thematic unity of what was intended to be a volume of history.

which further implies that the event is miraculous. Within the context of the *Mémoires* it stands out, as it is one of the rare occasions when the narrative attributes an event to divine will. The other events which the *Mémoires* describe in such terms could without controversy be said to have major military, historical and, in most cases, religious significance. They are the circumstances leading up to the conversion of Clovis to Christianity, the fall of Constantinople to the Turkish army and the loss by the Valois Dukes of Burgundy of their lands in France. Amongst these turning points in the history of France and of Christendom, it might seem incongruous that the consumption by a pig of a civic official to whom La Marche does not even attach a name is accorded almost the same status: that of an event which requires a divine explanation. Moreover, there is a disturbing specificity in La Marche's report: why should the author specify the gender of the pig that consumed the provost? Did he believe that being eaten by a sow was a greater mark of God's displeasure than being eaten by a boar would be?¹ The incident raises a number of questions of this nature – questions which could usefully be addressed in editorial comment which might examine other accounts of the capture of Luxemburg to see whether the circumstances of the provost's death could be corroborated, point out that the attribution of the killing to divine providence is unusual in the *Mémoires*, and maybe identify elements in the story which serve as proof that the provost had fallen foul of divine wrath. There is such an analogous tale with the same implication: the story of the drunken Mohammed being eaten by pigs, which recurs as an insult used by Christians against Muslims in a number of *chansons de geste* and which seems to have survived into the twentieth century as a European folk explanation

¹ Claudine Fabre-Vassas's book *The Singular Beast: Jews, Christians and the Pig*, trans. by Carol Volk (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997) presents a detailed study of the folklore surrounding the pig. Fabre-Vassas points out that the pig – and specifically the sow – is associated with antisemitism and the figure of the *Judensau*, the maternal swine who suckles Jews thus transmitting to them porcine characteristics such as red hair and large ears. This iconography could explain the association between the pig and divine displeasure, although, as will be seen in chapter five of the present thesis, La Marche's account of the Luxemburg campaign is far from being antisemitic. Fabre-Vassas also cites a number of animal trials involving sows with young piglets (p.126), usually convicted of murder of children and so La Marche's sexing of his pig may be related to a generalized belief that sows were more likely to make culpable attacks on humans outside the scope of the hunt.

of Islamic prohibitions on alcohol and pork.¹ Was La Marche thinking of this when he reports the belief that the provost's end was attributable to God's will? That would explain why such a seemingly minor incident should be placed in a category which La Marche usually reserves for major political events and this throws light on the author's presentational rhetoric. However, Beaune and d'Arbaumont make no comment on the incident whatsoever, except to comment that the provost in question was named Jean Chalop (La Marche, II, 38, n. 1). Their notes on the capture of Luxemburg as a whole are rather scant: they give a date (the night of 21-22 November, 1443) and references to two other accounts, one to be found in the *Livre des faits de Jacques de Lalaing* and the other in the *Chronique* of Monstrelet, which, they say, 'donne des détails aussi étendus mais moins circonstanciés qu'Olivier de la Marche'.² Monstrelet's account may be less descriptive but it details the same military actions leading to the final surrender of Luxemburg including the fact that very few lives were lost in the capture of the city:

'Si firent peu de résistance. A laquelle fut navré [...] messire Gauvain Quiéret. Et des [...] deffendeurs en furent mors deux tant seulement, et les aultres se mirent de toutes pars à fuyr vers le chastel, et aussy vers la ville bas.'³

This is essentially the same story as we find in La Marche, including the wounding of the heroic Gauvin Quiéret (who plays a larger role in Monstrelet's account of the attack than he does in that of La Marche) but without the episode with the sow which is so

¹ Amongst those *chansons de geste* which contain allusions to this story are *Gaufrey* (Paris: Vieweg, 1859) ll. 3580-82: 'Bien estes assotés/ Qui cuidiés que Mahom resoit resuscités,/ Que pourchiaux estranglerent l'autrier en I. Fossés' and *Le Couronnement de Louis*, ed. by Ernest Langlois (Paris: Champion, 1925) ll. 845-53: "'Gloz", dist Guillelmes, "li cors Deu te cravent!/ La toe lei torne tote a neient;/ Que Mahomez, ce sevent plusors genz,/ Il fu profete Jesu omnipotent,/ Si vint en terre par le mont preechant./ Il vint a Meques trestot premierement,/ Mais il but trop par son enivrement,/ Puis le mangierent porcel vilainement./ Qui en lui creit il n'a nul bon talent.'" The second of these examples is particularly interesting in the context of La Marche's account of the fall of Luxemburg because it does not state explicitly that it was the pigs that killed Mohammed and is thus open to the interpretation that he, like the provost in La Marche's account, was dead before the pigs began to eat him.

² La Marche, II, 37 nn. 1, 2. The accounts referred to are in *Le Livre des faits du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalaing* in Georges Chastellain, *Œuvres*, ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Brussels: Heussner, 1863-66; repr. Geneva: Slatkine, 1971) VIII, 1-259 (pp. 34-38); and Enguerran de Monstrelet, *Chronique*, ed. by L. Douët-d'Arcq, 6 vols (Paris: Société de l'histoire de France, 1857-62), VI, 87-90.

³ Enguerran de Monstrelet, *Chronique*, VI, 89.

interesting in La Marche's *Mémoires*.¹ Olivier de La Marche was one of those who fought with Philippe le Bon on the Luxemburg campaign, so one might expect him to have access to details which were not available to other historians. However, in a battle in which only one or two people were killed, it might be expected that the vivid circumstances of one of those deaths might pass into the account of the battle which was circulated and from there into Monstrelet's *Chronique*. The fact that it does not raises a further question about La Marche's account: does La Marche mention the belief that God's wrath had caused Jean Chalop's death because of the similarities which it presented with the death of Mohammed or did he create the parallel with Mohammed's death to illustrate his belief that Chalop was evil?

Editorial comment on such questions would make Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition more satisfying to read from a thematic perspective. But Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition is not so designed; it is intended to be a resource for historians. This imposes a reading on the text just as Stuart and Stuart's edition was to do subsequently.

La Marche and Nationalisms: The *Mémoires* 1560-1840

A slightly different reading of La Marche's *Mémoires* is suggested by the three editions which preceded that of Beaune and d'Arbaumont. Of these one appeared in 1837 in the *Nouvelle collection des Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France*, edited by Michaud and Poujoulat, one appeared in the *Panthéon Littéraire: Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur l'histoire de France avec notices biographiques par J. A. C. Buchon* in 1836, and one was published in 1825 as volumes nine and ten of the *Collection*

¹ It should be acknowledged that the account found in the *Livre des faits de Jacques de Lalaing* does not agree with Monstrelet and La Marche in saying that very few lives were lost in the battle. However the way in which the *Livre des faits* expresses this seems formulaic and intended to maximize the personal glory accruing to the hero of this chivalric biography: 'Alors le comte d'Estampes et ceux de sa compagnie, moult vivement les reboutèrent, auquel reboutement Jacquet de Lalaing fit de moult belles appertises d'armes, tant de lances comme de l'espée, qu'à le voir férir à dextre et à senestre, ceux qui le voyoient ne s'en pouvoient assez esmerveiller. Finalement, le comte d'Estampes et ceux qui avec luy estoient, eurent la victoire; et ceux de la ville furent tout contrains de prendre la fuite. Là en y eut assez de morts et de pris', *Livre des faits*, p. 37.

complète des Mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France, edited by M. Petitot.¹ Henri Stein, who does not list the 1836 publication in his list of editions of La Marche's *Mémoires* dismisses as 'sans valeur' both the 1837 and the 1825 edition (which he dates to 1820) and there is little doubt that he would have extended his description to Buchon's edition, had he been aware of it.² All three are editions which reproduce Denis Sauvage's text, with little or no editorial comment. Petitot's edition contains notes, some of which are the editor's own and some of which are those of Jean Lautens de Gand. The editor explains how this has come about in the preface to the edition:

Le commentaire de ce dernier [Jean Lautens, whom Petiot calls Laurens], fort estimable sous quelques rapports, n'est pas exempt de partialité. Cet auteur, né à Gand, cherche trop souvent à justifier les révoltes de cette ville factieuse contre les ducs Philippe et Charles, et contre l'archiduc Maximilien. Nous avons même découvert, en comparant son édition à l'édition originale, qu'il se permet de supprimer l'épithète de *rebelle*, toutes les fois qu'elle est donnée à ses compatriotes. Nous avons profité de son commentaire, écrit en vieux langage, pour ce qui concerne les particularités relatives à l'histoire de France, et nous y avons ajouté tout ce que peut contribuer à éclaircir la narration d'Olivier de La Marche. Celles des notes que nous avons conservées textuellement sont distinguées par la lettre L.³

The comment is unusual and serves to illustrate the way in which the early nineteenth century viewed the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche. Like Stuart and Stuart, Petitot identifies the partisan nature of the way in which Jean Lautens de Gand engages with the work that he edits. Like Stuart and Stuart too, Petitot recognizes the value of some of Lautens's interventions and wishes to preserve them. However, the 1825 edition only conserves those of Lautens's notes which are relative to the history of *France*, a country which, as Petitot makes clear, Jean Lautens regarded as inimical to his compatriots. The belief that Lautens, as a Ghent separatist, is not equipped to comment on those sections

¹ *Nouvelle collection des Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France* ed. by Michaud & Poujoulat (Paris: L'Éditeur du commentaire analytique du Code Civil, 1837); *Panthéon Littéraire: Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur l'histoire de France avec notices biographiques* par J. A. C. Buchon (Paris: Desrez, 1836), pp. 295-599 and *Collection complète des Mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France*, ed. by M. Petitot, vols 9 and 10 (Paris: Foucault, 1825)

² Stein, *Olivier de La Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, p. 133.

³ La Marche, *Mémoires*, in *Collection complète des Mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France*, IX, 5.

of La Marche's work dealing with his home town is in keeping with the focus of Petitot's edition, and the others of the early nineteenth century, as being representative of the history of France. This exemplifies an attitude to La Marche (which we shall encounter again in the work of his biographers) that tends to claim the author as representative of either French or Belgian national culture, subjecting the fifteenth-century author to classification according to categories which were only emerging when he died. The tendency is particularly clear in the case of these collections, which contain very little other than the text of the works that they reproduce. In the case of Buchon's edition, and that of Michaud and Poujoulat, other texts relevant to the history of France are included in the same volume as La Marche's *Mémoires* – which serves to reinforce the implication that La Marche's work is just one among many writings which provide source material for a study of the history of France.

The edition of 1785 which preceded these early nineteenth-century readings of La Marche's *Mémoires* might be thought to take a similar approach. Like them, it was intended to be published as part of a series reproducing historical writings: the *Collection universelle des Mémoires particuliers relatifs à l'histoire de France*.¹ Although it was intended to be part of this series and was presented as such on its title page, Henri Stein claims that it was removed from the series, despite the numerous changes perpetrated on the text by the anonymous editor (or editors) to meet with the perceived sensibilities of readers in 1785.² These changes are detailed in the prologue to the edition, which cites the criticism levelled at La Marche:

Les diverses imputations de M. de Fontanieu peuvent être réduites à deux, à une grande crédulité; à de l'inexactitude dans les faits.

¹ *Collection universelle des Mémoires particuliers relatifs à l'histoire de France*, VIII (xiv-422) and IX (first 359 pages) (London and Paris, 1785).

² Although no editor is given on the title page of this edition, T. van Hemelryck writes of the abbé Charles Boullémier 'premier éditeur "scientifique" des *Mémoires de La Marche*', active in 1782, and it is probable that it is to this (albeit highly unscientific) edition that he refers, T. van Hemelryck, 'Note sur la postérité du *Miroir de mort* d'Olivier de La Marche et une prétendue traduction bretonne', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme de Renaissance*, 59 n° 2 (1997), 337-52 (p. 342).

Nous n'essayerons point de justifier Olivier de la Marche du premier de ces reproches, quand il raconte des faits antérieurs au siècle où il vivoit. Aussi nous nous garderons bien de faire l'apologie de son introduction, morceau presque entièrement composé sur de vieilles Chroniques ou d'après d'anciens Annalistes qui n'avoient pas plus de discernement que de goût. L'érudition éclairée par une critique sage & sévère n'existoit point du tems d'Olivier; & il s'en falloit bien que les lumières de la Philosophie réunies à l'étude des Belles-Lettres eussent encore épuré les travaux du Savant & de l'Historien. Ainsi nous sommes sans restriction de l'avis du Critique relativement à ce qu'Olivier de la Marche nous a transmis sur la foi de ceux qui l'ont précédé: (& c'est ce qui nous a déterminés à supprimer en entier son introduction qui, dans l'original, occupe 112 pages in-4^o).¹

Olivier de La Marche, then, must be made to sound like an educated man of the Enlightenment, and, in order to do this, his introduction – or Book One – must be excised from the 1785 edition. Nor is this the only change which has been made:

Nous avons supprimé du texte les réflexions oiseuses & les déclamations triviales; nous avons ou retranché ou inséré par extrait, selon leur importance, les descriptions de Tournois, de Pas d'Armes, ou d'autres fêtes de cette nature; observant avec la plus scrupuleuse attention de conserver les noms & les couleurs des *Tenans* & des *Assaillans*. On a substitué au Chapitre 29 du premier livre, l'analyse qu'un moderne en a faite; & cette analyse courte, mais fidèle, suffit pour faire connoître la fête célèbre & dispendieuse que donna Philippe le Bon en 1453. L'Auteur avoit négligé dans le Chapitre suivant, destiné à présenter le *vœu* de ce Prince *sur le Faisan*, de nommer une partie des Seigneurs Bourguignons qui le prononcèrent; & nous avons réparé cet oubli en y plaçant le récit plus court, & cependant plus complet de *Mathieu de Coucy*. Enfin, conformément au plan que nous avons adopté, nous avons comparé les Mémoires d'Olivier de la Marche avec les Historiens du temps; & nous avons mis tous nos soins à rectifier les erreurs qui lui sont échappées.²

Thus the very aspects that modern readers frequently find so fascinating about La Marche's *Mémoires*, the account which they provide of the pageantry of the court of Burgundy, have been removed from the text, or are reproduced in a very reduced form. Whole chapters are to be found in the list of contents with the indication *supprimé* against them, demonstrating that they have been thought unsuitable for the Enlightenment audience. These include the final surviving chapter of the *Mémoires*, in which the author attributes honorific titles to the Habsburg Dukes of Burgundy, labelled

¹ *Collection universelle des Mémoires particuliers relatifs à l'histoire de France*, VIII, pp. viii-ix.

² *Collection universelle des Mémoires particuliers relatifs à l'histoire de France*, VIII, pp. xiii-xiv.

inutile by the editors and presumably omitted on the grounds that it echoes a similar chapter of the deleted introduction where La Marche ascribes titles to the Valois Dukes of Burgundy and is therefore open to the same charges of lack of discernment and good taste as is the introduction.

It will be noted that the 1785 edition, like many of those already examined, incorporates the notes of Jean Lautens de Gand, but, unlike them, it does not comment on the inaccuracies of Lautens's account which arise from his pro-Ghent sympathies. There is no indication here – as there was with the edition of Stuart and Stuart – that the editor found the idea of a Ghenter commentating on a vehemently anti-Ghent text picturesque. Indeed, the 1785 edition avoids all elements which might be thought picturesque in favour of that which is 'savant'. Nevertheless, the text is that of Jean Lautens, including the modifications which he made to Denis Sauvage's text to occlude criticism of the people of Ghent. Thus the chapter heading for chapter 22 of the first book of the *Mémoires*, which appears in Denis Sauvage's edition as 'Comment le Duc de Bourgongne fit la fest de la Toison à Mons en Hainaut: & comment les Gandois firent ennemis d'iceluy leur Seigneur: & comment le Comte de Charolois fit ses premières ioustes', is called 'Comment le Duc de Bourgongne fit sa feste de la toison à Mons en Haynaut: & de la dissention qui sourdit entre luy, & les Gandois, ensemble comment le Comte de Charolois fit ses premieres joustes' in the edition of 1785, just as it had been in Jean Lautens's edition. The extent to which the 1785 edition accepts Jean Lautens's work uncritically is displayed by the editorial assertion that Lautens's notes are 'souvent [...] nécessaires à l'intelligence de l'ouvrage', however, a closer comparison of the two editions reveals that the 1785 edition departs further from Jean Lautens's edition than the preface suggests by re-ordering the chapters. Thus the account of the wedding of Charles le Hardi and Margaret of York, which in Jean Lautens's edition (and all other editions of the *Mémoires*) follows chapters dealing with

the Vermandais campaign and the siege of Neuss, precedes these in the edition of 1785. There is a strong chronological argument for making this modification: Neuss was laid to siege in 1472, while the wedding of Charles and Margaret, which follows it in all the manuscripts and the other printed editions of the *Mémoires*, took place in 1468. However, there may be rhetorical reasons for this departure from chronological presentation, as it allows the text to alternate periods of war and festivity, giving the impression that the Valois dukes lived scenes of unbelievable grandeur right up to the disaster of 1477. The edition of 1785 makes the change in the order of the chapters without editorial comment, and this destroys any rhetorical impact that La Marche's chronological uncertainty might have.¹ This is in keeping with the overall approach of the 1785 editors to La Marche's rhetoric: judging him a simple soul, 'un guerrier qui raconte simplement les choses comme il les a vues; il ne cherche point à pénétrer; il décrit les effets, & raisonne peu sur les causes', the 1785 editors have no compunction in changing this description to suit the prejudices of the Enlightenment.

If the 1785 edition departs from the text found in Jean Lautens de Gand, it nevertheless challenges it much less than did post-Enlightenment editors of La Marche, aware of the potential prejudice in Lautens's account. Even this limited challenge is absent from the two editions of the *Mémoires* which immediately followed Lautens's publication, one published in Brussels in 1616 and the other in Louvain in 1645.² These not only reproduce the text and critical apparatus of Jean Lautens's edition, but also

¹ *Collection universelle des Mémoires particuliers relatifs à l'histoire de France*, IX, 132, n. b points out that the wedding of Charles and Margaret took place in 1468, but does not refer to the fact that the chapter occurs elsewhere in other editions.

² The Brussels edition was brought out with two different title pages: *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de la Marche: Troisième Edition* (Buxelles [sic]: Hubert Anthoine Imprimeur de la Cour, à l'Aigle d'or pres du Palais, 1616) and *Memoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche, Troisième édition, Reueuë, & augmenté d'un Estat particulier de la maison du Duc Charles le Hardy, composé du mesme Auteur, & non imprimé cy-deuant* (Bruxelles: Hubert Antoine Imprimeur de la Court, à l'Aigle d'or pres du Palais, 1616). The second of these contains an introduction, *L'imprimeur au lecteur*, which is also to be found in the Louvain edition, *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de la Marche: Touchant, les souueraines Maisons pour la plus part d'Austriche, Bourgongne, France, &c., Guerres, accords & paix, aliances entre icelles, & autres cas & actes plus memorables de plus Illustres Familles principalement du Pays-bas Auec les Annotations & corrections de I.L.D.G. Reueuë, & augmenté d'un Estat particulier, de la Maison du Duc Charles le Hardy, composé du mesme Auteurs, & non imprimé cy-deuant. La Quatrième Edition* (Louvain: Everaerd de Witte, 1645)

retain the same pagination, making it possible for them to use Lautens's contents page and index. Given this methodology, it is debatable whether they should be regarded as separate editions at all. Nevertheless they demonstrate a further attitude to the text, namely that Lautens's edition is definitive and – if only for the practical reason that drawing up a revised index is a long and complicated process – that it should not be modified.

And yet, as subsequent editors and commentators have recognized, there is a lot in Jean Lautens's edition that one might wish to modify.¹ Lautens's prejudice in favour of the people of Ghent has been noted, and it makes itself felt both in his lengthy footnotes and in the modifications he makes to chapter titles. The editor cannot be accused of concealing this partiality; he draws attention to both strategies in his introduction. It would be easy to conclude that the second of these – the modification of chapter headings – is the more serious since it entails modification to the text itself and not merely the addition of exegesis. However, as Lautens points out, the chapter headings themselves are not authorial, nor original to Sauvage's source manuscript, but are in fact additions by the earlier editor:

n'auons riens changé à l'ordre, & distinction dudict œuure: mais bien y restabli certains sommaires des Chapitres, selon l'exigence du cas: enquoy nous sembloit à nous estre deue aultant de licence, que l'annotateur de France s'en estoit attribué en l'edition precedente.

Such changes are, according to Lautens, justified by the prejudice of his predecessor who, by reason of his French nationality, cannot provide impartial commentary on 'les accidens des choses auenues en ceste partie de Germanie inferieure, notamment en ce celebre Comté de Flandres' which Lautens regards as the subject matter of both La Marche's *Mémoires* and those of Commynes. Indeed, Lautens's view is that no French

¹ *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de la Marche Avec les Annotations & corrections de I.L.D.G. Ce qui est dauantage, en cest seconde edition l'Epistre aux Lecteurs le declairera* (Ghent Gerard de Salenson à l'enseigne de la Bible, 1566).

writer could deal with these subjects impartially. French historians are, he argues, characterized by their ‘malveillance’ and

ce vice, par trop commun aux escriuains de la nation Gallicane, fait que leurs histoires sont peu receuës, & moins extimees enuers toutes personnes d’entier iugement: principalement ou ilz traittent la matiere de leurs aduersaires, tant s’y exhibent-ilz apostez de flaterie & vanité.

Indeed, Lautens opines that this partiality is the reason that La Marche’s *Mémoires* were not published earlier, for fear that they might prove seditious.¹ La Marche may be a fine writer, but he is unable to ‘surmonter ses passions particuliers’ and, when it comes to dealing with the territories of Flanders, Brabant and the surrounding lands, ‘il se fait veoir en aulcuns endroitz plus aspre calomniateur, que veritable historiographe’. Thus, in Lautens’s eyes, Sauvage’s edition of La Marche’s *Mémoires* is doubly compromised, firstly by the inherent pro-French bias of the author, and secondly by the failure of the French editor to counteract this in his choice of paratextual apparatus. Headings such as ‘Comment le Roy Charles, septième enuoya ses Ambassadeurs vers le Duc de Bourgogne & les Gandois, pour cuider faire paix entre eux: & comment les Gandois continuèrent en obstination & rebellion.’ cannot be allowed to pass as impartial comment and Lautens duly amends this to ‘Comment le Roy Charles, septiesme enuoya ses Ambassadeurs vers le Duc de Bourgogne & les Gandois, pour cuider faire paix entre eux: sans toutesfois rien proufiter’.² He can do this because he believes that La Marche writes with a militant anti-Flemish bias which needs to be counteracted and that Sauvage has failed to do so. This also leads him to add his comments to La Marche’s narrative in often lengthy marginal notes such as this one on the account of the rejection by Ghent of a tax on salt in 1451:

¹ ‘ou il est en propos des dissensions, & guerres domesticques, & autres jadis passees, en ces pays de Flandres, Brabant, & voisins [...] il se fait veoir en aulcuns endroitz plus aspre calomniateur, que veritable historiographe: tellement que plusieurs opinent, cela auoir esté la principale cause, de tenir ses escritz se longtemps en cachette, comme suspects à la tranquillité pubilque’, *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de la Marche*, ed. by Jean Lautens de Gand, Introduction.

² In both cases the emphasis is my own.

La demande de ceste gabelle sur le sel fut mise en auant en l'An 1448. Laquelle (comme dit Meyer) estoit de 18. soulz pariß. de chacun sac de sel: mais les Gandois y resisterent fort & ferme, comme semblablement ils refuserent certain autre nouveau peage, que le Duc exigeoit, sur le bled en l'an 1449. dont sourdirent toutes les malveuillances, noises, & debatz qui par apres enflammèrent la guerre: Quant à ce qu'il dict de Daniel Sersanders, il fault entendre qu'iceluy ayant esté Superdoyen des mestiers (qu'on nomme en vulgaire) Ouerdeken, en l'an 1448. fut creé second Escheuin de la Kuere en Aougst [sic] 1449. estant lors premier Escheuin Iosse Trieste, & pour autant que ledict Sersanders suiuant sa qualité auoit esté des Principaux qui auoyent tenu la main au refus de la susdicte gabelle, le Prince en estoit tant indigné, que pour chose en raison quelconque qu'on luy allegast, il ne vouloit adouëer ny agreër lesdictz Escheuins de l'an quarante neuf, tellement qu'au prochain mois de Septembre il deporta de leur office les grand, & souz-Bailly, ensemble lesdictz Escheuins, & demoura la ville long temps sans loy & justice, dont fut causé grand desordre parmy la vile: & le repos publicq mis en grand bransle, iusques à ce que nouueaulx Escheuins fussent creéz, & ledict Sersanders exclus: ce qui fut fait au mois de Mars apres ensuyuant, estant lors fait premier Escheuin, Hector van Veurhaute, et avec lui Lieuen vander Stichelen, Robrecht van Meerendre, & autres, toutesfois enuiron vn an apres s'aigrissant de rechef le debat, ledict Sersanders fut remis en l'estat de Superieur Doyen des mestiers, ce que nostre Autheur veut declairer par la narration suyuant. Touchant ladite imposition, qui certes estoit exceßiue, il y a apparence qu'elle fut intentée plus à l'incit d'aucuns particuliers, que par le propre mouuement du Bon Duc Philippe, qui de soymesme estoit prince humain debonnaire, & doux enuers son peuple, plus que nul autre de son temps: mesmement on ne treuue apres qu'il fut au deßus de ceulx de Gand par la bataille de Gaure, qu'il feit plus mention de ladite imposition, mais bien au contraire que luy mesme resista fort, & foible par apres à vne pareille gabelle de sel que le Roy de France vouloit introduire en la Duché de Bourgogne en l'an 1462.¹

The comment is intended to redress La Marche's perceived bias against the people of Ghent, and to give the reader some idea of the context in which the rejection of the tax was made. In doing this, Lautens provides his reader with a wealth of factual and historical information which subsequent editors have often found useful and incorporated into their editions. He also provides a model for the sort of edition – focusing on the historical rather than the literary content of the *Mémoires* – which has since been the norm, even for editors such as Beaune and d'Arbaumont, who reject both his reading of the text and his marginal comments in favour of those of Sauvage and the manuscript tradition. Lautens's historical approach to the *Mémoires* arises from his

¹ *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de la Marche*, ed. by Jean Lautens de Gand, pp. 335-36. The passage referred to is La Marche, II, 212-13.

polemical position; he wants to demonstrate where La Marche's interpretation of events is biased or where his account is inaccurate.¹ The fact that it chimes in with the historical approach of subsequent editors may be entirely coincidental. Nevertheless, the fact remains that he was the first editor to take this approach and, although those who followed him may have rejected his polemical standpoint, there are certainly grounds for arguing that he was influential in establishing their critical approach.

More than this, however, there are reasons for arguing that Jean Lautens's polemical position itself has been influential in shaping the way subsequent readers have seen La Marche. Lautens's aim was, as has been demonstrated, to counteract La Marche's anti-Flemish position by changing or adding paratextual material. This, at least, was the extent of the stated aims of the edition:

Afin, donc que nostre dict autheur, par ses criminations, & outrages, procedans de semblable enuie, n'engendrast trop faulses opinions, & imaginations es cœurs des hommes: nous l'auons en ceste seconde edition accompagné de quelques annotations deffensiues, sur les passages, ou la nécessité le sembloit requérir: d'auantage y auons adiustees, & faictes beaucoup d'aultres annotations, expositions, cottations d'annees, & corrections de motz, & diction corrompues, pardessus ce qu'en cemprendoit l'edition precedente, comme la marge l'enseignera plus-amplement: il y a encore de nouueau vne table declaratoire des choses plus notables contenues en ce liure, se rapportant distinctement aux abrezes couchez en la marge: desquelles additions, en effect, l'oeuvre enthier n'est seulement enrichi, & illustré: ains rendu beaucoup plus familier à la lecture. Au demourant n'auons riens changé à l'ordre, & distinction dudict oeuvre: mais bien y restabli certains sommaires des Chapitres, selon l'exigence du cas: enquoy nous sembloit à nous estre deue aultant de licence, que l'annotateur de France s'en estoit attribué en l'edition precedente.

In fact, as Petitot remarked, Lautens went further, removing the epithet 'rebelle' not only from Sauvage's chapter headings, but also from the text of the *Mémoires* themselves.² Nor was it only the suggestion of rebellion that Lautens sort to expunge

¹ For instance, on La Marche, II, 263, Lautens comments 'Il n'est vraysemblable que telle chase s'eust ainsi peu faire comme l'Autheur le racompte, veu la grande distance du chemin qui est depuis Baersele iusques à Gand, & principalement prinse consideration sur la difficulté & empeschement de chemin.' *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de la Marche*, ed. by Jean Lautens de Gand, p. 367.

² So that, for example, a passage which in Sauvage reads 'Si leur respondit qu'il sçavoit bien qu'eulx, qui parloyent de par les rebelles de Gand, le disoient en bonne intencion' (La Marche, II, 222, *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche*, ed. by Sauvage, p. 227) is rendered '[...] qu'eulx, qui parloyent de par

from the *Mémoires*. Towards the end of the work La Marche includes a passage which is highly critical both of the ruling class of Ghent and of those who followed them.

La Marche, III, 273-75

**Les Memoires
de Messire
Olivier de la
Marche, ed. by
Jean Lautens de
Gand**

Et en celle saison Guillaume Rin, qui estoit l'idolle et le dieu des Gantois, se tira à Allost pour faire une execution; mais ceulx de Gand machinoient desjà contre ledit Guillaume Rin, et luy mectoit on sus qu'il avoit esté cause de faire venir le seigneur des Cordes à Gand et les François, et qu'il queroit de prandre et emmener le josne prince ès mains du Roy de France; et plusieurs aultres choses que l'on a accoustumé de trouver sur ung homme que l'on veult deffaire. Et principalement luy [disoient] qu'il avoit esté cause de rompre certain traictié fait à Termonde pour le bien de paix, et disoit que ses maistres ne vouloient point tenir le traictié; et sesdits maistres, c'est à dire ceulx de la loy, disoient qu'ilz n'en avoient oncques ouy parler; et à deffaire Guillaume Rin tint fort la main le seigneur de Ravestain et maistre Jehan du Fay. Si fut depesché ung mandement, de par ceulx de Gand, pour aller prandre ledit Guillaume Rin au corps, et l'admenner à Gand; et fut la commission baillée au bastard de Fievin, bon homme d'armes, qui bien et diligemment l'executa et ammena Guillaume Rin prisonnier; et fut son procès fait, et par ce procès condempné à avoir la teste coppée, ce qui fut fait et executé publicquement sur le marché de Gand. Or povez à ce congnoistre quelle seurté on a à servir peuple; car Guillaume Rin avoit plus grant voix à Gand et plus grant credit que n'avoit le prince du pays ne les plus grans de Flandres; et soudainement changarent propos, et tous en generallité consentirent à sa mort; et sur le hourt on luy laissa faire ses remonstrances; mais oncques personne ne respondit, et dit ledit Guillaume, sur ces derniers motz: Ou vous ne me respondes point, ou je suis devenu sourt.' Et sur cela print la mort en gré, et eust la teste coppée, comme dit est; et deppuis icelle mort, [monseigneur] l'archiduc eust plus d'entendement, pour le bien du pays et pour la paix, qu'il n'avoit oncques eu;

En celle saison,
ceux de Gand
machinèrent tant
contre aucuns de
leur vile qu'ilz en
feirent prendre,
& decapiter
aucuns d'eux.

Et depuis, icelle
execution
Monsieur
l'Archeduc eust
plus
d'entendement,
pour le bien du
pays, & pour la
paix, qu'il
n'auoit oncques
eu

Jean Lautens's account obscures two features of La Marche's version of events to which the editor might object: firstly, and in keeping with his stated aims of countering French

ceux de Gand, le disoyent en bonne intencion', Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de la Marche, ed. by Jean Lautens de Gand, p. 341 (emphasis is added).

anti-Ghent opinion, he omits La Marche's implication that Ghentish rebellion is morally culpable, because comparable to the sin of idolatry, secondly, however, he avoids describing the extent to which the people of Ghent were themselves implicated in the implementation of Habsburg policy against Ghentish rebellion. Editors of the subsequent tradition who have taken Jean Lautens at his word, believing that his interventions have only affected the paratextual apparatus of the *Mémoires* have found themselves repeating this reading of La Marche's work which is partial in both senses of the word. Thus the account in the Stuart translation reads

At this season the people of Ghent intrigued so much against each other that those of one faction seized and beheaded those of the other, after which the Archduke came to a better understanding with them for peace than he had ever had before.¹

Despite the translators' awareness of the potential shortcomings of their source, their work has been compromised.

The Original Printed Edition

Equally influential in the production of subsequent readings of Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires* was their first printed edition, that of Denis Sauvage, published in 1561 and reissued in 1562 in an edition which is sometimes found bound with Sauvage's *Chronique de Flandres*.² As has been demonstrated in this chapter, both its text and structure shaped subsequent editions – in fact all are based on Sauvage's edition in one way or another, even the that of Beaune and d'Arbaumont, which claims to be the result of a return to the manuscript source. However, when this text is compared to Sauvage's source manuscript, BN ms f fr 2869, it becomes apparent that not even this edition recreates a manuscript source, and often with good reason. Mention has been made of

¹ *The Memoirs of Messire Olivier de la Marche*, XVI, 946.

² *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche, Premier Maistre d'hostel de l'archeduc Philippe d'Austriche, Comte de Flandres: Nouvellement mis en lumière par Denis Sauvage de Fontenailles en Brie, Historiographe du Treschrestien Roy Henry, second de ce nom.* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouille, A l'escu de Venise, 1561). The 1562 edition in the British Library is bound together with the *Chronique de Flandres*. However, there is a copy dated 1562 in the Bibliothèque Nationale which does not contain this work.

Sauvage's difficulty with the punctuation of his manuscript but an examination of the way in which he introduces this suggests a more profound problem:

Touchant son stile (auquel ie luy ay laissé quelques manières de parler, & certains mots de son siècle, & du creu de son païs, pour différence du vray François avec le Bourguignon) ie l'ay trouué assez passable, quand il a suyui son naturel: mais le voulant farder, & agencer d'artifice, il s'égaroit tellement, que l'on ne pouuoit tirer construction de ce qu'il vouloit dire: en sorte qu'il m'a souuent esté besoing de luy aider à s'expliquer, & principalement en toute sa première Preface.¹

Olivier de La Marche is, according to Sauvage, incapable of producing work in high rhetorical style, and the editor implies that he has had to do more than merely insert punctuation to help his author make sense. In fact Sauvage changed more than just the orthography of the text in his edition. Corrections are brought to bear on the *Mémoires* which, as Beaune and d'Arbaumont frequently point out, affected the whole of the subsequent print tradition. Sometimes these changes relate only to the manuscript which Sauvage consulted and amount to corrections which bring ms f fr 2869 into line with the rest of the manuscript tradition. An example of this occurs when, describing a victory by Sarrasins over Christians, ms f fr 2869 suggests that the victory has been achieved over 'ceulx de la region crestienne'.² All the other manuscripts contain the more plausible 'religion crestienne', and Sauvage exercises his judgement to make an informed correction of his manuscript.³ Sauvage does not suggest that he has consulted any other manuscript and his comments in his introduction suggest that he believes La Marche, rather than the scribe, to be the source of such errors. Although this does not appear to be the case here, it does seem to be true in other instances. Thus Sauvage amends his manuscript's account of the parenthood of Theseus the companion of

¹ *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche, Premier Maistre d'hostel de l'archeduc Philippe d'Austriche, Comte de Flandres: Nouvellement mis en lumière par Denis Sauvage de Fontenailles en Brie, Historiographe du Treschrestien Roy Henry, second de ce nom*, Introduction, unnumbered folio, p. ii.

² BnF, f. fr. 2869 fol. 34^r.

³ *Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche, Premier Maistre d'hostel de l'archeduc Philippe d'Austriche, Comte de Flandres: Nouvellement mis en lumière par Denis Sauvage de Fontenailles en Brie, Historiographe du Treschrestien Roy Henry, second de ce nom*, p. 31.

Hercules, recognized by Beaune and d'Arbaumont as being nonsensical, 'bastard de Eseus, Roy d'Athenes, et de Elise, Trajan l'empereur recommande' to the more conventional 'bastard de Eseus, Roy d'Athenes, et de Aethra, fille de Pitheus'.¹ In this case, however, the nonsense is purveyed by all surviving manuscripts of the *Mémoires* and, although there is clearly a lacuna between Elise and Trajan, it seems beyond doubt that La Marche wished to make Theseus the son of a woman called Elise who was in some way related to the Roman emperor.² Sauvage's intervention here serves to make La Marche seem better informed in the lore of classical antiquity than the manuscript texts suggest.

Such analysis of Sauvage's treatment of his manuscript source is possible because he identifies the manuscript used (that belonging to the house of Chaux) and indicates that no other witness has been consulted. However, on closer inspection, the evidence for considering ms 2869 as Sauvage's sole source is ambiguous, and points to a discontinuity between the print and manuscript traditions in which it becomes very difficult to analyse or recreate the process of textual transmission. The identification of manuscript 2869 as Sauvage's source manuscript stems largely from a note on the opening page of the text, to the effect that this was the manuscript consulted by Sauvage, a note which appears to be in a nineteenth-century hand. It is true that there are peculiar features of manuscript 2869 which are reproduced in Sauvage's edition: most notably a footnote to the Treaty of Arras, naming those responsible for the death of Jean Sans Peur, is reproduced as a footnote in Sauvage's edition (and thus in subsequent editions of the *Mémoires*).³ As manuscript 2869 is the only surviving manuscript of La Marche's work to contain this note, it would seem that the conclusion

¹ La Marche, I, 113. Beaune and d'Arbaumont's comment is made in their footnote 2.

² F. fr. 2868 fol. 44^r, f. fr. 2869 fol. 47^v, f. fr. 23232 fol. 40^r, BR II 1044 fol. 41^r, BR 10999 fol. 33^v, L 794 fol. 38^r, A 141 fols 23^v-24^r.

³ La Marche, I, 211, *Les Mémoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche, Premier Maistre d'hostel de l'archeduc Philippe d'Autriche, Comte de Flandres: Nouvellement mis en lumière par Denis Sauvage de Fontenailles en Brie, Historiographe du Treschrestien Roy Henry, second de ce nom*, p. 85; BnF, f. fr. 2869 fol. 97^v.

that this was Sauvage's sole source is on secure grounds. However, in other instances, Sauvage reproduces text which is not in this manuscript, or is included in such a way as to make its context virtually irretrievable without reference to other manuscripts. One example of this occurs in a passage where La Marche is explaining the feudal relationship between Philippe le Bon and the Holy Roman Emperor. My edition reproduces the passage as follows:

Ce duc de Bourgoingne, qui tant scet d'honneurs et de biens, va au devant de la seconde personne de chrestienté en election; luy qui est de nativité maternelle, et en subgection de plusieurs seigneuries à luy appertenant, subject de l'empire, pourquoy c'est il fait qu'il n'est descendu jus de son cheval, comme les aultres princes <L out> de l'empire font journellement devant leur Empereur <H out> <A out> ou devant le Roy des Rommains, <S out> <A in> <L in> ayant possession par election, et d'abondant desjà une couronne prise à Ais? <S in> <H in> Certes ce n'a pas esté du temps que j'ay esté paige, ne escuyer, ne josne homme que j'ay ceste question demandée ne sceue. Ad ce je respons deux poinctz ou deux raisons qui ne sont pas à oblier ou à non ramentevoir, pour appaiser les demandeurs. <para L> La premiere si est que le duc Philippe de Bourgoingne estoit filz, en tiers, du Roy Jehan de France, et yssu paternellement du noble lit, du sang et de la maison royalle de France, ce que le duc vouloit bien monstrier aux Allemans. <para L> Et la seconde fut qu'icelluy monseigneur Frederich d'Austrice n'estoit encores que Roy des Rommains, et non pas Empereur receu, mais esleu, et les seigneuries qu'il tenoit en l'empire, en tant qu'elles povoient estre <p 278> subjectes ou tenues, c'estoit comme de l'Empereur, et non pas comme du Roy des Rommains; et touteffois, je crois la premiere raison plus vraye. (La Marche, I, 277-78)

Manuscript 2869 is referred to here as *S* because of its traditional link with Denis Sauvage and, as can be seen, although it is apparently the base manuscript for both Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition and that of Sauvage which preceded it, it omits the phrase 'Aiant possession par election et dabondant une coronne prinse a Ais', which nevertheless appears later on in the text of the manuscript as a footnote.⁶⁷ There is, however, no indication of where this phrase should be inserted into the text, and it might seem equally logical to do so after 'comme du Roy des Rommains'. The fact that Sauvage does not, and instead places the text in the same position as that in which it is

⁶⁷ BnF, f. fr. 2869 fol. 127^r, the relevant passage is at the top of the folio, the note at the bottom.

found in other manuscripts suggests that either 2869 was not his base manuscript or that 2869 was not the only manuscript to which he referred. In other instances he includes text which is absent from 2869 but present in all other manuscripts.¹ There is, therefore, no simple relation between the print tradition and the manuscript tradition of La Marche's *Mémoires*. Even where editors indicate their source, this is not always unproblematically the source of the text. A similarly discontinuous relationship can be traced between the surviving manuscripts of the *Mémoires* and any putative authorial version, as will be demonstrated in an examination of those manuscripts.

Manuscript Readings

The multiplicity of variant readings demonstrated above should not surprise us. Indeed the polyvalent text has become so much a part of medieval studies that it would be surprising if the seven or so manuscripts containing the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche, or fragments of them, did not present significant differences. In fact, it is surprising how few differences there are between those manuscripts containing Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires*. Indeed, even those manuscripts which seem at first sight to be the most remote from the main textual tradition are in fact those which on closer examination appear to be most typical of it. However, as I have not undertaken a full codicological study of the manuscripts, these conclusions must remain provisional in anticipation of a full transcription of the seven texts. There are a number of factors inherent in the methodology of my survey which might tend to over-emphasize the strength of the relationships between some manuscripts over others and, whilst I do not feel that this invalidates my findings, I think it is important that they be borne in mind. Perhaps the most important of these is that my primary access to all the manuscripts discussed is through monochrome photographic reproduction. In six cases this meant the consultation of microfilms but in the seventh, that of Antwerp, Musée Plantin, ms

¹ So, for example, f. fr. 2869 fol. 316^v omits from an account of the seating plan of a banquet 'monseigneur de Pons et madame la chanceliere' (La Marche, II, 355), which is nevertheless present in Sauvage's edition, p. 279.

141, the material supplied took the form of very dark photographic negatives and was readable only with the aid of a light box and a magnifying lens. In all seven cases I have been unable to identify features which would be apparent from an examination of the fabric of the manuscript: I have not, for example, been able to examine watermarks as an aid to dating manuscript production, nor have I always been able to distinguish modifications to the text which have been made at the time of writing and those which were added later in different ink. In the case of ms 141, the difficulty I had reading the manuscript, compounded by the fact that, of all the manuscripts of La Marche's *Mémoires*, this is the one which fits the most text onto a single page, is likely to have resulted in my failing to notice some variant readings not shared by other manuscripts. The manuscripts are described in the order in which I consulted them and, although I did return to check that some variants were not present in manuscripts that I had previously studied, it must be recognized that the later a variant reading came to light, the less likely I was to find another manuscript which shared that reading. This has the potential consequence of making the manuscripts that I read last seem like the most original, containing more unique readings than those manuscripts which I studied first. In fact this does not seem to have emerged in my analysis of the manuscript variants, which again points to a surprising stability in the textual tradition.

The first manuscript which I studied was **Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fonds français, 2868**, which is discussed extensively above, as it is the only illustrated manuscript of the *Mémoires* and contains only the 1488 Book One of the work. Because of its illustrations, and the fact that this Book One came to be referred to as the Introduction in the print tradition, I refer to it as *I*. It presents a large number of unique readings, mainly in the form of text absent from *I* but present in all other manuscripts but there are also differences in terms of its visual presentation. *I* contains 37 illuminated parafs, which are not reproduced in other manuscripts either as visual

symbols or as paragraph breaks. This large degree of divergence is to be expected inasmuch as the other six manuscripts of the *Mémoires* are (with the exception of some passages which will be detailed below) complete and therefore cannot be based solely on *I*. However, the fact that there are so many instances in which every other manuscript of the *Mémoires* presents a variant reading from *I* suggests that *I* was not used as a source even for those sections of the *Mémoires* which it contains. As was suggested above, this casts doubt on the methodology of Beaune and d'Arbaumont, also advocated by Henri Stein, of using *I* as the base manuscript for an edition as, in the manuscript tradition, *I* seems to represent a codicological dead end. However, it also raises the question as to whether a manuscript representing an original version of the *Mémoires* can ever be identified. Beaune and d'Arbaumont's advocacy of *I* as a source is based partly on palaeographical evidence which places the manuscript at the end of the fifteenth century. As such, it is one of only two manuscripts which Beaune, d'Arbaumont and Stein consider to be written in a fifteenth-century hand.¹ The other is *L* which, as we shall see, represents an idiosyncratic response to the textual difficulties of the *Mémoires*. Neither can be seriously considered as a source for the other manuscripts and this discounts any methodology which would seek to equate an early date of production with a pre-eminent position in the subsequent development of the work.

Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 10999 (hereafter *B*) is a manuscript to which no commentator has attributed such a position. Both Beaune and d'Arbaumont and Stein are in agreement in saying that this is an inferior copy, belonging to the same family as BnF, f. fr. 2869 (which I refer to as *S*). In fact, it presents fewer similarities with this manuscript than with any of the other witnesses: only two variants that I have identified

¹ Codicological descriptions of the manuscripts of the *Mémoires* can be found in La Marche, IV, pp. civ-cxij and Stein, *Olivier de La Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, pp. 129-131. As I have not had the opportunity of consulting the physical manuscripts in all instances, I have relied on these sources for an account their fabric.

are peculiar to *B* and *S* alone, and its closest affinities are to manuscripts *A* and *L*. Also, surprisingly for a manuscript judged to be ‘très médiocre’, it has the fewest number of unique readings of any of the manuscripts studied, with many of these representing not textual variations or omissions but underlinings which, particularly in the 1488 Book One, serve to emphasize proper nouns. This Book One also receives special treatment in *B*, in as much as it is divided into sections which are introduced with the rubrics *Grande Histoire* or *Petite Histoire*. Beaune and d’Arbaumont noted this rubrication as a feature of *L*’s treatment of Book One, but it is also to be found in *S* and, to a lesser extent, in *B*. In fact, there is one section which is labelled a *Grande Histoire* in all the manuscripts which I have studied (with the exception of *I*) and this would suggest that the distinction between *Grandes* and *Petites Histoires* is not an invention of one particular textual tradition but is present in the source text and has been eliminated from some redactions. Not every instance of this rubrication is reproduced in *B*, *S* and *L*, with rubrics appearing most frequently in *L* and least often in *B* but there is no case of one manuscript labelling something a *Grande Histoire* which another refers to as a *Petite Histoire*. The term *Histoire* represents something of a grey area, and is only used in the earliest occurrences of the rubrication. Initially two episodes are headed *Histoire* by *B*, *S* and *L*, and this is followed by a third, which *S* calls a *Petite Histoire*, whereas for *L* no adjective is used (*B* contains no rubrication at this point). In the two succeeding instances, both *S* and *L* agree that episodes should be labelled *Petite Histoire*, but *L* uses the adjective postpositively, as if it were an afterthought. Thereafter *L* and *S* both place their adjectives before the noun. For this reason, I have tended to regard *Histoire* as synonymous with *Petite Histoire*, although, as will be seen, this conclusion is open to some dispute.

There is little to distinguish between *Grandes* and *Petites Histoires* as far as their length is concerned; *Petites Histoires* can be shorter than *Grandes Histoires* but as

a rule both sorts of *Histoire* are approximately the same length – typically five pages of Beaune and d’Arbaumont’s edition. Thematically there does seem to be some distinction, with *Grandes Histoires* tending to deal with crusading exploits against Muslims and with conversion to Christianity. Thus, the story of Alonso, King of Portugal, who conquered his kingdom from the Saracens and was excused from raising a papal tax because of the cost of his military exploits against Islam, is headed *Grande Histoire* in *S* and *L* (La Marche, I, 35-40), as is the account of the conversion of Clovis (La Marche, I, 55-58). Tales of contact with Islam falling short of armed confrontation are accorded the status of *Petites Histoires* and such is the case with the life story of Seville, wife of Thierry Duke of Flanders and daughter of the King of Jerusalem, who travelled to the Holy Land to visit her brothers, sending back a relic of Jesus’ blood to Bruges (La Marche, I, 74-79). Only when a visit from her son causes the King of Jerusalem to raise an army against him do the manuscripts (in this case *B*, *S* and *L*) introduce the rubrication *Grande Histoire* (La Marche, I, 79-82). The only exception to this rule that crusading endeavours take the rubric of *Grande Histoire* is the passage in which La Marche describes the acquisition of the new arms of Austria, in commemoration of the bloodstained apparel worn by men and horses in a confrontation with the Saracens (La Marche, I, 22-25). This is one of the early episodes and is marked by *B*, *S* and *L* simply as a *Histoire*, casting doubt on my initial assumption that this was a synonym for *Petite Histoire*. Certainly no account of armed combat between Christians and Muslims is labelled unequivocally as a *Petite Histoire*. The other circumstance in which portions of the 1488 Book One are referred to as *Grandes Histoires*, including that section thus marked by six of the seven manuscripts, is when La Marche gives an account of the career of one of the three dukes of Burgundy whom he served personally: Philippe le Bon (La Marche, I, 91-106), Charles le Hardi (La Marche, I, 126-36, 136-47) and Maximilian (La Marche, I, 170-75). In the case of

Maximilian, La Marche actually lists his achievements twice; the first account deals with the early events of Maximilian's government, his entry into the Burgundian Netherlands, his continued war with France, his re-establishment of the military order of the Golden Fleece, the birth of his son Philippe and a number of military actions in the Low Countries (La Marche, I, 157-62) and this section is labelled by *B*, *S* and *L* as a *Petite Histoire*. Only with the second account, which concentrates to an even greater extent on Maximilian's military achievements in the Low Countries, do we find the manuscripts using the term *Grande Histoire*. The terms *Petite* and *Grande Histoire* are consistently applied across the manuscripts that employ this terminology and a certain logic can be identified in the relation between the terminology and the material to which it is used to refer. Is this rubrication authorial, or does it represent the response of an early scribe? If the latter is the case, it is an interesting response, limited only to the 1488 Book One and testifying to a close reading of the text by a scribe anxious to emphasize the triumph of Christianity over Islam and the actions – particularly the military actions – of those Burgundian dukes whom the author had known personally.

Manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français, 23232, which I refer to as *Par*, belongs to another group of manuscripts which is distinguishable by rubrication. Again Beaune and d'Arbaumont and Stein argue that this is simply a copy of *S*, or of another manuscript in the same family, but this time they do not say, as they did in the case of *B*, that it is a particularly bad copy. Nevertheless, it presents a large number of unique readings, mainly a result of misreading of proper nouns (it consistently refers to Philippe de Ternant as Philippe de Tarvant), which point to its scribe being unfamiliar with Burgundian court circles. Apart from this, it presents very strong affinities with manuscript *H*, with the two manuscripts sharing nearly two

hundred variants not found in any other witness.¹ Many of these variants take the form of rubrics, and *Par* and *H* are alone in using rubrication throughout the *Mémoires*. Unlike the tradition described above, the rubrication in *Par* and *H* takes a conventional form, simply describing briefly the contents of the section which immediately follows the rubric. As such, it seems more likely to represent the instant response of the scribe as reader of La Marche's *Mémoires* than does the unusual division of the text into *Grandes* and *Petites Histoires*, which seems to be organized on more thematically consistent lines. An additional feature which would support this understanding of the rubrication of *Par* and *H* is the fact that many of the early titles in *Par* take the form not of rubrics which interrupt the text but of headings across the top of pages, indicating the wider subject matter of the marked passage. As the *Mémoires* progress, *Par* includes fewer of these headings, but continues to share rubrics with *H*, whereas *H* supplements these rubrics with headings.

Manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français, 2869 is that which I have labelled *S*, because of the belief that it formed the basis of Sauvage's edition. Stein and Beaune and d'Arbaumont place it at the centre of the codicological tradition, with both *B* and *Par* being copied from it. In fact, it presents the most affinities with manuscript *L*.

Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, II 1044 was part of Thomas Philipps's private collection (number 4291) when Stein and Beaune and d'Arbaumont produced their accounts of the manuscripts of the *Mémoires* and, as a consequence, they do not describe it. It is interesting to speculate on how their interpretation of the textual transmission of the *Mémoires* would have been different if they had access to this manuscript, which I have called *H* because of its frequent recourse to headings. These

¹ Apart from rubrication, these include sixty variant readings, twenty-nine omissions, two paragraph breaks, two failures to include a paragraph break and one instance where a space has been left for text to be entered. Whilst the structural basis of my survey means that features such as paragraph breaks are likely to be noticed, it is probable that a full textual study would reveal more omissions and variant readings common to *Par* and *H* that I have not yet identified.

headings are frequently repetitive ('Encores de Luxembourg' appears no less than seven times, and is often alternated with 'Conqueste de Luxembourg') but this in itself is a useful tool for textual analysis, and forms the basis for my division of the text into thematic passages developed below. *H* often shares the same headings, rubrics and variants as *Par* but it does not contain as many obvious misreadings of the names of members of the Burgundian court. It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that *Par* and *H* belong to the same family of manuscripts, but that *H* was produced by someone with greater familiarity with the court, whereas *Par* was copied by a less careful scribe. In the case of *H*, we even know who that scribe was, as the *Mémoires* end with the final rubrication 'Escrit de la main de monseigneur le maistre Dedier Boylot'.

Lille, Bibliothèque Municipale, 794, which I refer to as *L*, presents an original response to the difficulties of the text of the *Mémoires* in which the 1488 Book One is followed by another section which refers to itself as book one of the work. *L* initially omits this second book one altogether, moving directly to the section marked as book two by the text and reproducing all of the final portions of the *Mémoires* before returning to book one. To some extent this treatment must be attributed to scribal confusion produced by the complex traces of the work's composition, but it must not be thought that *L* represents an uninformed response to the *Mémoires*: the decision to place the early portions of book one at the end of the manuscript means that events which, in other manuscripts, the text anticipates, have already been described in *L* and the text of *L* is modified accordingly. One example of this is the account of Anthoine de Saint-Simon's conversion to the Franciscan life which, in other manuscripts, is offered to the reader as something to come – 'comme l'on trouvera cy après' (La Marche, II, 50) whereas in *L* the corresponding phrase reads 'comme avez ouy cy devant'. *L* is also atypical of the *Mémoires* manuscripts in another way – it is the only manuscript which I have studied to contain the complete text of the *Mémoires* and any other text. The texts

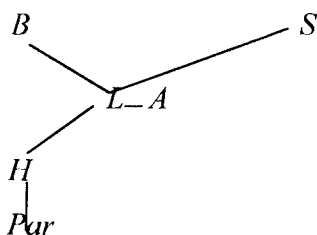
in question are very short, and take the form of a chronology of important figures in Burgundian history, culminating in ‘Charles [le Hardi] A qui Dieu doint victoire et bonne vie mil iiij^c lxxvj’. This text wishing Charles a long and happy life and dated the year before Charles’s death is followed by the rubrication: ‘Et sic est finis. Monseigneur cecy vous present Jacotin de Tennyerres vostre serviteur’, which Beaune and d’Arbaumont interpret as pointing to the author of these final fragments (La Marche, IV, cxj), however it is also possible that this, as in the case of *H*, refers to the scribe rather than the author of the text.¹

The form in which the *Mémoires* appear in *L* is so idiosyncratic that it would seem almost impossible that any of the other manuscripts have used *L* as a source. Of course it would be possible to make the changes found in *L* in the reverse direction, but it is unlikely that this would produce the same readings as found in the other manuscripts. Moreover, *L* presents a number of structural dissimilarities from the other manuscripts of the *Mémoires*, especially towards the end (that is, towards the end of book one in most manuscripts), where it has many more paragraph breaks than are to be found in other texts. In general the manuscripts are in accordance as to where to place paragraphs, and so it does not seem as if *L* has been the direct source for any of the other manuscripts. The structural irregularity of *L* is to be contrasted with its textual regularity, which would seem to place it at the centre of the codicological tradition. As we have seen it is the manuscript with which both *S* and *B* have the most in common, despite the fact that the correlation between *B* and *S* is the weakest between any pair of

¹ Dr Graeme Small of the University of Glasgow has suggested that these fragments represent a short Burgundian historical text, the *Chronique des rois de Bourgogne depuis l’an 14*, on which he has carried out extensive research. I have sent photocopies of the text in Lille 794 to him, but a preliminary examination based on information provided by Dr Small suggests that this is not the text in question – or at least that if it is, it is a much earlier redaction than any examined by Small. His texts all end with Philippe le Beau, whereas that in Lille 794 was written during the lifetime of Charles le Hardi. Moreover, although Girard de Roussillion figures in the text, it is his status as a founder of monastic institutions rather than his defeats of the French which is foregrounded. This too may be attributed to the text’s earlier date and the fact that Charles le Hardi was still nominally a subject of the French king, whilst Philippe le Beau was not.

manuscripts. *L* also presents strong affinities with *H* (and thus with *Par*) but the manuscript with which it shares the most variants is manuscript *A*.

Manuscript *A*, is **Antwerp, Musée Plantin 141**. It was the last of the manuscripts which I studied and therefore the large number of readings unique to *A* identified in my study could be a consequence of my methodology rather than a feature of the manuscript itself. However, there is one variant which, as in the case of *L*, is clearly a response to the textual confusion of the *Mémoires* and which rules *A* out as a possible source for any of the other texts. Following the 1488 Book One, most manuscripts (with the exception of *L*) continue with the introduction to the work written in the early 1470s. This means that most texts of the *Mémoires* have two introductions, in which the author sets out his plan for the work. In *A* the 1470s introduction is omitted, leaving the work in a more conventional form with only one introduction. No other manuscript of the *Mémoires* does this, and therefore *A* cannot be the sole common source for the other manuscripts. Where our study of the print tradition ended in uncertainty as to which if any of the manuscripts had been the source text, a study of the manuscript tradition ends similarly: an attempt to compose a *stemma* on textual grounds would produce a diagram showing the relations between the six complete texts something like this:



where *L* and *A* are at the centre of a textual tradition and *Par* appears to be a development from a family represented by *H*. With this one exception, however, there is nothing to indicate precedence between the different texts. I have argued that it is likely that the rubrication *Grande* and *Petite Histoire* in the 1488 Book One is present in the original text, and this is present in *B*, *S* and, to a lesser extent *L*. However, the decision

to rubricate or not does not necessarily impact on the fidelity of a manuscript to the source. The centrality of *L* and *A*, which link otherwise disparate manuscripts, might suggest that they represent a reading closest to the source text but each in its way is idiosyncratic. Thus uncertainty lies at the heart of the codicological history of the *Mémoires* – there is no clear indication of which manuscript might be the closest to the author’s original and thus no clear indication of the form that the original might have taken.

A Change of Address? Completion and Audience in the *Mémoires*

Part of the reason for this uncertainty is the fact that *L* and *A* represent informed readings of Olivier de La Marche’s *Mémoires*, which try to reconcile some of the textual difficulties arising from the confused history of the work’s composition. In describing this confusion above, I stated, without further elaboration, that material in the earlier sections of the *Mémoires* went unrevised when La Marche redefined his project and dedicated it to his patron Philippe le Beau. However, if we are to use the contextual and linguistic evidence of individual passages of the *Mémoires* as guides to when they were composed, it is important that we establish that the traditional view of the work as unrevised is correct and that there is unlikely to have been ‘contamination’ of the text suggesting a later date of composition than was in fact the case. The critical orthodoxy on La Marche’s *Mémoires* views this lack of revision as a consequence of the author’s failure to complete his work and this related issue is one which must also be addressed at the beginning of a study of the rhetoric of the work: does the reader of the *Mémoires* have access to the text as the author intended it to be or was there a planned final section which would have redefined the context in which the work was to be read?

Comparison of the final chapter of the print tradition with the last chapter of the 1488 Book One, which in all manuscripts but *Par* and *H* ends with La Marche’s *devise*, ‘tant a souffert La Marche’ and can therefore be regarded as complete, would suggest

that the *Mémoires* were in fact completed. The two chapters follow parallel lines of argument, both revolving around the reputation of princes. The 1488 Book One ends with a list of rulers who, in spite of their virtues, were subject to biological frailties, while the *Mémoires* as a whole end with a discussion of the honorific titles to be attributed to successive dukes of Burgundy. There are no comparable passages elsewhere in the *Mémoires* and in both the author appears to stand back from his material and give an assessment of the wider historical context in which it is to be placed. This suggests that we should read the final passage in the *Mémoires* as having been written specifically as an end to the work, a reading which seems all the more probable when we consider that the final chapter of Philippe de Commyne's *Mémoires* employs a similar technique of shifting focus from the details of events which the author recalls to the broader historical picture in a description of the genealogy of the kings of France and the irregular means whereby some of them acceded to the throne.¹ It thus seems that this broadening of perspective in the closing pages was a standard technique in historiography of the period and we can consider its appearance in La Marche's *Mémoires* as an indication that what we now read as the final chapter was indeed intended to be the end of the book. However, this raises a further question, namely at what stage La Marche decided that this was to be the closing chapter of his work. The penultimate chapter of the print tradition contains the only marker of date to be found anywhere in La Marche's *Mémoires*. Talking of Maximilian, now elected King of the Romans, La Marche writes 'à l'heure que escripvis cestes, qui fut le treziesme jour de juing l'an mil cinz cens et ung, l'empire ne fut oncques si paisible qu'il est à present et par la diligence et poursuyte de cestuy noble Roy.' La Marche's

¹ Philippe de Commyne, *Mémoires*, ed. by J. Calmette and G. Durville, 3 vols (Paris: Champion, 1924-25), III, 315-17. Calmette and Durville note (p. 315, n. 3) that Commyne's first editor, Denis Sauvage, who was also responsible for the first edition of La Marche's *Mémoires*, believed that this passage was written by somebody other than Commyne. It is not my intention to discuss the authorship of the passage here because I do not believe that this impacts significantly on the argument that this sort of passage was considered desirable – or perhaps even necessary – in the completion of a work of historiography.

will is dated 8th October 1501, and the author died on the first day of the following February.¹ In the context of medieval and early modern practice, the proximity of these two dates should not be regarded as surprising: the drafting of a will was a stage in the ritual of preparing oneself for death and many wills of the period were drawn up only shortly before the death of the testator.² It is therefore probable that La Marche believed his death to be imminent in the final months of 1501 and that the closing sections of the *Mémoires* were composed with this belief in mind. This interpretation seems all the more probable given that, apart from the fleeting discussion of the names to be attributed to the dukes whom La Marche has known, there is little to indicate that the *Mémoires* are coming to an end: the rubrication ‘Qui est tout ce que nous avons des memoires du seigneur de la Marche’ appears in none of the surviving manuscripts of the work and seems to have been added by Denis Sauvage.³ Moreover, the text of the *Mémoires* appears to envisage continuation beyond this final chapter, presenting the reader with unfulfilled promises such as ‘parlerons du fait de monseigneur l’archiduc, nostre prince, par croire conseil, il se ressourdit et porta le temps saignement, comme nous dirons cy après’ (La Marche, III, 318). Taken together with statements at the beginning of both prologues, which present the *Mémoires* as preliminary material to be used by La Marche’s fellow historiographers after the author’s death, it could be concluded that the *Mémoires* were never intended as anything other than work in

¹ La Marche’s will is reproduced in Henri Stein, *Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon* pp. 198-203.

² The importance of the will in preparations for death is explored in Philippe Ariès, *L’Homme devant la mort* (Paris: Seuil, 1977), pp. 188-200. The fact that the will was written when the testator knew himself or herself to be dying can be seen as a consequence of the original function of the document which Ariès describes as being more to specify a place of burial than to dispose of one’s worldly goods (pp. 24, 25). Ariès has commented on Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *Awareness of Dying* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), a sociological study on the implications of treating patients who do not know that they are dying, arguing that, in contrast, medieval and early modern societies expected the dying patient to be the first to become aware of his or her condition: Philippe Ariès, ‘Time for Dying’, review article, *Revue française de sociologie*, 10 (3), (1969), reprinted in his *Essais sur l’histoire de la mort en Occident du moyen âge à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 1975), pp. 210-12.

³ *Les Mémoires de Messire Olivier de La Marche*, ed. by Sauvage, p. 435.

progress, to which the author would continue to add for as long as he was able.¹ If the section attributing honorifics is to be read as a deliberate conclusion to the work, therefore, it should be interpreted not as a culmination planned by the author from the outset, but as a punctual intervention, a response to his failing health which led him to recognize that it was time to bring the work to some sort of end.

This reading of the final pages of the *Mémoires* would seem to confirm the traditional view that La Marche's *Mémoires* were not revised in the light of subsequent events. The section attributing titles to the dukes of Burgundy looks like a hastily-appended conclusion in the light of the author's awareness of his own mortality, but the sentence promising further material occurs after this passage, indicating perhaps that La Marche, having had some indication of his failing health, either believed himself to be recovered or considered his most important task in the circumstances as being to add material to the *Mémoires* rather than to revise the material which he had already written. The *Mémoires* thus present a number of passages which testify to their having been written over a long period of time and compiled without revision: characters who are presented as being alive in some passages, are unequivocally dead at other points in the work and authorial comments express hopes which sections written subsequently reveal to have been frustrated.²

Another indication of La Marche's failure to revise his work in the light of subsequent events – and one which manuscript *A* specifically tries to address – is the fact that the work as we currently read it preserves two prologues, containing radically

¹ The statement from the 1488 prologue reads that 'je [...] feray et adrecceray mes memoires cy après escriptes devant ceulx d'iceulx qui me survivront, affin que s'il y a chose qui puisse amplier et aydier leurs haultes et solempneles euvres, ilz s'en aident et servent' (La Marche, I, 15), implying that La Marche's *Mémoires* will be of use only when the author is dead and thus that he will continue to work on them up until this point. This passage is reproduced in almost exactly the same terms in the earlier prologue (La Marche, I, 184-85) and the implications of both are discussed at greater length in chapter 3 of the present thesis.

² The most apparent example of a character who dies in the course of the composition of the *Mémoires* is that of George Chastelain, who is dead in the opening pages of the print tradition (La Marche, I, 14) and yet is presented as living in subsequent pages, which were written some fifteen years earlier (La Marche, I, 185).

different definitions of the work's generic position. The earlier of the two will be discussed at greater length in the chapter which follows but it should be noted that the author's definition of his work as *mémoires* is based on an undertaking to report only that which he has experienced personally and is accompanied by a specific disavowal of alternative generic labels for the work such as 'croniques, histoires ou escriptures' (La Marche, I, 183-84). As the following chapter will demonstrate, such labels were linked closely in the fifteenth-century mind with the fact of the author having been commissioned to produce the work, or with the work being dedicated to a patron. Thus, the fact that the later prologue, which appears first in modern editions of the work, is addressed to Philippe le Beau and introduces a book in which the history of Philippe's family is traced back to the fall of Troy (an event of which La Marche cannot plausibly claim eyewitness experience) demonstrates a radical break from the author's original conception of the *Mémoires*. This might be considered an important aid to dating various passages of the work: those which display evidence of being addressed to Philippe le Beau, or which break with the contract of eyewitness experience as initially defined in the *Mémoires*, can be attributed to the period around or after the composition of the second prologue.

In fact, no such technique can be employed. Apart from the material contained in the 1488 Book One, there is no indication that any of the work is addressed to Philippe le Beau. The passage in the final chapter which discusses the titles to be attributed to the dukes of Burgundy opens with 'Ce duc Philippe fut surnommé Philippe le Hardy pour les raisons que j'ay mises en mon premier volume', which acknowledges the existence of the 1488 Book One as a part of the *Mémoires*, but later in the same passage Philippe le Beau is referred to in the third person, with no indication that this is the addressee of the work (La Marche, III, 315-16). Moreover, the preceding chapter in the print tradition contains an account of the exploits of Philippe's father, Maximilian,

which is introduced by ‘Item, est temps que j’escrive de ses haultz faitz ce que je n’ay pas veu, à cause de mon ancienneté; mais je ne diray chose que je n’en soye bien acertené.’¹ In excusing himself from meeting the criterion of an eyewitness account as defined in the earliest prologue to the *Mémoires*, La Marche demonstrates that it is still this definition, and not the redefinition of the work as found in the subsequent prologue, which conditions the selection of material.

Moreover, except in the 1488 Book One, there is little evidence of a narratee and, even when this evidence is present, there is no indication that Philippe le Beau is the historical figure behind the ‘vous’ of the text. There is a marked imbalance in the occurrences of second person pronouns and possessives in the *Mémoires*, with 67% of instances (488 of a total of 725) occurring in the first 20% of the printed text, which in this case corresponds exactly with the 1488 Book One. Of the remaining instances, 193 occur in direct speech, leaving only 44 (or 6% of the total) which represent addresses to a second-person narratee outside the scope of the 1488 Book One. Not all of these represent extradiagetic narratorial comments: as will be seen in the following section of this chapter, some of the *Mémoires* takes the form of a letter addressed to Gilles du Mas, *maître d’hôtel* in the court of Brittany, and some of the instances of second-person pronouns and possessives represent this sort of address to a named addressee who is clearly not the person to whom the text as a whole is dedicated. Where the pronoun or possessive is directed to an external addressee, it is always as part of a discourse device such as ‘comme vous pourrez entendre et ouyr’ (La Marche, I, 259) and the addressee is not identified. The fact that the *Mémoires* did not have a patron until after 1488 does not indicate that the work was intended as a private document prior to this date: the use of a second-person narratee in discourse devices demonstrates that at the very least La Marche was writing within a conceptual framework which envisaged the possibility of

¹ La Marche, III, 307. The opening word in this sentence is ‘Item’ only in manuscript *S*. In all other surviving manuscripts, it is ‘Il’.

the work's being read. Furthermore, it is important to realize that rededication of the *Mémoires* to Philippe le Beau had very little impact on the form taken by the main body of the text, which continued to address this anonymous addressee.¹ In the light of this, it would be tempting to question whether the 1488 revised plan of the work was ever intended to be a preface to the work with which it is now read. It will be remembered that *I* is the only manuscript which appears to be contemporary with its author, and which appears to have had a high degree of authorial input into its visual presentation, and that it contains only this 1488 Book One and no other part of what we now think of as the *Mémoires*. However, the two halves to the *Mémoires* are not quite so easily separated for, as I mentioned above, La Marche refers to material in Book One when considering the titles to attribute to dukes of Burgundy and he does so saying that this is 'mon premier volume' (La Marche, III, 315). The 1488 Book One was, therefore integrated into La Marche's *Mémoires* at this point, but this integration appears to have had little impact on the form taken by the work as a whole, which continued to follow the pattern defined by the first prologue.

'Pour ce que je sçay bien que plusieurs ont escript de celle feste, et que chacun ne peult avoir tout veu, et pourroit on dire que j'en parle bien largement': Earlier Documents in La Marche's *Mémoires*

The imperfect integration of the 1488 Book One into La Marche's *Mémoires* problematizes the way in which we read the rhetoric of the work, as this book makes statements of authorial intent and it is difficult to know how far these condition even those passages of the *Mémoires* written after 1488. However, this is not the only problem of textual integration in the *Mémoires*: a number of passages in the main body of the text can be shown to predate the conception of the work as a whole. These

¹ Thus, in a passage describing Philippe le Beau's liberation from captivity in Ghent, La Marche says of Maximilian 'il assembla son armée, où il pouvoit avoir trois mil combatans et non plus, et les mist en ordre, *comme je vous diray*.' (La Marche, III, 280, emphasis added). This addressee is clearly not Philippe le Beau, who appears in this passage in the third person.

passages must, by virtue of their having been formulated before La Marche ever thought of writing his *Mémoires*, be subject to different presentational intentions. Some of these take the form of official documents, such as the text of the Treaty of Arras and the Treaty of Soleuvre, which are not by Olivier de La Marche and which have been copied into the work without his authorial comment. However, at least one other passage seems to have been written by La Marche before the author began his *Mémoires*. The account of the wedding of Charles le Hardi and Margaret of York of 1468 takes the form of a letter written by Olivier de La Marche to his fellow *maître d'hôtel* in the court of Brittany Gilles du Mas.¹

Ne me puis tenir et passer de mettre par escript et incorporer en ces presentes Memoires les pompes, l'ordre et la maniere de faire desdictes nopces; et commenceray à la lettre que je escripviz à Gilles du Mas, maistre d'hostel de monseigneur le duc de Bretagne (La Marche, III, 101)

writes La Marche by way of introduction to the account and, although he does not say when this letter was written, the implication is that it was soon after the events in question. If this section, which forms a substantial part of the text of the *Mémoires* (100 pages in Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition), has in fact been incorporated without modification from a source written in or around 1468, it must predate the 1472 expression of the contract with the reader with which the *Mémoires* open. This would call into question the rhetorical status of this passage, and any other similar passages which can be identified, originally written for purposes other than those stated in the first introduction to the *Mémoires* but which are now read as if they were subject to the same framing narrative. It would also throw doubt upon one of the implicit assumptions of previous scholars of the *Mémoires*, namely that, apart from the 1488 Introduction, the work was composed in the order in which it is now read and therefore that chapters may be dated with reference to material contained in the chapters which precede or follow them.

¹ La Marche, III, 101-201.

The Wedding of Charles le Hardi and Margaret of York

In the case of the account of the marriage of Charles le Hardi and Margaret of York, it cannot be proven beyond doubt that the account found in the *Mémoires* was written in 1468 in the form that it appears there. However, there are indications that this is the case. Certainly the way in which the account is presented suggests that it is unmodified; the chapter begins with a salutation to Gilles du Mas and ends with ‘je suis le vostre’, as a letter might. Problems arise with the existence of another account, also signed by La Marche in a manuscript in Turin, ms gallic. codex XXI, L. V. 1, the text of which Beaune and d’Arbaumont reproduce in the fourth volume of their edition of the *Mémoires*.¹ This version begins with an introduction more appropriate to an independent account than to a letter between two fellow professionals:

Les fais et advenues louables ne se doibvent des bons souffir [sic] extaindre, mais collegier et mettre par escript, affin de perpetuelle memoire, especialement quant c’est chose catholique si digne que sacramentèle, on en doibt reciter la solempnité esmouvant les corraiges des hommes à louer Dieu, en vertu ducquel ce se fait. (La Marche, IV, 95)

The account it presents of the events surrounding the wedding differs significantly from that found in the *Mémoires*, although the basic structure of the two accounts is more or less the same. The account found in the Turin manuscript is by far the shorter of the two versions since it gives a much briefer account of the festivities that followed the wedding. Here only brief mention is made of the *entremets* portraying the twelve labours of Hercules, which were performed at the banquets, whereas the version in the *Mémoires* not only describes them in detail but also quotes the various moralising apothegms, concluding each labour, in the form of written stanzas for the audience to read. Similarly, the Turin manuscript chooses to omit the results of the jousts of the *Arbre d’or*, ‘affin que mon escript n’en soit à nul desplaisant’ (La Marche, IV, 119), while the version in the *Mémoires* does what the Turin account eschews, giving a tally of lances broken by both participants in each joust. It is, of course, possible that the

¹ La Marche, IV, 95-144.

Turin manuscript represents the original redaction of the account, written some time around 1468, and that the version found in the *Mémoires* is a revised version, written especially to fit the terms defined by that work. However, if this were the case, why would La Marche present his revised version as if it were a contemporary document? And there is further evidence to suggest that La Marche's text circulated independently in several forms, including that found in the *Mémoires*.

The Bibliothèque municipale of Valenciennes owns a manuscript, number 776, which is frequently listed as a manuscript of the *Mémoires*. Indeed, Henri Stein goes so far as to argue that it 'devait être utilisée pour une édition des Mémoires d'Olivier de la Marche'.¹ This misconception is compounded by the annotation of a nineteenth-century reader on the first folio of the manuscript, 'Memoires d'olivier de la Marche *Chap: 4. livre 2*'. Beaune and d'Arbaumont are more precise in their analysis, saying that the manuscript contains only 'une partie de la description des noces de Marguerite d'York avec Charles le Téméraire, c'est-à-dire du ch. IV du liv. II des *Mémoires*.' However, they too err in claiming that it 'ne donne [...] qu'un court fragment des *Mémoires*' and that it 'n'offre [...] que de rares et légères variantes de mots ou d'orthographe avec le texte [des autres manuscrits]' (La Marche, IV, p. cx). In fact, ms Valenciennes 776 does nothing of the sort. The text which it gives is nearly identical to that found in the *Mémoires*, but it differs significantly in two instances which demonstrate that it cannot have been copied from existing manuscripts of the *Mémoires*. Valenciennes 776 contains the Latin texts attached to the tableaux celebrating marriage which were presented at Margaret's entry into Bruges and it also contains the text of the letter presented by the *chevalier de l'arbre d'or* at the *pas d'armes* of the same name. Neither text is present in any surviving manuscript of the *Mémoires*, but both are to be found in

¹ Stein, *Olivier de La Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, p. 130. Stein, like Beaune and d'Arbaumont in their edition, lists this manuscript as Valenciennes, Bib. Mun., 581, but the details given of folios taken up by La Marche's work and (in the case of Beaune and d'Arbaumont) of the other texts contained in the manuscript indicate that this is the same volume as ms 776. La Marche, IV, pp. cix-cx.

the Turin manuscript in almost identical form to that in which they appear in Valenciennes 776. This means that Valenciennes 776 cannot have been copied directly from the *Mémoires*; its redactor must have had access to the material also contained in the Turin manuscript. Of course it is possible that Valenciennes 776 represents an intermediate stage between an original version found in the Turin manuscript and a revised version which made its way into La Marche's *Mémoires*. Indeed, there is some evidence of this, as all surviving manuscripts of the *Mémoires* contain, at the point where Valenciennes 776 gives the text of the letter, the rubric 'S'ensuit la teneur de la lettre présentée par Arbre d'or, serviteur de la dame de l'Isle celée, et aussi les chappitres faictz pour la conduite de cestuy noble pas'. This indicates that this was originally present but was removed at some stage. Nevertheless, there is evidence which suggests that this revision of the account took place shortly after the events themselves and not, as the position of the account in the *Mémoires* would suggest, in the later years of the composition of that work.

The wedding of Charles le Hardi and Margaret of York was a memorable occasion, inspiring a number of eyewitness accounts (or accounts claiming eyewitness status) in French, English, Dutch and Latin. One of these accounts, in English, omits all the details of the tournaments which accompanied the wedding on the grounds that:

To wryte of the justes that dayly was duryng the [...] ix dayes in the markett place of Brigges, ys over longe a thyng to be writtyn in this abbreviate. Garter the kyng of armys hathe it in ffrenche, and for that cause I leve to wrytt.¹

¹ London, British Library, Cotton, Nero C.IX, 173^v-177^v (177^v). There is an edition of this text, with some errors, by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 'Relation du mariage du duc Charles de Bourgogne et de Marguerite d'York', *Bulletin de la Commission Royale de Belgique*, 3rd series, 10, (1869), 245-66 (passage cited on p. 264), as well as another, reportedly equally unsatisfactory, edition by Samuel Bentley, in *Excerpta Historica* (1831), 223-39, which I have not consulted. Thomas Phillipps also produced an edition in *Archaeologia*, 31 (1846), 326-38, which Richard Firth Green claims is of a later manuscript, British Library, Additional, 46354, fols 41^v-50^v. Phillipps himself does not cite his source.

Richard Firth Green, in his edition of a seventeenth-century English excerpt from an account of the wedding, suggests that this account ‘in ffrenche’ was that of La Marche.¹ Both the account in the Valenciennes manuscript and that in the *Mémoires* devote what Green describes as a ‘considerable amount of space’ to the jousts, as indeed does the account in the Turin manuscript, although it does not say who won the individual combats. It thus seems probable that La Marche was the author of this account in French, and this becomes even more likely when it is realized that the seventeenth-century account edited by Green is an almost direct translation of the concluding paragraph of La Marche’s account as it appears in his *Mémoires* and in Valenciennes 776. The Valenciennes redaction and that of the *Mémoires* are very close at this point, so it is difficult to determine which of the two versions was the source. However, a minor difference between the Valenciennes text and that of the *Mémoires* suggests that the latter may be the account from which this English version has been copied. At the end of the passage we find this sentence:

Mémoires	Valenciennes, ms 776	Bodleian, ms Rawlinson B. 102
‘et au regard du service, il fut grant et solempnel, et de plus en plus en multiplication de platz et de viandes.’ ²	‘Et au regard du <u>service</u> jl fut grant et solennel Et de plus en plus <i>fort</i> Et en multiplication de platz et de <u>viandes</u> ’. ³	And as to the regarde of the service, it was greate and solempnell and alwaies more and more in mvtiplications of places and <u>meates</u> .’ ⁴

The evidence is not conclusive, but it seems as if the English text is following the version found in the *Mémoires*. This, in turn, suggests that the text found in the *Mémoires* was established shortly after the events of 1468, as the English herald would presumably want a record of proceedings as quickly as possible.

¹ Richard Firth Green, ‘An Account of the Marriage of Margaret of York and Charles the Bold, 1468’, *Notes and Queries*, March 1988, 26-29.

² La Marche, III, 200

³ Valenciennes, ms 776, fol. 43^r. Expanded abbreviations are indicated by underlining and added emphasis by italics.

⁴ Reproduced in Green, ‘An Account of the Marriage of Margaret of York and Charles the Bold’, p. 28.

It thus seems likely that the account of the wedding of Charles le Hardi and Margaret of York was written before La Marche formulated his original plan for his *Mémoires*. Even if this did happen shortly after the wedding in 1468, this would only make it predate the first chapters of the *Mémoires* by four years. However, there is another similar account incorporated into the *Mémoires* which must have been written by 1465 and may have been written as early as 1454. Its inclusion means that Olivier de La Marche was working on texts that we now know as his *Mémoires* over a period of at least forty and maybe even nearly fifty years. It also means that some of the texts included in the work predate the conception of the work by some ten – perhaps even twenty – years, and that this is true even if we only examine those portions written by La Marche himself and exclude the texts of documents such as the Treaty of Arras, whose status as documents is clearly signalled by the text.

The Banquet of the Pheasant

The status of the section of the *Mémoires* in question – the event known as the Banquet of the Pheasant – is far from being signalled unequivocally.¹ Indeed it is often cited as being the most representative passages of the work. Johann Huizinga refers to it in his *Herfstij der middeleeuwen* as one of the unforgettable accounts of Burgundian display.² So too do Steven Runciman and Paul Archambault and they, along with most

¹ The Banquet of the Pheasant (La Marche, II, 340-394) derives its name from the live bird that was presented to the guests in the course of the evening, to which they swore oaths to go on a crusade to recapture Constantinople. The iconography of the occasion was complex and included a representation of the story of Jason and moving table decorations, among which was a small boy urinating rosewater and a fire-breathing dragon. An analysis of this iconography can be found in Agathe Lafortune-Martel, *Fête noble en Bourgogne au XV^e siècle*, Cahiers d'études médiévales, 8 (Montreal: Bellarmin; Paris: Vrin, 1984).

² J. Huizinga, *Herfstij der middeleeuwen: Studie over levens- en gedachtenvormen der veertiende en vijftiende eeuw in Frankrijk en de Nederlanden*, 15th edn (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1982) (first published 1919), p. 261, 'Iedereen herinnert zich de beschrijvingen van die Bourgondische hoffesten, zoals het banket te Rijsel in 1454, waar de gasten bij de opgedragen fazant hun geloften aflegden, om tegen de Turk ter kruisvaart te trekken.' This is translated in *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, trans. by F. Hopman, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1924; repr. 1968) as 'Everyone has read the descriptions of the Burgundian festivities at Lille in 1454, at which the guests took the oath to undertake the crusade' (p. 239), whereas the original merely states that everyone remembers the description. I have been unable to consult the reading in the translation by Rodney J. Payton and Ulrich Mammitzsch, published as *The Autumn of the Middle Ages* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1996), which claims to correct such mistranslations. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to assume that Huizinga is imagining transmission of the account via textual intermediaries rather than purely oral means.

other commentators, do not question its status as La Marche's eyewitness account and an integral part of the *Mémoires*.¹ 'When [La Marche] in his memoirs comes to this chapter, a feeling of awe still comes over him', writes Huizinga, suggesting that the account of the banquet was written in the normal sequence of composition of the *Mémoires*.² It therefore comes as a surprise to many readers to discover that what is essentially the same text exists in four separate versions apart from the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche: three anonymous manuscripts (two containing other material and one containing only the account of the banquet) and one other complete work, the *Chronique* of Mathieu d'Escouchy. This latter work was completed some time before 1465, when its author left Péronne, the town in which he says he is living in the Prologue, which his editor believes was the last part of the work to be completed.³ This means that the account of the Banquet of the Pheasant must have been composed before 1465 if it was to make its way into d'Escouchy's *Chronique*. However, it remains debatable how close to 1465 the account was composed. There appears to have been a resurgence of interest in the Banquet of the Pheasant in the early years of the 1460s, contemporary with preparations for an expedition led by Anthoine, Bâtard de Bourgogne, which set out in 1464 but came to nothing. Two of the anonymous manuscripts, both belonging to the fonds français of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (mss 11594 and 5739), contain documents written in or describing the events of, the first years of the 1460s.⁴ It is therefore possible that the account of the events in Lille in 1454 was composed around this period to take advantage of the renewed

¹ Paul Archambault, *Seven French Chroniclers: Witnesses to History* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1974), especially 74; Steven Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople, 1453* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 166-67.

² *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, trans. by F. Hopman, p. 241; *De Herfstij der middeleeuwen*, p. 263, 'Wanneer deze in zijn gedenkschriften tot die zaken genaderd is, wordt het hem nog plechtig te moede.'

³ Mathieu d'Escouchy, *Chronique*, edited by G. du Fresne de Beaucourt, 3 vols (Paris, Société de l'Histoire de France, 1863-64), I, pp xxxix and 2.

⁴ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français, 11594, which contains an account of the Banquet of the Pheasant and an extensive record of crusading vows on fols 1-142^r follows this with a papal Bull from 1463 on fols 145-190^r while Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français, 5739 (formerly Baluze, 10319³) has a version of the account of the Banquet of the Pheasant on fols 172-226 and an account of the *Pas du Perron Féeé* of 1 January 1462 old style (i.e. 1463) on fols 136-171^v.

interest in a crusade. It is also possible that this renewed interest led to increased circulation of an account written in 1454, and this is what Pierre Cockshaw proposes when he suggests that the third anonymous account, which is the hardest of all the versions to put a date to because it is on parchment and in a volume containing no other texts, is in fact the manuscript for which Droin du Cret received five and a half francs in 1455.¹

This may or may not be the case but it can certainly be demonstrated that the manuscript in question, Brussels IV 1103, is not the original manuscript from which the other versions are copied. There are strong indications that it is copied from an earlier source to which the other versions had access. On two occasions in recording a vow, the scribe of the Brussels manuscript leaves a blank, indicating that the text was unclear at this point (fol. 50^r, fol. 55^v). In both instances d'Escouchy's *Chronique* and Paris 11594 differ in their readings (d'Escouchy, II, 209 has 'injurier' where BnF, f. fr. 11594, fol. 213^v has nothing, d'Escouchy, II, 218 has 's'ensievent' where BnF, f. fr. 11594, fol. 92^r has 'mempeschent'), while the account in La Marche's *Mémoires* does not include these vows and the remaining Paris manuscript omits these clauses altogether. This might indicate that all were copying from – and clarifying – the Brussels manuscript, were it not for the fact that on a further occasion this latter omits a line of verse which is reproduced in the four other versions, albeit with differences between them. The two Paris manuscripts, the account in La Marche's *Mémoires* and one of the manuscripts of d'Escouchy's *Chronique* have 'Froissiez vos aises acourssiez vos sommes' while the

¹ Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, IV 1103. For a discussion of the relationship between the five accounts, see Pierre Cockshaw, 'Les Vœux du faisan, étude manuscrite et établissement du texte' in *Le Banquet du faisan 1454: L'Occident face au défi de l'Empire ottoman*, ed. by Marie-Thérèse Caron and Denis Clauzel (Arras: Artois Presses Université, 1997), pp. 115-21. Cockshaw claims that there is no significant difference between the text of the five versions, and bases his analysis purely on the order and treatment of the crusading vows. In fact, there are a number of small but significant differences between the different texts which allow me to build up some picture of the textual transmission of the account. For a more extensive account of this process see my 'Who Witnessed the Banquet of the Pheasant?: A Codicological Examination of Five Versions of the Account' in *Fifteenth Century Studies*, 28, 2002, forthcoming. My conclusions as to the relationship between the five versions on the whole support those of Cockshaw, although I conclude that there is a direct link between BnF, f. fr. 11594 and the version in La Marche's *Mémoires*, whereas Cockshaw suggests only that they belong to the same manuscript family.

other d'Escouchy manuscript gives the second hemistich as 'atournissiez vos souaiz'.¹ Another line absent from the Brussels manuscript (fol. 17^v) is reproduced in La Marche's *Mémoires*, BnF, f. fr. 11594 and d'Escouchy's *Chronique* as 'Ma povrete touteffois mainteindray'², which indicates that these three sources draw on a common redaction just as the instance cited above demonstrates that all four other versions incorporate material which does not come from the Brussels manuscript.

Nevertheless, if the Brussels manuscript is not actually the source for all the other accounts of the Banquet of the Pheasant, there is reason to believe that it takes a form closer to that taken by the earliest version of the text, one which explains the idiosyncrasies of the other versions. Each version of the account of the banquet incorporates a record of at least some of the crusading vows made in the course of the festivities. Paris 11594 and the version in La Marche's *Mémoires* both place these vows after their account of the banquet itself, while d'Escouchy's *Chronique* and Paris 5739 integrate their list of vows with the account of the banquet, including them at the point where the duke swore his vow.³ The Brussels manuscript also inserts the vows into the middle of the account of the banquet but, after this account is over, it produces another vow, which it introduces thus:

Par ceste Rude maniere ay ose entreprendre De mectre par escript et enregister si haulte et noble cause comme ceste Si supplie treshumblement a mon tresredoubte et souuerainseigneur monseigneur le Duc dessusdit et a tous ceulx quj lirront et verront ceste chose quilz me vueillent mon ygnorance pardonner et mon bon vouloir auoir agreable ensemble le veu

¹ BnF, f. fr. 5739, fol. 196^v, BnF, f. fr. 11594, fol. 29^v, La Marche, II, 367, d'Escouchy, II, 162. The information on the variant readings of the d'Escouchy manuscripts is provided by his editor's comments.

² BnF, f. fr., 11594 fol. 25^v; La Marche, II, 364. D'Escouchy, II, 156 has the slight variant 'Et touteffois ma povreté maintendray'.

³ This difference of opinion as to where to place the records of the crusading vows is a consequence of more than just structural considerations on the part of the scribes. The vows were an integral part of the festivities, and some of them were indeed sworn during the course of the banquet. However, owing to the amount of time taken up by the festivities and the consequent lateness of the hour, this activity was curtailed and participants were allowed to submit their vows in writing. BnF, f. fr. 11594, the earliest manuscript to move the account of the vows to the end, contains a number of such vows as well as some sworn in other ducal territories after the banquet. There is no reason to integrate these vows into the narrative of the banquet (their authors did not view them in the same light; no mention is made in them of the pheasant to which vows were sworn in Lille) and, for the sake of completeness, the redactor moves all the vows to the end of the account.

que je faiz cy dessoubz escript pour lonneur et Reuerence De mon createur et pour le deuoir que Je dois ou seruice de mondit souuerain seigneur et prince.¹

There then follows the vow of Olivier de La Marche himself. With a few exceptions, the order of the other vows presented is the same in this Brussels manuscript, d'Escouchy's *Chronique* and BnF, f. fr. 5739.² However, the way in which the latter two versions present this separated vow by La Marche differs. In d'Escouchy's *Chronique* La Marche's vow is included at the end of the main body of the vows while in BnF, f. fr. 5739 it is omitted altogether. We may therefore conclude that the *Chronique* and BnF, f. fr. 5739, whose accounts of the vows are similar enough to be considered as a single redaction, are drawn from a source or sources which preserved this separation of La Marche's vow, and the different ways in which their scribes dealt with this fact led to its being omitted in BnF, f. fr. 5739 altogether. If this were the case, then it would seem reasonable to conclude that La Marche was indeed the author of this account which has for so long been attributed to him, as the version which appears to be closest to the original redaction claims his authorship.

The point is an important one because, of all five versions of the account of the Banquet of the Pheasant, that incorporated into the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche is the only one which can be demonstrated to derive directly from one of the other versions, that of BnF, f. fr. 11594. Moreover, the way that it has been incorporated into the *Mémoires* suggests that it was not La Marche who adapted his account for inclusion into that work. Without an indication that La Marche was the author of the original account of the Banquet of the Pheasant, therefore, we would have to question whether this was indeed the text of which he speaks in the chapter which precedes the Banquet

¹ BR, IV 1103, fol. 64^r.

² The fifteenth and sixteenth vows in d'Escouchy's *Chronique* are inverted in BnF, f. fr. 5739 while d'Escouchy's sixteenth vow appears twelfth in the Brussels sequence. One vow (that of Louis de Viesville) included in d'Escouchy and BnF, f. fr. 5739 is absent from the Brussels manuscript while four vows (those of Jean de Poitiers, Jacques de Visque, Anthoine de Rochebaron and Josse de Halwin) included in the latter are not to be found in either of the other two.

of the Pheasant in the *Mémoires*, ‘Si ay enregistré avec ceste ledit banquet, le plus largement que j’ay peu, afin d’en avoir memoire’ (La Marche, II, 340).

That the account found in La Marche’s *Mémoires* derives directly from BnF, f. fr. 11594 can be demonstrated fairly simply. The two texts have a number of features in common which distinguish them from the other four versions of the account, including the way in which they move the action from the jousts which preceded the banquet to the banquet itself and their placing of the crusading vows after the end of the account rather than in the middle of the banquet. However, there are other features that demonstrate that the version in La Marche’s *Mémoires* is taken from a source which is, or which is close to, BnF, f. fr. 11594. In the rare instances where La Marche’s *Mémoires* differ from the version found in BnF, f. fr. 11594, they also differ from all other versions of the text. One such change can be seen in the *Mémoires*’ description of the *entremets* of the *luiton*, in which this mythical creature is described as wearing ‘une jaquette juste de soye blanche, rayée de vert et chapperon tenant en sus.’¹ In all the other versions the word following ‘tenant’ is ‘ensamble’² – perhaps a more informative comment than that of the *Mémoires* which simply tells us that its hat was on its head. An instance where the *Mémoires*’ version appears to correct errors found in the other accounts may be seen in the passage where the narrator questions one of Philippe le Bon’s chamberlains on the propriety of spending money on entertainment as lavish as that of the Banquet of the Pheasant, and receives the reply:

11594/ 5739/ d’Escouchy

ces chappeletz banquetz et festoiemens qui sont [11594/ d’Escouchy: menez et] maintenus de longue main [d’Escouchy/ 5739: et de plus en plus montes et acreux] Na este sinon par la ferme entreprise et secrette desirance de

La Marche

ces chappeletz, bancquetz et festiemens, qui sont menez et maintenez de longue main, *n’ont* este sinon par la ferme entreprise et secrette desirance

¹ La Marche, II, 357.

² D’Escouchy, II, 143; BnF, f. fr. 5739, fol. 186^v; BnF, f. fr. 11594 fol. 17^r; BR, IV 1103, 12^r.

Monseigneur¹de monseigneur le duc²

Any objection that the version found in the *Mémoires* is in fact the source to which errors have then been introduced can be refuted by clear evidence that, at times, the *Mémoires* text serves specifically as a correction of BnF, f. fr. 11594. This is the case in the passage where the character *Grace Dieu*, who appears at the end of the Banquet, announces:

IV 1103/ d'Escouchy/ 5739	11594	La Marche
<p>ton veu ensemble les yceulx [5739 ensievans], procedans de bonne volente, sont agreables à <i>Dieu et à la benoigte vierge Marie sa mere</i>, qui me envoient par toute crestienté devers les empereurs, rois, ducs, princes, comtes, barons, chevalliers, escuiers ou autres bons crestiens leur presenter, <i>de par eulx</i>, douze dames...³</p>	<p>...ton veu ensamble iceulx procedans de bonne volente sont agreables <i>a Dieu</i> qui <i>menvoye</i> par toute crestiente vers empereurs rois ducz contes et autres bons crestiens leur presenter <i>de par eulz</i> xii dames⁴</p>	<p>...ton veul, ensemble iceulx procedans de bonne volenté, sont agreables à <i>Dieu</i>. A ceste cause, <i>il m'envoye</i> par toute crestienté vers Roys, ducz, contes et autres bons crestiens leur presenter <i>de par luy</i> douze dames⁵</p>

In this passage, it can be seen that ms 11594 has changed the verb to agree with the singular subject created by the omission of the reference to Mary but has failed to make the other necessary modifications, which are to be found in the *Mémoires*. Another instance where the *Mémoires* may be read as a correction of ms 11594 occurs in a description of a table decoration at a banquet held by Adolf de Clèves:

IV 1103/ d'Escouchy/ 5739	11594	La Marche
<p>auoit vng cyne dargent moult bien faicte lequel [1103/ 5739: cyne] fut aorne par le</p>	<p>‘...avoit un cygne dargent portant en son col un colier dor</p>	<p>‘...avoit ung cigne d’argent portant en son col ung collier d’or</p>

¹ BnF, f. fr. fol. 32^r; BnF, f. fr. 5739, fol. 218^r; d'Escouchy, II, 224. This passage is missing from BR IV 1103, since there is a section between folios 57 and 58 which has been lost. Variants are given between the brackets. The orthography is that of BnF, f. fr. 11594. Added emphasis is indicated by italics.

² La Marche, II, 370. The garlands mentioned are those which were passed from one host to the next in the series of banquets which led up to that of the pheasant.

³ BR, IV 1103, fol. 59^r; d'Escouchy, II 229; BnF, f. fr. 5739, fol. 220. Variants are indicated and orthography is as in d'Escouchy.

⁴ BnF, f. fr. 11594, fol. 35^v.

⁵ La Marche, II, 373.

col Dung colier dor auquel
tenoit vne longue chainne dor
Dont ledit cyne tiroit par
maniere jcelle nef
[d'Escouchy: nooit par engin
dessoubz en icelle nef.] Et a
lung des bout de *ladicte table*
seoit vng chasteaul moult
Richement et bien fait¹

auquel tenoit une
longue chaine dor
dont le dit cygne
faisoit maniere de
tirer la nef.¶ Et au
bout de *la ditte* seioit
un chasteul mout bien
fait et richement...²

auquel tenoit une
longue chaine d'or
dont ledit signe faisoit
maniere de tirer la nef,
et au bout de *ladicte*
nef seoit ung chasteul
moult bien fait et
richement...³

Here it seems that the redactor of the version in La Marche's *Mémoires* has attempted to correct the ambiguity created by the omission of the noun in ms 11594, to bewildering effect.

A further indication that the account of the Banquet of the Pheasant found in the *Mémoires* is based on BnF, f. fr. 11594 can be seen in its treatment of the crusading vows. At a first glance these two versions might seem the furthest apart for, while ms 11594 records the greatest number of vows (96 sworn at the banquet or recorded as if they had been sworn there and a further 87 sworn in the regions of Artois, Holland, Hainault and Flanders), La Marche's *Mémoires* contains only 21, far fewer than any of the other versions.⁴ However, the vows which the *Mémoires* do reproduce are presented in the same order as they appear in BnF, f. fr. 11594, an order which differs substantially from that of the other versions. It would, therefore seem that the redaction which appears in the *Mémoires* is an abstraction from the larger collection of vows found in BnF, f. fr. 11594. This raises the question as to the grounds on which the selection has been made. Many of the vows included in the *Mémoires* are taken from the early part of the sequence. This concentration on the early vows may be attributable to scribal laziness, but it may also reflect the logic of the redaction in which the first oath

¹ BR, IV 1103, fol. 1^v; BnF, f. fr. 5739, fol. 173; d'Escouchy, II, 119. The orthography is that of BR, IV 1103.

² BnF, f. fr. 11594, fol. 2^v.

³ La Marche, II, 342.

⁴ In numbering the vows I have decided to count as a single vow each separate text, regardless of the number of people making the vow, and this has put my count at odds with others (e.g. Georges Doutrepont, 'Les historiens du Banquet des Vœux du Faisan' in *Mélanges d'histoire offerts à Charles Moeller*, 2 vols (Louvain: Université de Louvain, 1914), pp. 654-70), who count two people making the same vow as two separate vows.

is that of Philippe le Bon, followed by a series of his relatives, while the final sequence is made up of household servants of these people. The special treatment accorded by the *Mémoires* to the earlier vows may well reflect the higher status of the people making the vows, and this conclusion would seem to be supported by the fact that the *Mémoires* single out the vow of Nicolas Rollin, chancellor of Burgundy, despite the fact that it occurs comparatively late in the sequence.

If the status of the individuals vowing was one criterion for selection of the vows presented in the *Mémoires*, another seems to have been the content of those vows. Three of them, those of Monseigneur de Rochefort, Jehan du Bois and Crestien and Erart de Dignonne (La Marche, II, 390-394), are particularly memorable since they express the wish to participate with the count d'Estampes in a confrontation with up to five Turks.¹ The version present in the *Mémoires* makes this vow even more memorable by omitting three further vows to the same effect in BnF, f. fr. 11594 (fols 68, 71^v-72^f, and 78^v-79^f), thereby giving the impression that there were five and only five men in the court willing to undertake such a task.

There is further evidence which supports the theory that the *Mémoires* select vows largely on the criterion of social importance but which would seem to suggest that, whoever incorporated this account of the Banquet of the Pheasant into Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires*, it was not La Marche himself. Seven of the vows included in this version belong to people which the account of the Banquet of the Pheasant has already singled out as playing a particularly important role in the event, as participants in the final *mommerie*. This may explain why the *Mémoires* include the vow of Crestien de Dignonnes and his brother (La Marche, II, 393-94) which, as the 54th vow listed in BnF, f. fr. 11594, is uncharacteristically late in the sequence to receive the attention of

¹ These are consequent upon d'Estampes' own vow that 'se je puis savoir et congnoistre qu'il y ait aucungz grans seigneurs de la compagnie dudit Grand Turc et tenans sa loy, qui ayent volenté de avoir à faire à moy, corps contre corps, deux à deux, trois à trois, quatre à quatre, ou cinq à cinq, je [...] les combatray.' (La Marche, II, 383).

the *Mémoires*. This criterion for selection could be explained by the personal interest which La Marche, as an organizer of the entertainment, took in the participants. However this raises the question as to why the vows of Jehan de Cuimbre and Philippe Pot, also named as participants in the *mommerie* and present in BnF, f. fr. 11594 record of the vows (fols 51 and 69^r-70^r), are not included in the *Mémoires*. In the case of Philippe Pot this can be explained by the form which the vow takes in BnF, f. fr. 11594, where it is attributed to ‘Monseigneur de la Roche’, Pot’s title, making it difficult to associate it with Pot. However, La Marche would presumably have been aware that these two titles referred to the same person and, had he been the person in charge of adapting the extensive account of BnF, f. fr. 11594’s vows for his *Mémoires*, he would have been able to include this vow. Similarly striking is the absence from the *Mémoires* of La Marche’s own vow, which one might expect the memorialist to consider significant, if only because of its validatory force in demonstrating that he was a participant at the events which he describes.

The account of the Banquet of the Pheasant, then, predates by some long time La Marche’s starting work on his actual *Mémoires*. It was either written in 1463, when a renewed interest in a crusade meant that such texts were popular, or it was written in 1454 or 1455 as a report on the banquet and enjoyed increased circulation around 1463. It seems likely that La Marche was the author of this original version, although none of the manuscripts which survive are the original source. The version which is actually present in La Marche’s *Mémoires* is the only one which is demonstrably copied from an existing text, and there is some indication that the person who did this was not Olivier de La Marche. How, then, did this version find its way into his *Mémoires*? One suggestion appears in Molinet’s *Chroniques*, where the author, writing after the death of La Marche, reports on a court case in which La Marche’s widow was obliged to hand over the manuscript of the *Mémoires* in order to have passages defamatory to a member

of the Lalaing family removed.¹ The fact that no trace of such violence to the text can be identified in the text we have today, suggests that the work was in a rudimentary state at this point. If this is the case, it is possible that a compiler of the *Mémoires*, seeing that La Marche claimed to have written an account of the banquet, inserted the text of one that was to hand at this stage. Manuscript 11594 was in the ducal library from 1469 and thus is the most likely to have been to hand for someone with access to La Marche's manuscript, La Marche having maintained links with the court until his death.

The question of when La Marche wrote his *Mémoires* thus becomes the rather different question of when the *Mémoires* were compiled in their current state. However, given the textual stability of the known manuscripts, it is likely that this is a question that cannot be answered unless further documents come to light, as none of the witnesses offers, for example, a version of the *Mémoires* containing the defamatory remarks against Josse de Lalaing, or without an account of the Banquet of the Pheasant. In the absence of this evidence, the least we can do is bear in mind that there is some indication that the *Mémoires* have been compiled by someone else, and that this may have consequences for the way in which we read the date of composition.

Extradiegetic References as Means of Dating the *Mémoires*

Traditionally, scholars who have attempted to determine the date of composition of the *Mémoires* have done so using extradiegetic references to historically datable events and presuming that – except where it can be proved otherwise – the work was composed in the order that it is now read. As this chapter has demonstrated, this is not a supposition which can be taken for granted: sections such as the accounts of the Banquet of the Pheasant and the marriage of Charles le Hardi and Margaret of York were written long before the material which surrounds them and possibly inserted into the work at a much

¹ Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, ed. by Georges Doutrepont and Omer Jodogne, 4 vols (Brussels: Palais des Académies, 1935-37), II, 546-48. The defamatory passages appear to have implied that Josse de Lalaing had shown favour to the rebellious citizens of Ghent.

later date, maybe even after La Marche's death. Recognition of this fact inevitably means that we must challenge one of the bases of previous use of extradiagetic references, whereby a previously established *terminus ad quem* is regarded as binding on the whole of the subsequent text. If the work was composed in sections which were only later arranged to form the *Mémoires*, then it becomes important to date these individual sections on their own terms before concluding whether or not we now read them in the order in which they were written. However, in order to do this, it is necessary to determine what constitutes a section of Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires*.

The description of the print and manuscript traditions which precedes demonstrates the extent to which the chapters established by Sauvage cannot be regarded as marking natural textual divisions in the *Mémoires*. In the context of a manuscript tradition which is surprisingly structurally homogeneous, particularly as far as paragraph divisions are concerned, Sauvage's chapters, which occasionally cut through paragraphs recognized by all the surviving manuscripts, cannot be regarded as indicative of sections in the original composition of the work. I have therefore chosen to base my examination on divisions which can be established using the rubrics and headings which are to be found in manuscripts *Par* and *H*. Of course, these headings do not necessarily represent authorial divisions of the material – indeed they are in all probability scribal rather than authorial – but they do represent a very early reader response to the text based on what the rubricator perceived as continuity in the subject matter. If we are to presume that the author did not interrupt his work in the middle of a section dealing with a single subject, then rubrications such as those in *Par* and *H*, indicating continuity of subject with headings such as 'Encores du Seigneur de Charny', are useful tools in determining what, to the fifteenth-century mind, constituted a single subject. On the basis of this rubrication, therefore, I have divided the *Mémoires* into thirty-nine sections of unequal length (ranging from 919 words to 27,215) and have

examined everything that might be considered an extradiagetetic reference. I have not, at this stage, rejected any date which this examination has suggested, not least because, as will become apparent, there are conflicts even within the sections indicated by *Par* and *H* and even over the space of adjacent sentences. The results of this examination are reproduced in the table below:

Number	Page Span	Content	<i>Terminus ad quem</i>	<i>Terminus a quo</i>
1	I, 1-42	History of Austria	July 1488 ¹	22 July 1488 1490 19 August 1493 ²
2	I, 42-106	History of Burgundian House	1481? ³	
3	I, 107-16	Accounts of famous bastards		
4	I, 116-21	Short history of England		
5	I, 121-77	Charles le Hardi's Life, War in the Low Countries	23 June 1483 ⁴	6 December 1491 ⁵ 1493
6	I, 177-81	Conclusion of Book One	7 April 1498 ⁶	
7	I, 182-87	Introduction to the <i>Mémoires</i>	July, or more probably 6 November 1473 ⁷	2 May 1473 13 February 1475 ⁸ ?1471? ⁹
8	I, 187-95	The Author's First Memory		1477 ¹⁰
9	I, 195-206	Death of Jean Sans-Peur	1455 ¹¹	
10	I, 207-38	Text of the Treaty of Arras	Written in 1435	
11	I, 238-83	Events in Burgundy	1460 ¹²	
12	I, 283-334	Charny <i>Pas d'armes</i>		
13	II, 1-52	Luxemburg Wars	1471 ¹³	
14	II, 52-63	Further Events in Burgundy	1460 ?1471? ¹⁴	1488
15	II, 64-79	Ternant <i>Pas d'armes</i>		
16	II, 79-96	Festival of the <i>Toison d'or</i> in Ghent	1451 (probably much later) ¹⁵	
17	II, 96-111	Jacques de Lalaing's Exploits		
18	II, 111-42	Preparations for Combat		1477, 1481 ¹⁶
19	II, 142-204	<i>Pas de la fontaine des pleurs</i>	1461, 4 July 1471, 1472 ¹⁷	
20	II, 205-211	Events in the Low Countries		
21	II, 211-340	Ghent Wars	4 July 1471, 1472 ¹⁸	13 February 1475 ¹⁹
22	II, 340-94	Banquet of the Pheasant	1454	1465 ²⁰
23	II, 394-401	Saint-Pol/Croy Wedding	1472, 1473 ²¹	
24	II, 401-407	Combats in Valenciennes	1488 1489 1494 ²²	
25	II, 407-427	Events in the Low Countries	1488, 1494 ²³	
26	III, 1-7	Events in the Ducal Family		
27	III, 7-26	<i>Guerre du Bien Public</i>		
28	III, 26-35	Inter-War Period	1476, ²⁴ 1488 ²⁵ , 1500 ²⁶	20 March 1501
29	III, 35-68	Liège War	1474 ²⁷	
30	III, 68-88	Continued War	1478 ²⁸	
31	III, 88-101	Siege of Neuss		
32	III, 101-201	York Wedding	Probably written in or around 1468	
33	III, 201-214	Various Events, Wars		
34	III, 214-34	Treaty of Souleuvre	Written in 1475	
35	III, 234-42	Charles le Hardi's Final Years	13 October 1472, 24 November 1492 ²⁹	
36	III, 242-64	Maximilian's Early Years	1494, 1498 ³⁰	
37	III, 264-84	Wars in the Low Countries		
38	III, 284-304	Maximilian Consolidates Power	27 December 1494 ³¹	
39	III, 304-319	Acts of the Austrians	Written in or around 13 June 1501 ³²	

¹ La Marche, I, 34 describes Frederick III returning to Germany after his intervention in a dispute between Maximilian and the city of Ghent. This return took place in July 1488.

² These three dates are based on the fact that La Marche refers to Mathius Corvinus, king of Hungary (d. 1490) and the Emperor Frederick III (d. 19 August 1493) saying that both men are still alive (La Marche, I, 27, 34). The earliest date is the most problematic, because, taken in conjunction with the *terminus ad quem* for this section, it provides a very short period in which the section could have been composed. La Marche, addressing Philippe le Beau, writes ‘vous estes à l’heure presente sous dix ans’. As Philippe had been born on 22 July 1478, this should place the composition of the passage before 22 July 1488. However, as many frustrated students of La Marche have noted, the author makes a number of contradictory statements about his own date of birth in the course of his *Mémoires*, and this might suggest that birthdays were not a subject on which he was always entirely accurate, so this could be read as an approximate rather than an accurate date.

³ La Marche, I, 73, says that the only two surviving members of the house of Burgundy (i.e. with the surname Bourgogne) are ‘monsieur Jehan de Bourgoingne, conte de Nevers et de Reetel, et la contesse de Engoulesme, sa fille’. Henri Beaune & Jules d’Arbaumont, *La Noblesse aux États de Bourgogne de 1350 à 1789* (Dijon: Lamarche, 1864), p. 243 gives the name of the last surviving member of this family as Jeanne, who was the illegitimate daughter of Claude (not Jean) de Montaigu. However, he died in 1470, and she was not made legitimate until 1481, although she did marry the Count of Angoulême. It is thus not clear whether these are the people of whom La Marche is speaking, as Jeanne did not have the right to her family name while her father was alive. If she is the countess of whom La Marche writes, the section must have been written after her legitimization and marriage.

⁴ La Marche, I, 163 describes the engagement of Marguerite de Bourgogne and the future Charles VIII of France, which took place on 23 June 1483. Furthermore, as Charles is described as king of France in this passage and in I, 134, the section must have a *terminus a quo* of 1493.

⁵ Marguerite de Bourgogne is described as queen of France (La Marche, I, 156), which means that the passage must predate her divorce on 6 December 1491

⁶ La Marche, I, 180, describes the death of Charles VIII, which took place on this date.

⁷ Michael Zingel has concluded that the section must have been concluded after this date because La Marche, I, 185 refers to Charles le Hardi using all his titles, including ‘duc [...] de Gueldres’, a title which he acquired by conquest in July 1473 and adopted officially in November of that year. However, it should be noted that this date is in conflict with the earlier *terminus a quo* based on the date that Chastelain was made a knight, which appears on the same page. My own impression is that it is this date which should be accepted, as the ducal title is liable to scribal interference, arising from the fact that court scribes would be used to composing documents giving all the duke’s titles.

⁸ La Marche, I, 184 refers to George Chastelain as ‘ce très vertueux escuyer’. Chastelain was made a knight on 2 May 1473. Moreover, La Marche, I, 185 makes it clear that Chastelain is still alive, providing a date prior to 1475.

⁹ La Marche I, 186 asserts that ‘j’aproche quarante et cinq ans’, which would provide the clearest indication possible of when the text was written were La Marche’s date of birth to be known to us. However, this is not the case and a number of dates have been suggested, both for the author’s birth and for the composition of this passage. Most recent work (for example, that of Alistair Millar) has suggested a birthdate of around 1426, and the assertion that this passage was written no later than his 45th birthday, gives a *terminus a quo* of 1471. Again, given La Marche’s uncertainty with dates of birth, I do not believe this is a date to which undue weight should be given.

¹⁰ Charles le Hardi is still alive.

¹¹ Writing of the Treaty of Arras, 1435, La Marche says that he collected a copy of the treaty ‘plus de vingt ans après’. This is a vague term and should not be regarded as dating the passage exactly. However, it is perhaps indicative that this would place La Marche’s interest in the document to 1455, the year after the author’s first recorded literary activities, the entertainment at (and probably the official account of) the Banquet of the Pheasant, and a play performed for Charles d’Orléans, discussed in more detail in chapter four of this thesis. Perhaps, after this literary success, La Marche was already considering writing his *Mémoires* at this point, and wanted to collect material for them.

¹² The indications given in this section of text are inconclusive, and must stand as a warning for students of this text who regard verb tenses as useful pointers to when a particular section was written. Hence, one might be tempted to read La Marche’s use of the perfect tense in his comment on Jacques de Lalaing (La Marche, I, 268) ‘lequel a depuis tant cuilly et monsté de vertuz, d’honneur et de vaillance, que cy après je auray assez affaire à besonger pour declairer et pour escrire le exercite chevaleureuse de sa vie’ as an indication that the passage had been written while Lalaing was still alive. However, Jacques de Lalaing died in 1454, before La Marche appears to have begun any work on his *Mémoires* proper, and so it is much more plausible that the author’s reference to Lalaing’s life should be regarded as a comment on the aggregate of his achievement and that the present element of the composite tense be considered as not intended to indicate his continued existence. I base the *terminus ad quem* of 1460 on La Marche’s description (La Marche, I, 279-80) of deliberations within the Burgundian hierarchy ‘à ce que j’entendiz

et sceuz deppuis'. This information is thus presumably the outcome of the author's increasing familiarity with the inner circles of Burgundian power, something which he acquired over the decade 1460-70.

¹³ La Marche, II, 18, refers to an archer called Martre, 'bel homme, vaillant et renommé, et lequel fut depuis archier du corps du duc'. This 'corps du duc' is almost certainly one of the companies of ordinance whose establishment in 1471 is described in Marie-Thérèse Caron, *La Noblesse dans le duché de Bourgogne 1315-1477* (Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille, 1987), p. 132.

¹⁴ A reference to 'le Roy d'Escoce present', the son of a niece of Philippe le Bon, demonstrates that this was written during the reign of James III (1460-88). For details of his reign, see Peter Gibson, *The Concise Guide to Kings and Queens: A Thousand Years of European Monarchy* (Exeter: Webb & Bower, 1985), p. 84. Michael Zingel argues that the passage describing the establishment of the French companies of ordinance (La Marche, II, 63) was written in the light of the similar developments in the Burgundian army in 1471.

¹⁵ Beaune and d'Arbaumont point out a number of inconsistencies in La Marche's account of the events of 1445, the most striking of which is that one of the knights whom La Marche cites as being present, the Seigneur de Montagu (La Marche, II, 84), was not made a knight until 1451 and that another, Florimond de Brimeu, was absent from the festival in 1445, having died earlier that year. They conclude, persuasively, that not only was the section written after Montagu's knighting in 1451, but at a great remove from the events described, when the author could confuse events of possibly several decades before. A further indication that this was the case comes from the presence of Jean de Bretagne, receiving the order at the Ghent gathering (La Marche, II, 95). This, as Beaune and d'Arbaumont demonstrate, is not only inaccurate (he received the order in 1440), but was an impossibility, for the knight in question had died in 1442.

¹⁶ La Marche II, 118 refers to Charles le Hardi, 'à present mon souverain seigneur et maistre', whereas La Marche, II, 137 speaks of Alfonso (reigned 1438-81) as the current king of Portugal.

¹⁷ La Marche, II, 145 says that since 1450, a church of the reformed Franciscans has been built on the Île de Saint-Laurent in Chalon-sur-Saône. This church was consecrated in 1461: Marie-Thérèse Suhard-Maréchal, *Saint-Laurent* (Chalon-sur-Saône: Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Chalon-sur-Saône, 1994), pp. 76-77. I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mme. J. Giustiniani, secretary of the society, for her assistance in obtaining this information. The dates in the 1470s are based on the evidence of verb tenses which, as we saw above, is not the most reliable evidence. A reference (La Marche, II, 148) to 'Pierre, seigneur de Goux, [...] qui depuis fut chancelier', suggests by its use of the preterite, not only that the passage was written after de Goux's appointment as chancellor in 1461, but also after his death in 1471. A subsequent reference to Amé, Seigneur de Rabustin 'fut tenu de son temps l'ung des vaillans, saiges, plaisans et courtois chevaliers qui fust en Bourgoingne', is even more explicit in suggesting that the subject is dead, both by the double use of the preterite and the reporting of others' opinions of him, formed during his lifetime which is, by implication, over. Rabustin died at the Battle of Beauvais in 1472.

¹⁸ The statement (La Marche, II, 326) that 'Pierre de Goux fut l'ung des adroitiz hommes de conseil qui fust en son temps', similarly suggests strongly that this section was written after the chancellor's death. In addition, Michael Zingel reads La Marche, II, 240, 'plus de vingt ans après, il [an archer who fought in the Ghent wars] mourut contre les François devant Corbie, archier des ordonnances, soubz ma charge' as a reference to the wars against France in 1472, during which La Marche had charge of a company.

¹⁹ La Marche II, 310 suggests that George Chastelain is writing a history of the events described in the *Mémoires*, which indicates that this passage was written before his death.

²⁰ See notes above on when this account was composed.

²¹ La Marche, II, 396 refers to 'la fille aînée du duc d'Yorc qui depuis fut duchesse d'Exestre'. If the preterite tense can be read as an indication that the woman in question (Lady Anne, eldest daughter of Richard of York) is no longer duchess of Exeter then this section was probably composed after her divorce from her husband, Henry Holland, on 12 November 1472, or after he was found dead in the sea in 1473, *The Official Baronage of England Showing the Succession, Dignities and Offices of Every Peer from 1066 to 1885* ed. by James E. Doyle, 3 vols (London: Longman, 1886), I, 712-13.

²² La Marche, II, 403 refers to another work, already completed, by La Marche – the *Le Livre de l'avis du gaigne de bataille*. In the prologue to this work in turn, the author refers to yet another of his works, *Le Parement et triumphe des dames*, and to the 1488 Book One of the *Mémoires*. *Le Parement et triumphe des dames* can be dated to 1488 by its codicil, but Henri Stein, claiming that Victor Gay dates *Le Parement et triumphe des dames* to 1492, places the composition even later than this, to 1493 or 1494, basing his conclusions on the stylistic qualities of the piece which he argues are characteristic of La Marche's later work. In fact Gay, in his *Glossaire Archéologique du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance*, 2 vols (2nd volume revised and completed by Henri Stein) (Paris: Picard, 1887-1926; facsimile edition, Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1967), similarly cites La Marche's work as evidence of female headgear in his article 'Chaperon' (I, 332). The date he gives for the work is not 1492 but V. 1492, (that is around 1492). However, Stein's later date is in accordance with the date of 1494 which he attributes to *Le Livre de*

l'avis du gaige de bataille, without any independent justification: Stein, *Olivier de La Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, pp. 122, 125.

²³ La Marche, II, 412 refers to Anne de Beaujeu, a child of Louis XI born during his Burgundian exile as 'madame de Bourbon d'à present', a title that she acquired in 1488 after the death of her brother-in-law, Jean II de Bourbon (*Livre d'Or de la noblesse européenne*, ed. by M. le conte de Girondan [vol. 5 in a series of 5 with slightly different titles and different editors] (Paris: Collège héraldique et archéologique de France, 1852), pp. 10-11). A reference to Philippe le Beau as 'Monseigneur l'Archiduc qui est à présent' (La Marche, II, 410) presumably dates the section to after his accession to this title, 9 September 1494.

²⁴ The use of tenses in La Marche, III, 28, which describes 'Jehan Carondelet, qui depuis a esté chancelier de Bourgoingne' and 'Guillaume Hugonet, qui depuis fut chancelier de Bourgoingne', suggests that the former is still alive, whereas the latter has died, and despite the difficulties presented by verb tenses in dating other passages of the *Mémoires*, this is a possibility as Hugonet was killed in 1476 while Carondelet appears to have lived until 1501. Frédéric de Reiffenberg, 'Catalogue de la bibliothèque de Guillaume Hugonet, chancelier de Bourgogne, dressé après la mort de ce seigneur décapité par les Gantois en 1476', *Comptes-rendus des séances de la commission royale d'histoire*, 2 (1837-38), 120-27. I have not been able to confirm the date of Carondelet's death using any printed source, but it is a fact which for some reason appears on a number of websites listing births and deaths for 20 March. Amongst these is <http://www.invercarron.com/today/0320.htm>.

²⁵ La Marche, III, 27 makes another reference to Anne de Beaujeu 'qui de present est duchesse de Bourbon'.

²⁶ A reference to 'l'evesque de Verdun, qui estoit de ceulx de Heraucourt', suggests that the bishop, Guillaume de Harcourt (d. 1500), is no longer alive. However, as is demonstrated by instances cited above, tenses of verbs are not always reliable indicators of the date of composition of a section of the *Mémoires* and this should be borne in mind when considering this as *terminus ad quem*.

²⁷ Describing Philippe le Bon's initial burial (La Marche, III, 58), La Marche tells us that the body was later reburied in Dijon. This took place in 1474.

²⁸ La Marche, III, 70 describes the death of the Duke of Clarence.

²⁹ La Marche, III, 237 says of Louis de Bruges, Seigneur de Gruthuse, 'et deppuis luy donna le Roy d'Angleterre une conté, et luy fit des biens largement'. In fact Louis became Earl of Winchester in 1472 and the fact that the preterite rather than the perfect tense is used may indicate that, by the time that this section was composed, Louis was already dead, which gives rise to the latter of the two dates here, *The Official Baronage of England*, III, 698-99.

³⁰ La Marche, III, 252 describes the birth of Philippe le Beau 'qui est à present nostre prince' while the subsequent birth of his sister, Marguerite de Bourgogne, is described in the context not only of her divorce from the king of France but also of her second marriage to a prince of Castille, and his death, which took place on 4 October 1497. This misfortune, La Marche suggests, was made all the greater because 'il laissa madicte dame grosse d'ung filz qui ne vesquit pas longuement'. As Beaune and d'Arbaumont point out, the child was in fact a girl, who died in 1498.

³¹ La Marche III, 299 mentions a herald 'à present roy d'armes de Hainnaut' dispatched to give a message to Philippe de Ravenstein from his father. Gilles de Rebecques, appointed to the post of Hainaut in December 1494, later married a member of the Ravenstein household (18 December 1496), so it is plausible to assume that this is the man of whom La Marche writes, given that he seems to have had the personal connections of that man. Rebecques remained roi d'armes de Hainaut until his death around 1507. For details of his biography, see Robert Wellens, 'Notes biographiques sur Gilles de Rebecques, roi d'armes de Hainaut', *Annales du cercle archéologique du canton de Soignies*, 23 (1964), 108-11. I would like to thank Véronique Jottrand of L'Oiseau Lire bookshop for helping me to procure this information.

³² Date given La Marche III, 310.

Linguistic Evidence for Dating Sections of the *Mémoires*

The extradiegetic references within the *Mémoires* confirm the pattern described thus far: certain sections of the work (10, 22, 32, 34) were written independently of the rest of the text and inserted into it while the earliest sections intended for inclusion in the *Mémoires* were written between 1472 and 1475 (7, 21) the later period of composition dates to between 1488 and 1501 (1, 5, 24, 25, 28, 35, 36 and 39) and, within this period, there is evidence that some sections were completed before 1494 (1, 5) and that some were started after this date (6, 25, 28, 36). It will be noted that the texts which can be dated to before 1494 all appear within the 1488 Book One, whereas most of the sections attributable to after this date occur in the main body of the *Mémoires*. Conventionally the view has been that, when La Marche returned to his work in 1488, he worked on both the new Book One, and the remaining sections of his history, finishing all but the final section of the former before 1493 and working on the latter until his death. The evidence derived from the extradiegetic references in the work suggests that there may have been three periods of activity on the *Mémoires*, the first between 1471 and 1475, the second between 1488 and 1493 in which the revised Book One was composed and the third between 1494 and 1501, during which most of La Marche's efforts were concentrated on adding material to the main body of the text. However, the extradiegetic references cannot, in themselves, prove this point. There are many sections which do not supply datable references or where the references supplied are so general as to be of little help in providing a precise date for the passage. If, however, the extradiegetic indications can be combined with linguistic evidence which suggests which passages share linguistic features and are therefore likely to have been composed at a similar period, a more precise, generalized, picture of the composition of the *Mémoires* can be formed.

In attempting to identify linguistic evidence, I have employed, as far as possible the methodology of forensic linguistics, one of the major aims of which is to identify the author of a particular text.¹ This aim is thought achievable because every speaker of a language has his or her peculiar idiolect.² This idiolect is not simply ‘the uniqueness of an individual’s speech’ at one particular instant in time, but the aggregate of all the written and spoken styles adopted by a single speaker over the course of a lifetime.³ The recognition of the existence of changing styles in a speaker’s idiolect means that we can envisage a methodology that subjects texts produced at different periods of an author’s life to the same sort of analysis which is brought to bear on texts whose authorship is disputed, with a view to identifying features which are characteristic of a particular period of the writer’s output.

Of course, there are limitations to this approach, some of which are inherent in the discipline of forensic linguistics which, as Malcolm Coulthard points out, is still in its infancy and

just like literary stylistics in its early days, is currently still developing its methodology, almost case by case or text by text. Only when it is clear on which linguistic features it is useful to focus will it be possible to create a battery of tests and begin to automate the analysis.⁴

Other limitations arise from the nature of the text to be examined which, in contrast to many of the texts which are the object of analysis by forensic linguists, is a literary text,

¹ An introduction to forensic linguistics and a comprehensive bibliography is provided in Sarah Sreenan, ‘Forensic Linguistics: Lexical Density Analysis of Disputed Statements’, *Teangeolas, Iris Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann/ Journal of the Linguistics Institute of Ireland*, 37 (1998), 14-23. Following John Gibbons’s ‘Introduction to Forensic Linguistics (in *Language and the Law*, ed. by John Gibbons (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 319-25), Sreenan points out that the identification of the author of a disputed text is only one of the ends to which forensic linguistics is used, others concentrating on comprehension – whether an individual or group could understand a text.

² The concept of the idiolect and its place in forensic linguistics is discussed in Malcolm Coulthard’s articles, *Questioning Statements: Forensic Applications of Linguistics*, (Birmingham: ELR, 1995) and ‘Explorations in Applied Linguistics 3: Forensic Stylistics’, in *Principle and Practice in Applied Linguistics: Studies in Honour of H. G. Widdowson*, ed. by Guy Cook and Barbara Seidlhofer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 229-43

³ Michael Gregory and Susanne Carroll, *Language and Situation: Language Varieties and their Social Contexts* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), provides a useful introduction to this concept of idiolect as a unique and evolving feature of an individual’s language use. The quotation is taken from p. 23.

⁴ Coulthard, ‘Explorations in Applied Linguistics 3: Forensic Stylistics’, p. 231.

mediated by the process of scribal copying and later editorial intervention. This process is likely to filter out the performance mistakes (lapses in spelling or in the application of standard grammatical rules) and many of the competence errors (idiosyncrasies produced by a speaker operating with a non-standard set of rules) which so often prove decisive in forensic applications of linguistics.¹ The absence of punctuation in the medieval text also means that any analysis based on the position of words in sentences, such as that proposed by Andrew Q. Morton and Wilfrid Smith, is a time-consuming process which cannot be disentangled from the subjectivity of the analyst who decides what is to be considered a sentence.² For this reason, although I do not rule out the possibility of undertaking such analysis at a later date, I did not consider it practicable to do so within the scope of this thesis. I did, however, examine text which was given positional prominence by virtue of its being placed at the beginning or end of a paragraph, but found this to be dependent more on the content of the material than on any discernable stylistic considerations subject to change over time. By contrast, the sections of the *Mémoires* to be examined present a number of advantages over other texts typically studied by forensic linguists (such as confessions, suicide notes and threatening letters) in that they tend to be longer than them and therefore present a more sustained picture of their author's language use.³ Moreover, the demand of forensic

¹ This distinction between performance mistakes and competence errors and a description of their contribution to forensic linguistics can be found in Coulthard, 'Explorations in Applied Linguistics 3: Forensic Stylistics' and *Questioning Statements: Forensic Applications of Linguistics*. Scribal and editorial interference in orthography is particularly regrettable for, as Dionysis Goustos points out in his review article 'Forensic Stylistics', *Forensic Linguistics, The International Journal of Speech, Language and the Law*, 2:1 (1995), 99-113, 'It seems that spelling is such a reliable feature in author identification because it is precisely unconscious and cannot be easily manipulated.' pp. 110-11. The introduction of a third (or fourth, or fifth) party into the process of textual transmission also introduces an element of conscious control, correction or manipulation which means that orthographical features cannot reliably be regarded as authorial.

² Wilfrid Smith, 'Computers, Statistics and Disputed Authorship' in *Language and the Law*, ed. by John Gibbons (London: Longman, 1994), pp. 374-413.

³ Wilfrid Smith, in 'Computers, Statistics and Disputed Authorship', seems to suggest that the ideal length for a text sample to determine characteristic features of an author's idiolect is 6,000 words, when he suggests that two text samples should ideally be used and that 'If they are relatively brief (each consisting of about 3000 words), they would have to be combined for tests of prescribed positions and collocations and a check for each author's own variation would have to be omitted.' (p. 410). Thirteen of the 39 sections of the *Mémoires* are longer than 6,000 words, although it must be noted that Smith's

linguists that the texts examined be commensurable, that is resemble each other 'as much as possible, not only in mode but in audience, register, purpose, and time of composition', is met in large measure by the fact that most of the sections of the *Mémoires* were composed for inclusion in the same work.¹

Despite these apparent advantages, many of the tests which I have attempted to apply to the *Mémoires* have simply served to throw doubt on the assumptions of forensic linguistics, suggesting that linguistic habits are more dependent upon context than might be imagined so that, for example, La Marche only opens a paragraph with a reference to the sources on which he bases his account in sections 1, 2, 6 and 7, that is to say, in those sections which take the form of prologues to his own history, but these were written in three different decades. Moreover, an analysis of the collocations of words without lexical content, such as the pairs 'ne se', 'mais il', 'et par' – even one in which word counts are normalized to give the number of occurrences per thousand words – produces results which differ more according to the length of a text than according to the text's author.² Thus, in a study of 47 such pairs, selected from a computer-generated list because they occurred in the text as a whole more than fifty times, sections 10 and 34 (containing the texts of treaties and therefore not written by La Marche) do present a comparatively large number of anomalous results, that is to say results which differ from the mean frequency of this pair by more than one standard

methodology has been developed to address the problem of disputed *literary* (rather than forensic texts) and this sets him apart from other practitioners of forensic linguistics. After all, the threatening letter which runs to 6,000 words must be a rarity.

¹ Richard W. Bailey, 'Authorship Attribution in a Forensic Setting' in *Advances in Computer-Aided Literary and Linguistic Research: Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium on Computers in Literary and Linguistic Research* ed. with an introduction by D. E. Ager, F. E. Knowles and Joan Smith (Birmingham: Aston University, Department of Modern Languages, 1979), pp. 1-20 (p. 9).

² A definition of lexical items and of lexical density (the ratio of lexical items to total words in a text) can be found in Jean Ure, 'Lexical density and register differentiation' in *Applications of Linguistics: Selected Papers of the Second International Congress of Applied Linguistics, Cambridge 1969* ed. by G. E. Perren and J. L. M. Trim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 445-52. The length of La Marche's *Mémoires* has made it impossible to subject them to this sort of analysis within the scope of this thesis, however, this is an avenue which might profitably be explored at a later date.

deviation (13 for the Treaty of Arras, 11 for that of Souleuvre).¹ However, this number is matched and even surpassed in several of the shorter sections.² Similarly, the longest section, number 21, is the only one to present no instances which differ significantly from the mean. It has long been recognized that text length has a great impact on analysable features of the text, such as the type/token ratio, but my findings suggest that it also affects other measures of frequency in a text and, until a more sophisticated way of taking text length into account can be elaborated, all conclusions based on the frequency of a feature must be regarded as provisional.³

Nevertheless, it is possible to draw some tentative conclusions, which suggest that the hypothesis of three major periods of activity on the *Mémoires* is correct. The collocation *et + definite article*, which is frequent throughout the text of the *Mémoires*, is particularly common in the final sections of the text, with four of six sections more than one standard deviation greater than the mean of 6.4 per thousand words occurring in the final ten sections (including the only section differing by more than two standard deviations). By contrast, the opening five sections are all within one standard deviation of the mean, but slightly below it. A similar pattern is produced in the case of the collocation *et + ainsi*, while it is reversed in that of *de + ce*. Such instances suggest that La Marche was not working on sections 24-29 of the *Mémoires* at the same time as he was writing sections 1-5.

¹ I selected these pairs because I felt that they fitted Bailey's demands that features tested should be salient, structural, frequent, easily quantifiable and relatively immune from conscious control. (Bailey, 'Authorship Attribution in a Forensic Setting', p. 10. For a description of statistical methodology, see Douglas Biber, *Variation Across Speech and Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)

² For example, section 4 (a section of 1,083 words) has 22 anomalous results, section 26 (3,711 words) has 18. For comparison, section 10 has 8,308 words and section 34 4,824.

³ A discussion of the shortcomings of the type/token ratio (the number of different words divided by the number of total words in the text), together with a range of alternative methods for measuring vocabulary diversity can be found in Roderick L. Johnson, 'Measures of Vocabulary Diversity', in *Advances in Computer-Aided Literary and Linguistic Research: Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium on Computers in Literary and Linguistic Research* ed. with an introduction by D. E. Ager, F. E. Knowles and Joan Smith (Birmingham: Aston University, Department of Modern Languages, 1979), pp. 213-227. Johnson's proposals focus on tests for the overall lexical diversity of a text, although it might be possible to apply some of his statistical methods to an examination of individual features.

This conclusion is corroborated by some evidence relating to lexical items. Following the work of Michael Stubbs, I investigated the semantic prosody of around 150 frequently occurring words in the *Mémoires*.¹ Many of the relations thus uncovered appear to be context-dependent and some of the more suggestive relations proved not to be between a word and a number of semantically related items but between a word and a number of variant forms of the same headword.² Thus, a surprising interrelation between the concept of ‘honneur’ and that of ‘honte’ which occurs in three of the later sections (24, 34 and 35) is not related to a general conceptual linking of honour and shame in La Marche’s later work, but to the use of a specific figure, in which actions are compared on an axis of which the two concepts form opposite poles. Thus, in section 24 (La Marche, II, 407), La Marche reports that spectators regarded the mortal combat between Jacotin Plouvier and Mahuot as being ‘plus honte que honneur’, the Burgundian army (La Marche III, 75) is reported as having had ‘plus d’honneur que de honte’ while the French court returns Marguerite de Bourgogne to the Habsburg court after her divorce because they believe that to do otherwise would bring them ‘plus de honte que d’honneur’ (La Marche, III, 260). This usage is not conditioned by context, as the analysis is applicable to any situation which invites a moral judgement, but it is a feature only of the later sections of the *Mémoires*.³ The euphony of the phrase might indicate that it is a figure which suggested itself to La Marche at a time when his role within the court was increasingly that of occasional poet and when those such as Molinet were active in court circles were elaborating rules of poetic rhetoric. On the

¹ The semantic prosody of a word is defined by Stubbs in his article ‘Corpus Evidence for Norms of Lexical Collocation’, From *Principle and Practice in Applied Linguistics: Studies in Honour of H. G. Widdowson*, ed. by Guy Cook and Barbara Seidlhofer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 245-56. The analysis of the semantic prosody of a word goes beyond the simple analysis of individual collocates and attempts to define semantic relations between collocates which demonstrate, for example, whether the prosody of a particular item is positive or negative.

² Stubbs defines the headword, which can also be called the lemma or lexeme, as the word that appears in the dictionary, not subject to any of the morphological changes which can be applied to it.

³ A further instance where ‘honte’ and ‘honneur’ are in proximity (La Marche II, 262) does not fall into the same category because it occurs in reported speech – that of the comte de Saint-Pol – and takes the form of an implied rather than a grammatical comparison. In it, La Marche reports Saint-Pol’s belief that ‘il acquiert assez honneur qui se garde de honte’.

other hand, it may simply be a phrase which became part of La Marche's idiolect in later life. Other collocations seem to typify periods of the author's activity: 'faire' + 'grand' (where 'grand' qualifies the direct object of 'faire') is frequent throughout the *Mémoires* but is most frequent in sections 1-5 and 25-31, 33, 36 and 39, that is to say the period of composition after 1488. Of course, these must be preliminary conclusions and will be open to reinterpretation in the light of either more precise dates emerging from extradiegetic references or a more complete forensic methodology. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to conclude from the present evidence that La Marche's *Mémoires* were written in three main phases: 1472-75, 1488-91 and 1494(?) - 1501.

The idea that the 1488 Book One was not written at a time when La Marche was working on the main text of his *Mémoires* may go some way to explaining why the projected work described in that book is not reflected in the main text of the *Mémoires*. Similarly, it must be recognized that comparatively little of the main text was composed after 1488: only the portion after La Marche, II, 407 in Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition dates from that period, and even that contains 130 pages devoted to the York wedding and the reproduction of the Treaty of Souleuvre. Alistair Millar's reading of the *Mémoires* as a Habsburg document must, therefore, be modified to some extent: they are in part a product of La Marche's Habsburg years but in arguing this we should not lose sight of the fact that much of the text was written in the Valois court of Burgundy, and the most important decisions about the form the *Mémoires* were to take were made during this period. Nor should we lose sight of the fact that La Marche's text is unrecoverable, whether we read the *Mémoires* in manuscript or printed edition: no easy transmission from one version to the next can be traced and the question of whether or not the sections we now identify were put together by an unknown compiler cannot currently be answered, however much this seems probable.

Alistair Millar makes a persuasive case for La Marche's interest in his *Mémoires* in 1472 and 1488 being a response to major events in Burgundian politics which also affected the author personally – the loss of his ancestral lands in wars with France in the first instance and then the imprisonment of Philippe le Beau in Ghent and his subsequent liberation. Having argued that there is a third period of activity on the *Mémoires*, after 1494, it might be expected that I would suggest a similar motivation for this. Indeed, one would not have far to look; Philippe le Beau was appointed ruler of the Burgundian Netherlands in 1494. However, the logic of providing this justification is problematic as the extradiegetic references which suggest a date of 1494 tend to be references to Philippe's accession. That 1494 is the *terminus ad quem* does not mean that it was actually in that year that La Marche began to write again, simply that this was a politically significant year which marked his subsequent output. This output may have been prompted by Philippe's accession, but it may have had other justifications, maybe stemming from events in the author's private life, and it is the *Mémoires'* treatment of this life which will be the subject of the following chapter.

L'Autobiographie moyenâgeuse: Genre in the *Mémoires*

If the previous chapter dealt with when the *Mémoires* were written, the initial focus of this one will be when they were read. It may seem as if this question has little to do with an examination of the rhetoric of the *Mémoires*; for surely the rhetoric of a work is something which is fixed by the author at the moment that the work is produced. However, rhetoric is not made up solely of discursive strategies and figures of speech which exist only within the text. The rhetorical force of a text comes equally from the way in which it conforms to, or frustrates, pre-existing discursive and representational formulæ. Such formulæ constitute the framework of generic expectations and, as ideas of genre change over time, so, at least from the point of view of the reader, does the rhetoric of the work in question.¹

This observation is particularly pertinent in the case of a work, like that of La Marche, whose title is also the name of a genre and whose conformity to the expectations conditioned by its title was sufficient to ensure that it was always known as *Mémoires* when other, similar, works changed their titles. Furthermore it must be recognized that *mémoires* does not mean the same for us as it did to authors and readers in La Marche's day. 'Il faut d'abord écarter un faux problème et cesser d'identifier les genres avec les noms des genres', writes Tzvetan Todorov but the temptation to do so in the case of La Marche is strong and each generation has brought its own generic understanding to the *Mémoires*.² If we are to seek to understand the rhetoric of the *Mémoires*, we must examine what is meant

¹ This concept of genre perception being conditioned by a 'horizon of expectations' (horizon d'attente/Erwartungshorizont) has been developed by Hans-Robert Jauss, most notably in *Literatur als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft* (Constance: Universitätsverlag, 1967) and Hans-Robert Jauss 'Littérature médiévale et théorie des genres' in *Poétique*, 1 (1970), 79-101. Chapters 5-12 of *Literatur als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft* have been translated into English as 'Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory' *New Literary History*, 2, (Autumn 1970), 7-37, in which the author states that 'A literary work is not an object which stands by itself and which offers the same face to each reader in each period. It is not a monument which reveals its timeless essence in a monologue. It is much more like an orchestration which strikes ever new chords among its readers and which frees the text from the substance of the words and makes it meaningful for the time' (p. 10).

² Tzvetan Todorov: 'Genres Littéraires' in *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences du langage* ed. by Oswald Ducrot and Tzvetan Todorov (Paris: Seuil, 1972), pp. 193-201 (p. 193).

by *mémoires* today, and the extent to which La Marche's work conforms to our modern expectations, as well as examining what La Marche and his contemporaries meant when they used the term. This is necessary because, as Philippe Lejeune writes when establishing the terms of reference for his *Le Pacte autobiographique*:

Textuellement, je pars de la position du lecteur [...]. En partant de la situation de lecteur (qui est la mienne, la seule que je connaisse bien), j'ai chance de saisir plus clairement le fonctionnement des textes (leurs différences de fonctionnement) puisqu'ils ont été écrits pour nous, lecteurs, et qu'en les lisant, c'est nous qui les faisons fonctionner.¹

However Lejeune's position needs a certain amount of modification, as Elizabeth Bruss points out, particularly when his methods are applied to texts from a more distant period:

On ne peut dire à proprement parler qu'il existe un 'contrat autobiographique' entre un écrivain du XVIII^e siècle et un lecteur du XX^e siècle, étant donné qu'un tel écrivain serait incapable de prédire la façon dont un lecteur future envisagerait la littérature ou le monde (et même s'il avait effectivement des prédictions de cette nature, il est vraisemblable qu'elles auraient quelque chose d'anachronique). Un auteur ne peut légitimement conclure un 'contrat' qu'avec des lecteurs qui comprennent et acceptent les règles qui gouvernent son acte littéraire; seuls de tels lecteurs peuvent, en retour, le tenir responsable de sa production.²

If it is true to say, as Lejeune does, that the only position we ever really understand in relation to a text is our own position as readers, Bruss is equally right to suggest that such a position is unlikely to produce an understanding of the text which is identical to that of the author. By studying the way in which different readers over the ages have responded to La Marche's work, I hope to be able to address this problem, at least to a certain extent.

One factor which must be borne in mind is that Lejeune's *prise de position* forms part of his study of a generic type, that of the autobiography, which he claims did not exist in the medieval period, but which informs our understanding of what *mémoires* are today. *Autobiography* and its French equivalent are nineteenth-century additions to the literary

¹ Philippe Lejeune, *Le Pacte autobiographique* (Paris: Seuil, 1975), p. 13. Italics are those of the author.

² Elisabeth W. Bruss, 'L'Autobiographie considérée comme acte littéraire', *Poétique*, 17, (1974), [14-26.], p. 14 n. 1.

vocabulary and many of the texts produced prior to this period which we would today consider to be autobiographical (including some of those considered as such by Lejeune) were called *mémoires* by contemporary readers.¹ We must, however, exercise caution in concluding that *mémoires* is just another name for autobiography in a literary culture which did not employ this terminology. Certainly Paul Zumthor draws a distinction between autobiography and *mémoires* in his *Essai de poétique médiévale*, when he contrasts the writing of Joinville (which he claims is the only text written in French in the medieval period to contain some of the formal features of autobiography) and that of ‘les auteurs de Mémoires proprement dits’.² Even if such generic distinctions were apparent to medieval readers, they did not operate in the same way that we perceive them as doing today, when the term *mémoires* has been retained as a sub-genre of *autobiographie* to designate a ‘personal history that seeks to articulate or repossess the historicity of the self.’³ *Mémoires* is, for us, a genre in which the story of an individual’s life is set against the backdrop of the events in which that person participated. It is also, as part of the larger genre, subject to the same contractual obligations as *autobiographie*; contractual obligations which Lejeune and Bruss have defined as including a triple identification between the author, the (usually first-person) narrator and the central character of a work together with the implication that all details of the narrative are provided in good faith and are subject to independent verification. La Marche’s *Mémoires* seem to make a similar sort of contract with the reader, but is it similarly framed by generic conventions which both author and readers would have considered part of the rhetoric of the text? And are La Marche’s *Mémoires* subject to the same sort of verification which we would apply to modern *mémoires*?

¹ Bruss, ‘L’Autobiographie considérée comme acte littéraire’, p. 19.

² Paul Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), p. 173.

³ Francis R. Hart: ‘Notes for an Anatomy of Modern Autobiography’, *New Literary History*, 1 (Spring 1970), [485-511], 491.

The Surprising Stability of the Mémoires

In the case of La Marche's *Mémoires*, it seems as if the generic term was regarded as sufficiently descriptive of the contents of the work to prevent it suffering the same fate as other contemporary works whose titles were variously recorded as *mémoires*, *chroniques* or *journaux*. One example is that of Jean de Roye, who, in the prologue to his work, explicitly disavows the title of *chronique* 'pour ce que à moy n'appartient, et pour ce fayre n'ay pas esté ordonné et ne m'a esté permys.' saying that instead he intends to write a *mémoire*.¹ Despite this clear statement of generic definition, the work to which this is a prologue is known as the *Chronique scandaleuse* and is published as *Journal de Jean de Roye, connu sous le nom de Chronique scandaleuse*. Similarly Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy refers to his work as 'aucunnes petites recordacions et mémores', but it is normally called his *Chronique*.² Indeed the fact that such statements appear in fifteenth-century texts suggests that genre was not regarded as something that would be self-evident from the content of the work. Generic indeterminacy of the sort found in the case of the *Chronique scandaleuse* or Jean Lefèvre's *Chronique* may have been anticipated to some extent by authors of the period, who attempted to impose their own definitions by stating them in the prologues to their works. La Marche's *Mémoires*, however, do not suffer from this generic indeterminacy: they are always given the title of *mémoires*. In his entry for 1504 (two years after La Marche's death), Molinet reports on the judicial proceedings taken out against La Marche's widow with regard to the *Mémoires*. His first reference to the work and its author runs 'Messire Olivier de la Marche, chevalier, grant hystorien [...], composa ung livre que aucuns gens nomment: *Les memoires messire Olivier de la Marche*', thereafter his account

¹ Jean de Roye, *Chronique Scandaleuse*, ed. by B. de Mandrot, 2 vols (Paris: Société de l'Histoire de France, 1894-96), I, 2

² Jean le Fèvre, *Chronique*, ed. by F. Morand, 2 vols (Paris: Société de l'Histoire de France, 1876-81), I pp. 2 and 5.

refers to the ‘memores’ while the report of the judgement calls them ‘ung livre [...] par forme de cronique nomm e *Les Memoires monseigneur de la Marche*’.¹ Here La Marche’s work is clearly being considered in terms of other, apparently related genres, such as *histoires* and *chroniques*, but not to the extent that its title is brought into question. Indeed one could argue that the identification as fragments of the *M moires* of independent *morceaux de style*, such as the marriage of Charles le Hardi and Margaret of York or the Banquet of the Pheasant, demonstrate the extent to which the title and genre of *m moires* are associated with Olivier de La Marche.² And this despite the fact that the author’s changing conception of his work meant that he did at one stage envisage it as a public work destined for a prince, a feature which puts La Marche’s *M moires* at odds with the criteria stated by Jean Le Roye. Indeed Le Roye was not the only author to claim that *chroniques* could only be written at the request of a prince. Alain Bouchart, who had received a princely commission to write the *Grandes Croniques de Bretaigne*, proudly draws attention to the fact by saying ‘il n’est permis   personne composer cronique s’il n’y a est  ordonn  et deput ’.³ However, the fact that it was commissioned did not always disqualify an author’s work from being considered a *m moire*. Philippe de Commynes’s prologue explains that he is writing in response to a request from the Archbishop of Vienne, which does not prevent him, or subsequent readers, from considering his work to be a *m moire*. It could be argued that there are features of Commynes’s work; his obvious personal involvement with his subject matter, the extent to which he makes himself the centre of his narrative, which lead

¹ Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, ed. by Georges Doutrepoint and Omer Jodogne, 4 vols (Brussels: Palais des acad mies, 1935-37), II, 456-57.

² Thus the rubrication of Valenciennes, Biblioth que Municipale, ms, 776 suggests that the text of the York wedding it contains is a chapter of the *M moires* while Jos phe G rard’s account of La Marche’s life and works (Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 71 D 58) lists Paris, Biblioth que Nationale de France, fonds fran ais, 11594, the text of the Banquet of the Pheasant from which the account in the *M moires* is copied as actually forming part of the *M moires*: ‘il se troue imprim  dans les Memoires d’olivier de la Marche mais comme l’imprim  differe du Mss, qui Contient entre autres differens voues faits par des Gentilshommes l’on en donne l’Extrat ci apres’ (p. 21).

³ Alain Bouchart, *Grandes Croniques de Bretaigne*, ed. by Marie-Louise Auger and Gustave Jeanneau, 2 vols (Paris: CNRS, 1986), I, 77

to it being considered as a *mémoire* despite this formal feature which would militate against its being regarded as such. Olivier de La Marche's work is also dedicated to a patron (at least it was from 1488 and in all the surviving complete manuscripts and all but one of the editions of the work) and yet it remains surprisingly immune to generic re-definition. Could this be because, like Commines's *Mémoires*, those of Olivier de La Marche are more firmly based around the personality of their author than are other works which claimed the title of *mémoires*?

Olivier de La Marche, like other historical writers of the fifteenth century, includes, in his préface, a statement of his methodology which is linked to a statement defining the generic position of the text. La Marche's statement is particularly radical for its kind. Like Jean de Roye he disavows alternative titles for his work:

Et n'entens pas que ceste ma petite et mal acoustrée labour se doibve appeler ou mettre ou nombre des croniques, histoires ou escriptures faictes et composées par tant de nobles esperis

However La Marche goes further than does Le Roye in stressing his own personal responsibility for his text. Whereas Le Roye merely states that he has not been asked to compose his work, so it cannot be regarded as a *chronique*, La Marche makes a positive statement of what sort of work he intends his *Mémoires* to be:

Ay empris le faiz et la labour de faire et compiler aucungz volumes, par maniere de memoires, où sera contenu tout ce que j'ay veu de mon temps digne d'escripre et d'estre ramentu. Et n'entens pas de couchier ou d'escripre de nulles matieres par ouy dire, ou par rapport d'aultruy, mais seulement toucheray de ce que j'ay veu, sceu et experimenté; sauf toutesvoies que pour mieulx donner à entendre aux lisans et oyans mon escript, je pourray à la fois toucher pourquoi et par quelle maniere les choses advindrent et sont advenues, et par quelles voyes elles sont venues à ma congnoissance, affin qu'en eclairissant le paravant advenu, l'on puist mieulx entendre et congnoistre la verité de mon escript. (La Marche, I, 184-85)

Here the author assumes total responsibility for his work: not only does he compile it according to his own wishes, he also provides the central source for its subject matter. La Marche's 1473 introduction thus establishes the generic framework of his work as *Mémoires* according to the same criteria of personal responsibility for material and of the centrality of authorial experience as does Commynes. It should be noted at this point that this definition has a lot in common with the autobiographical contract identified by Lejeune and Bruss. The association is even clearer when we recognize the importance accorded by both La Marche in his introduction and by his readers to the author's value as a commentator on the events he recounts by virtue of his having been an eyewitness to them.¹ Such a position is akin to the criterion of verifiability in the context of external evidence which Bruss and others argue is an essential component of our modern understanding of autobiography.

Before concluding that our modern generic understanding of *mémoires* can be applied without reservation to the work of La Marche we should, however, note another line of argument used in the 1473 introduction when defining the terms of the work to follow. The *Mémoires* are personal literature, that is to say they are written about an individual's experience but this is how they are defined from the outset. Like Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy La Marche says that he writes to avoid the vice of sloth.² This is a literary topos which recurs in fifteenth-century historiography but it is one which situates the impulse for writing in the author's mental life rather than in any external agent such as commissioning prince, young pupil or desire for posterity. Moreover the way in which La

¹ For example Isaac Bullart, *Academie des sciences et des arts: contenant les vies & les éloges historiques des hommes illustres*, 2 vols (Brussels: Foppens, 1682), I, 136, 'Son Histoire est d'autant plus à estimer, qu'il parle de ses propres actions avec beaucoup de modestie, & qu'il a esté le témoin de la plupart des choses qu'il escrit'.

² Lefèvre's phraseology in this respect is very similar to that of La Marche: 'pour eschiever occiosité, qui est la mère de tous vices [...] me suis disposé [...] faire et compiler ce petit volume.' Jean Lefèvre de Saint Rémy, *Chronique*, I 4.

Marche introduces this topos situates the work doubly within his mental life. His préface begins:

Ayant de present en souvenance ce que dit le saige Socrates, que oysiveté est le delieieux lict et la couche où toutes vertuz s'oublent et s'endorment, et, par le contraire, labeur et exercice sont le repoz, l'abisme ou la prison où sont les vices abscondz et mussez, et ne se peuvent reveiller ne resouldre sinon par ladicte oyseuse mere de tous mauz; je doncques tanné, annuyé de la compaignie de mes vices, et desireux de reveiller vertuz lentes et endormies, ay empris le faiz et la labeur de faire et compiler aucungz volumes, par maniere de memoires [...] (La Marche, I, 183)

La Marche thus cites Socrates as an authority in support of his aim of achieving personal moral objectives through the act of writing but, significantly, it is to the Socrates of his memory that La Marche appeals. Syntactically too, Socrates is subordinated to La Marche, who remains the subject of the main verb of the sentence. Socrates may appear to be La Marche's authority when he chooses to write, but in fact it is the Socrates of La Marche's mental life; intellectually subordinate to the writer as well as grammatically so. *Mémoire* is not only a generic term which conditions readers to expect something similar to but distinct from *histoires* and *chroniques*. In the case of La Marche it also designates the faculty of memory, established in the préface as being the ultimate source of his authority, not only in the selection of his material but also in justifying his methodology. The stress placed on the authoritative nature of memory in the introduction serves to reinforce the association between the work and the generic designation, *mémoires*. The *Mémoires* are *mémoires*, it would seem, not just because they obey certain literary conventions but also because they draw heavily on the recollections of their author in both their subject matter and their methodology.

It is in this context that we should understand La Marche's apparent fascination with childhood memories. The first section following the 1473 introduction contains an account of what La Marche claims is his first memory; the entry of Jacques de Bourbon

into Pontarlier in 1435. La Marche recalls being taken, along with the other pupils at his school in Pontarlier, to watch Jacques de Bourbon, the former king of Naples and now a Franciscan, enter the town. (La Marche, I, 187-95) He describes what he saw: the former king in his habit being carried on a stretcher, followed by four Franciscans and, at a distance, his household, in what might strike a modern reader as rather unusual splendour for someone who had sworn a vow of poverty.¹ There seems, however, to be nothing exceptional in this event: La Marche himself says that he heard that ‘en toutes les villes ou il venoit il faisoit semblables entrées’. The fact that it is a comparatively banal recollection only serves to support the theory that the author has chosen to recount it to his readers because of its importance to him as an individual, rather than for its wider significance. Elsewhere too La Marche stresses the importance of early memories in an individual’s quest to make sense of his or her life. *Le Chevalier délibéré*, La Marche’s allegorical poem documenting the narrator’s quest to do battle with *débile* or *accident*, the two allegorical knights which inevitably bring about the death of their every oponent, returns repeatedly to the consolation given by memory in this quest and early in the poem childhood memory, in the guise of ‘Relicque de Jeunesse’, appears as a force protecting the narrator.² It is this lady who protects the narrator in a battle against ‘Hutin’ whom he has encountered whilst wandering on the plain of ‘Plaisance mondaine’, and later in the poem the narrator laments the extent to which old age robs him of the consolation of early memories. La Marche thus clearly recognizes the importance of memory in establishing one’s self identity and we might expect therefore that a work such as the *Mémoires*, in which memory is so central, would have La Marche’s personal identity as its central subject matter, just as we would

¹ ‘après luy venoyent quatre Cordeliers de l’observance, que l’on disoit moult grans clerks et de sainte vie; et après iceulx, ung peu sur le loigns venoit son estat, où il povoit avoir deux cens chevaulx, dont il y avoit litiere, chariot couvert, haquenées, mulles et mulletz dorés et enharnaichés honnorablement.’ La Marche, I, 194.

² Olivier de La Marche, *Le Chevalier delibéré (The Resolute Knight)*, ed. by Carleton W. Carroll, trans. by Lois Hawley Wilson and Carleton W. Carroll, *Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies*, 199 (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999), p. 68 (v. 21).

expect this of *mémoires* today. However, in *Le Chevalier délibéré* an important feature of memory is the extent to which it is susceptible to loss and we find in the *Mémoires* too that a forgotten fact is as much a guarantee of the author's status as a witness to events as a remembered one.¹ This means that the central informing principle of the *Mémoires* and the source of their authority is also that which makes them obscure and difficult to situate against a schema of objective historical fact. The more one considers the *Mémoires* as evidence of Olivier de La Marche's experience, the more one becomes aware of the extent to which this experience is changed by the vicissitudes of the author's memory as well as by various rhetorical and political considerations. I propose to highlight this fact by considering a number of accounts of key events in La Marche's life as they appear in the *Mémoires* and by examining the rhetorical import of these accounts. In doing this, I have selected events which do not only seem significant to me, a reader with a particular set of preconceptions, but which successive generations of readers of the *Mémoires* have identified as important in their biographies of La Marche. These biographies, which until the nineteenth century drew almost exclusively on the *Mémoires* as their source material, reflect condensed versions of the *Mémoires* which are read solely as a source for biographies; that is to say as autobiography. By reading such *Vies d'Olivier de La Marche* a modern reader may identify what previous generations have considered to be the autobiographical content of the *Mémoires* and thus determine which sections of the work should be subjected to closest examination when considering La Marche's work as autobiography.

¹ So that, for example, La Marche writes of one protagonist in the *pas de l'arbre Charlemagne* 'croy qu'il estoit du Daulphiné, mais ne suis pas bien memoratif s'il estoit du Daulphiné ou de Savoye' (I, 319), which nevertheless reiterates the point that the author was a witness to the events which he describes and that the account which readers receive is mediated through him.

Autofiction and Écriture personnelle: Readings of the Mémoires as Biography

Most of the *Vies d'Olivier de La Marche* which this chapter will examine are very condensed biographies of the author which occur in either dictionaries of literary history or in bibliographical works of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Longer lives of the author survive in manuscript form from the end of the eighteenth century, including an account by Gérard in the Royal Library of the Hague and one by an anonymous author in a compilation in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.¹ These tend to draw largely on the evidence presented in the *Mémoires* for their accounts of La Marche's life. It is only with the more substantial works of the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries: that of Stein, d'Arbaumont and Alistair Millar, that La Marche's account is subjected to sustained scrutiny in the light of other documentary evidence. However, even within such apparently limited methodological parameters, substantially different accounts of La Marche's biography emerge. One significant area of difference which is immediately apparent is the way in which authors view La Marche either as a French or as a Belgian author according to their own polemical agendas. Thus Gérard claims him as an honorary Belgian, writing 'Olivier de La Marche né hors des limites de nos provinces y a demeuré une grande partie de sa vie: il est mort et enterré dans la capitale des Païs-Bas'.² Similarly La Marche is able

¹ Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 71 D 58, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français, 9465 fols. 412-426 The author of the latter text has proved impossible to track down, despite a number of very promising initial indications. The rubric informs the reader that the biography is a 'Vie d'Olivier de la Marche prononcée par M. L'Avocat Général de France à la séance du 21 fev. 1758'. However, the title 'Avocat Général de France' is not one which appears to have existed. There are some suggestions that it may refer to the avocat général du Parlement de Paris, who in the following year was Jean-Omer Joly de Fleury. However, he does not seem to have had the requisite expertise in fifteenth-century historiography. The manuscript from which the life is taken bears the title 'Mélanges Foncemagne' on its opening leaf, indicating that it was the property of Étienne Lauréault de Foncemagne, a member of both the Académie Française and the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres on the date in question. This led me to question whether the 'séance' was a meeting of one of these two academies of which Foncemagne kept a record but the Académie Française did not meet on 21st February. The Académie des Inscriptions did meet on that date, but not to discuss the life of Olivier de La Marche. I would like to thank those who have assisted me in my attempts to identify the author of this biography: my colleagues Tony Strugnell and Mark Darlow, staff in the *salle des manuscrits* at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and Mirelle Lamarque, conservateur des archives for the Académie Française.

² Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, ms 71 D 58, p. 1.

to appear in both Foppens's *Bibliotheca Belgica* and in Goujet's *Bibliothèque française* while his *Mémoires* form part of Michaud and Poujoulat's *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France*.¹ Beyond this, however, different biographers stress different aspects of La Marche's life which suggest readings of the *Mémoires* which are surprisingly divergent.

Some of the differences in readings of La Marche's *Mémoires* can be attributed to the *mentalités* of the time in which the reader operates. Thus the anonymous Paris manuscript's comment on La Marche's schooling in Pontarlier that 'Ce fut dans cette Ville qu'il apprit avec les Enfants et les Neveux de ce Gentilhomme les premiers Elements des lettres que son Gout Naturel luy fit Cultiver dans La Suite avec joie' can be read as an eighteenth-century interpretation of La Marche's history which stresses the values of education and erudition popular in eighteenth-century thought but absent from La Marche's own account of his schooldays (which he describes purely in terms of the other pupils which he met, and without any reference to what he might have learned).² Yet other differences can be ascribed to the peculiar angle from which any given biographer might approach La Marche's work so that, for example, François-Ignace Dunod de Charnage's *Nobilitaire* of the county of Burgundy stresses elements of La Marche's military career and family life which are not to be found in other contemporary biographies of La Marche because the primary concern of the work is to provide a complete account of the Burgundian nobility, which consists largely of the way in which its members are related to each other.³ Because of this, Dunod de Charnage's discussion of La Marche's career is

¹ Joannis Francisci Foppens, *Bibliotheca Belgica*, 2 vols (Brussels: Foppens, 1739), II, 932; M. l'Abbé Goujet, *Bibliothèque française: ou, Histoire de la littérature française* (Paris: Mariette & Guerin, 1745), IX, 372-390, Michaud et Poujoulat, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France* (Paris, l'éditeur du commentaire analytique du Code Civil, 1837) vol. 3.

² BnF f. fr. 9465 fol. 413^r.

³ François-Ignace Dunod de Charnage, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du comté de Bourgogne* (Besançon: Charmet, 1740), pp 270-1. An unkind reader might suggest that Dunod de Charnage's fascination with the Burgundian nobility stems from the fact that he was himself recently ennobled by Louis XIII.

more or less limited to what position he held in the Burgundian army and, uniquely amongst biographies of La Marche, he omits any mention of the Battle of Nancy: at which the last Valois duke of Burgundy was killed and where La Marche was captured. Other differences in approach to La Marche's biography seem to have their origins more in the responses of individual readers. Thus Michaud and Poujoulat compare the procession which accompanied Jacques de Bourbon into Pontarlier to a funeral march and comment that Olivier was to lose his father within two years of that event. The contrast is a poignant one, or at least it would be if it were not one created entirely by Michaud and Poujoulat for La Marche does not make the comparison between Jacques de Bourbon's entourage and a funeral procession. The move from the first memory to La Marche's subsequent bereavement fits into the poetics of Michaud and Poujoulat's biography which stresses the negative aspects of the author's life and ends with the words:

Il y eut dans la vie d'Olivier bien des agitations et des amertumes, et, parvenu à mi-chemin de ses jours, lui-même nous dit que son passé est triste et qu'il ne voudrait pas recommencer. L'auteur avait adopté trois mots qui étaient comme la devise de sa destinée, trois mots par lesquels il termine ses récits historiques, et par lesquels nous terminerons cette notice TANT A SOUFFERT LA MARCHE

This does not necessarily mean that it accords perfectly with the poetics of La Marche's *Mémoires*, nor do Michaud and Poujoulat put forward the only possible reading of La Marche's *devise*. Alistair Millar, writing in 1996, reads it, and La Marche's reference to the bitter taste of his memories, as a reference to the author's disappointment at the failure of the Burgundian campaigns in Northern France in 1472 and particularly the effect of the brutal burning of Gamaches, in which he had been involved.¹ La Marche's editors, Beaune and d'Arbaumont, on the other hand, see an entirely different motive for adopting the slogan; that of the heavy responsibilities of his position as *maître d'hôtel*:

¹ Alistair Millar, 'Olivier de la Marche and the Court of Burgundy, 1425-1502', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1996 pp. 120-21.

Charles lui témoigna de suite une haute estime, une pleine confiance, sinon une vive affection; il l'attacha plus étroitement à sa personne, tout en lui conférant des titres ou des missions qui engageaient plus lourdement sa responsabilité. Les comptes commencent alors, en effet, à le qualifier de conseiller du duc et de maître d'hôtel. Il va monter de dignités en dignités, mais au prix de quel labeur? Ainsi s'explique, peut-être en partie sa mélancolique devise: 'Tant a souffert La Marche'. (La Marche, *Mémoires*, IV, p. xlv)

Alongside these differences in approach and emphasis which make Olivier de La Marche variously French or Belgian, a cultivated lover of the *beaux arts* in an eighteenth-century mould, a long-suffering civil-servant in the Valois regime or the repository of a Burgundian blood-line, La Marche's biographers select different events from La Marche's *Mémoires* to illustrate the life of their subject. By far the most complete accounts of La Marche's life are those of Stein and d'Arbaumont in the late nineteenth century and Millar in the late twentieth and these accounts seem to cover most events in the *Mémoires*. However, these biographies also draw on sources other than the *Mémoires* for their subject matter so that, for example, Millar is able to draw attention to the involvement of La Marche and his wife, Isabeau de Machfoing, in the Dutch-speaking *chambre de rhétorique*, *De Leliebloem*, on which La Marche is mute.¹ Moreover, it should be noted that the general tendency is for biographies of La Marche to become more detailed, with the accounts of Bullart, Foppens and Dunod de Charnage presenting mere outlines of La Marche's career: his entry into the Burgundian court, his receiving the status of a knight at the battle of Montlehéry and his capture at the battle of Nancy. It is only with the accounts of Papillon, Goujet and the author of the Paris manuscript, written after 1740, that more details of La Marche's life begin to be included and we find the affair of the Bâtard de Rubempré, over

¹ Millar, 'Olivier de la Marche and the Court of Burgundy, 1425-1502', p. 97. On the question of methodology, it seems that earlier biographers of La Marche do draw evidence from sources other than the *Mémoires*, for the account they give of, for example, the Rubempré affair is much more detailed than that of La Marche. However, in their selection of topics they seem bound by the *Mémoires* and write only about events which La Marche himself describes.

which Louis XI demanded La Marche's arrest, appearing in the biography of the author.¹ Another event in La Marche's military career; the delivery of provisions to the town of Linz during the siege of Neuss, which La Marche directed, only appears in accounts of his life after 1750, at the same time as biographers begin to take interest in La Marche's schooling. Accounts of La Marche's memory of Jacques de Bourbon, which in the *Mémoires* is intimately linked to the author's description of his schooldays, are only dealt with in biographies after 1800. There thus seems to be a significant shift in perceptions of La Marche's biography between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, which may be linked to a change in approach to biography in general over the period whereby details of a person's early life and private activity take on an increased importance in the context of their public activity. It should not be forgotten that the end of the nineteenth century saw the popularity of approaches to literary history which resulted in studies of the 'La vie: Les œuvres' type, where the private existence of an author was linked critically to his or her literary output.² The fact that accounts of La Marche's first memory do not appear until this period suggest that, until this time, it was not considered as part of the legitimate area of his biographers' concerns and interest was instead focused upon aspects of La Marche's court and military careers. However, even these accounts serve to display changing *mentalités* in approaches to medieval biography; particularly when we consider the way in which subsequent biographers deal with a significant moment in La Marche's professional life: his receiving the title of knight at the Battle of Montlehéry.

Henri Stein, writing in 1888, points out that Dunod de Charnage, when writing an account of La Marche's life, said that the author was made a knight after the Battle of

¹ *Bibliothèque des auteurs de Bourgogne Par Feu M. l'Abbé Papillon, Chanoine de la Chapelle au Riche de Dijon*, 2 vols (Dijon: Desventes, 1745), I, 18-21,

² This approach remained popular into the early years of the twentieth century and can be found in the area of Burgundian historiography in Kenneth Urwin's *Georges Chastellain: La Vie; Les Œuvres* (Paris: Pierre André, 1937) and Noël Dupire's *Jean Molinet: La Vie, les œuvres* (Paris: Droz, 1932).

Montlehéry, whereas, in fact, the *Mémoires* record that he was knighted, along with a number of other men, prior to the battle.¹ However, the error does not stem purely from a failure to read La Marche's account properly and nor is it one which is limited to Dunod de Charnage. The author of the Paris manuscript is the most explicit in pointing out the political agenda behind this assertion when he writes that '[La Marche] se trouva à la Bataille de Montlhéry; après laquelle il fut fait chevalier, qualité qui ne se donnoit alors qu'à ceux qui l'avoient meritée par leurs actions.' The implication, and one which recurs in political comment of the eighteenth century, is that honours, which used to be given on the basis of individual merit, are now handed out on the personal whim of the monarch, often as part of a financial exchange. The author of the Paris manuscript may not have consciously chosen to modify La Marche's account to make the polemical point: he may believe that La Marche was indeed made a knight following his daring exploits on the field of battle, but in making the point, he highlights an important feature of political attitudes which is implicit in other biographies of La Marche and not only those of the eighteenth century. Thus, for example, Bullart, writing in 1682, and Michaud and Poujoulat, writing in 1837, claim that La Marche was knighted on the field of Montlehéry for his deeds.² To a medieval mind, receiving one's spurs before a battle would have been part of the normal order of things: it is a frequent motif in both historiography and literature.³ To a modern mind, since questions of who is knighted or ennobled have disappeared from French political discourse, the matter no longer has any relevance. However, in the years between

¹ Henri Stein, *Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon* (Paris: Picard, 1888), p. 33, n. 2.

² Bullart, *Academie des sciences et des arts: contenant les vies & les éloges historiques des hommes illustres*, I, 134 'et depuis encore à la bataille de Mont-le-hery; où il fit des actions si éclatantes, qu'il eut l'honneur d'estre fait chevalier par les mains du Comte, après l'avoir eu pour témoin de sa valeur en cette memorable occasion.', Michaud and Poujoulat, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France*, III 303 'il combattit noblement à la journée de Montlréy, et fut fait chevalier pour prix de sa bravoure.'

³ So, for example, Molinet reports that Olivier de La Marche himself made Robert le Roucy a knight before the confrontation over the re-supplying of Linz, Jean Molinet, I, 69

the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, it was a question of genuine political concern and this affects the way that it is treated in biographies of La Marche at this period.

The question of La Marche's knighthood, and the circumstances in which he gained it, may seem to illustrate a facile point: namely that readers are affected by the attitudes prevailing in their period. Nevertheless, I believe that this is an important point to recall when offering a reading of the *Mémoires* of La Marche as autobiography. In examining the accounts of other readers, I have been able to determine a skeleton structure of La Marche's life which has remained more or less constant since the *Mémoires* were written. This includes La Marche's entry into the Burgundian court, important because it was to determine the course of his subsequent career and the only event which every one of his biographers chooses to deal with, his professional and social advancement at the Battle of Montlehéry, when he became a knight, and his capture at Nancy. To these I have added a number of incidents which, although not present in the earliest biographies of La Marche, have played a role in accounts of his life over the last 150-200 years and which seem to be of greater relevance to a study of the man, Olivier de La Marche, which is the focus of biography in this period. These events are La Marche's schooldays and his first memory, the role that he played in the affair of the Bâtard de Rubempré, his encounter with Louis XI and his capture of Yolande de Savoie. In presenting readings of these events, however, I do not claim that my perspective is necessarily any more free of personal prejudice or of the *mentalités* of my age than were those of readers of La Marche who have preceded me. The alternative, however, is not to read La Marche because, as Lejeune has pointed out, my own position as reader is the only one I know and the only one I am able to adopt. Indications of other reading positions can be obtained from an examination of the writings of other readers, as has been carried out in this chapter, and from the nature of La Marche's presuppositions when writing. By adopting this methodology, I hope to give as full an

account of La Marche's autobiographical rhetoric as possible. This is not the same as writing a biography of La Marche. The events which I have selected for examination have been chosen because they have for so long been considered critical in accounts of La Marche's life. It will be noted that none of the events is taken from the final twenty years of the author's life, when he was in the service of the Habsburg dukes. This is due partly to the structure of the *Mémoires* themselves, which concentrate predominantly on the Valois period of La Marche's career. It is also due to a prejudice, common amongst La Marche's readers and only beginning to be challenged with Alistair Millar's work, that La Marche is a historian of the Valois period and that all work of any significance in the *Mémoires* deals with this period. Again some writers have argued that the dearth of information on La Marche's later career stems from the fact that the author went into a sort of retirement after the arrival of Maximilian and therefore no longer had anything of any political or social import to say. Whatever the reasons may be, I have followed previous writers in selecting my material from the Valois period because this is the only course justified by the methodology I chose in order to identify moments of biographical significance. I do not pretend that they are actually invested with this significance, merely that others have read them as such in the past, and that they therefore deserve some consideration. Similarly I do not claim to give an account of what actually happened in any one of the events that I have chosen to examine. Where this is possible, I have, of course, attempted to discover the facts behind La Marche's account, but, as will be seen, these are often difficult to determine and there are some grounds for believing that this is at times due to a deliberate attempt on the part of the author to create uncertainty. Such an obscuring of historical fact, where it can be shown to occur, is part of the rhetoric of the *Mémoires* and is therefore just as significant within the terms of this study as the question of how accurately La Marche portrays events.

Primal Scenes: From Olivier's First Memory to His Entry into Burgundian Service

The first event which this chapter will examine is Olivier de La Marche's first memory and his entry into the Burgundian court. These two *points de repère* in the early life of the author will be examined together as they present a unified chronological and thematic unit which is unusual in the *Mémoires*. La Marche, who is notoriously vague on questions of dates and of his own age, seems to have paid particular attention to the presentation of these features in the opening sections of his work, so that events are punctuated by references to the year and to how old he was when a particular event took place and these references are entirely self-consistent. La Marche begins his account of his first memory with a description of how he came to be in Pontarlier in 1434 or 1435, when, he writes, 'pouvoie pour lors avoir d'eaige de huit à neuf ans' (La Marche, I, 192).¹ His next reference to his age is phrased in exactly the same way, and occurs in the description of the circumstances in which he entered the Burgundian court, in 1439 'pouvoys avoir treze ans d'eaige.' (La Marche, I, 252.) At the same time he gives the information that his father died in 1437 and that, in the years between 1437 and 1439, he had been living with Guillaume de Lurieu and his wife, Anne de la Chambre. These details are, as I have said, entirely self-consistent, and would have made Olivier de La Marche eleven years old when his father died. However, when the dates given in the opening sections of the *Mémoires* are compared with the dates at which the events they describe are known to have occurred, inconsistencies appear, which suggest that the time scheme presented in these sections has been artificially made to accord, in order to reinforce the impression of thematic unity created by these sections.

Let us first examine the events of 1435 and Olivier de La Marche's first memory.

We have seen how this passage is important in reinforcing the contract which La Marche

¹ The uncertainty over the precise date is that of La Marche. He writes that his first memory occurred in 1435 (La Marche, I, 188) but he reports the request that his father should go to Joux as having taken place in 1434 (La Marche, I, 189). It is thus unclear as to when La Marche actually arrived in Pontarlier.

creates with his reader in his introduction, by reaffirming the centrality of the author's experience in selecting material for the *Mémoires*. La Marche has promised his reader that he will only provide accounts of that which he has personally experienced and the opening section of the *Mémoires* seems to confirm this approach. He writes of 'comment ne par quelle maniere je vins au premier lieu où je veiz ma premiere ramentevance', and then gives a description of this 'premiere ramentevance' itself. The fact that it is the author's first memory seems significant in the context of a work which takes the personal experience of the author as its informing principle. La Marche supplies an account which is of personal importance: all the more so because it is the moment at which memory, the faculty upon which he relies for the entire composition of the work, provides him with his first material. The double occurrence of the word 'premier' in the introduction cited above, stresses the importance of the scene as a primal one.¹ However, upon closer examination, it becomes apparent that La Marche's first memory is not all that it might seem. If we are to believe that La Marche's first memory does come from when he was nine years old, which we are compelled to believe if we are to accept the chronology of the opening sections, this raises some uncomfortable questions about the reliability of La Marche as an eyewitness.

Someone today who claimed to remember nothing before the age of nine would almost certainly be regarded as unusual in this respect. Did people in the fifteenth century have shorter memories than we do today? Or, as this seems unlikely, are we to conclude that Olivier de La Marche, a man whose very project revolved around recording his memories, had a memory himself that was significantly less reliable than that of other men and women

¹ I make no apologies for borrowing the vocabulary of Sigmund Freud in this discussion of La Marche's rhetoric. Freud himself gives no clear definition for the term 'primal scene' in his case history of the Wolf Man, but leaves the reader to suppose that the scene is one whose content reappears in subsequent dreams and an understanding of which can illuminate these dreams. He also implies that the content of such a primal scene is forgotten, although this was not the case in the Wolf Man's primal scene. La Marche's first memory sets the scene for his *Mémoires* in a similar way, in that it provides a scene which supplies motifs which recur in subsequent events in the work. For an account of Freud's work with the Wolf Man, see *The Wolf-Man and Sigmund Freud*, ed. by Muriel Gardiner (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973).

so that he remembers nothing before the age of nine? In fact, it seems more than likely that La Marche did remember events prior to the entry of Jacques de Bourbon into Pontarlier, if only because the very section of the work which presents his account of Jacques de Bourbon's entry also includes an account of events prior to this, namely of the circumstances in which the young Olivier came to be in that town.

Et pour ce que mon pere pensoit que la guerre et sa commission fust chose de longue durée, il mena tout son mesnaige celle part, et moy je fus mis à l'escolle en une petite bonne ville à une lieue dudit Jou qui se nommoit Pontarli, et fus mis en la maison d'ung gentilhomme nommé Pierre de Saint Moris, qui avoit plusieurs enfans et nepveux qui pareillement alloient à l'escolle, et dont depuis nous sommes retrouvez de celle nourriture à l'hostel du prince, et ses serviteurs domestiques, et principalement Jaques de Fallerans et Estienne de Saint Moris, qui ont esté tenuz et reputez deux très vaillans escuyers de leurs personnes. (La Marche, I, 190)

Although, as can be seen, he does not actually say that he remembers these events, this is the clear implication of the way in which the section is structured, beginning with the Seigneur de Saint George, whose territorial disputes with his neighbours led to the author's father, who was employed by Saint George at the time, moving to Joux, rather than simply beginning with La Marche's recollection of Jacques de Bourbon. Indeed an examination of the temporal structure of this opening section reveals a complex narrative, which may be summarized diagrammatically thus:

1410s	1420s	1430s	1440s	1450s	1460s	1470s
		History of the Seigneur de Saint George (C.a. 1435)		History of Guillaume de Vienne, his son		La Marche reiterates the content of the preface (Writing in 1473)
		Reference to La Marche's disappointment in love (sometime between 1435 and 1473) The posting of Philippe de La Marche in Joux; Olivier's entry into school (1435)				History of Jehan de Vienne, his grandson (approaching 1473)

The Marriage of Jacques de Bourbon and Jeanne of Naples (1415 – date not supplied by La Marche)
 Jacques de Bourbon's imprisonment and escape (1419 – date not supplied by La Marche)

The entry of Jacques de Bourbon into Pontarlier (1435)

Reflection on the lessons La Marche has drawn from the spectacle.

As can be seen, the passage begins in the present in which the author is writing, referring to the promise he has made in his preface only to talk about what he has himself experienced, except where that which he did not personally witness serves to illuminate that which he did. He then goes back to 1435, the year in which Jacques de Bourbon was to enter Pontarlier, and introduces the Seigneur de Saint George, a powerful noble in Burgundy at the time, without at this point explaining how he is relevant to his narrative. One might think that, having reached the year in which his first memory took place, La Marche would proceed with a linear chronology of events as they occurred. However the account progresses in a way which is far from linear. Having described the career of the Seigneur de Saint George, he then goes on to describe those of his successors (his son and grandson) bringing the history of the family up to date with references which are once more contemporary to the ultimate destruction of the line, before returning to the Seigneur de Saint George and his territorial disputes which led to the posting of La Marche's father in Joux in 1435. Once more, then, La Marche has returned his readers to the significant year in which his first memory was to take place but before he delivers his account of this memory he takes another detour, this time into the period before 1435, to describe the circumstances which led to Jacques de Bourbon's coming to Pontarlier: his marriage to

Jeanne, Queen of Naples, his subsequent imprisonment by her, his escape and his conversion to religious life. Only after he has described all of this does La Marche go on to give the details of what he claims to be his first childhood memory and he follows this immediately with his evaluation of the event, situated in a present in which he is able to speak with hindsight.

This already confused temporal structure is made yet more complicated by the author at the point where he has brought the history of the Saint George family up to date, when he says that he mentions this family for two reasons; 'l'une c'est pour regret en amour, l'autre c'est pour donner à entendre comment ne par quelle maniere je vins ou premier lieu ou je veiz ma premiere ramentevance' (La Marche, I, 189). As we have seen, it is the account of the author's first memory which then follows but, throughout this, the reader has been alerted to another possible narrative, that of his disappointment in love, to which he might return at any moment. In point of fact he never does return to this theme in his *Mémoires*, and we are left to speculate whether or not this is an allusion to a real historical event. In the context of the opening section of the *Mémoires*, however, it fulfills a functional role in that it adds to the confusion of temporal perspectives by inviting the reader to speculate on events occurring between the time remembered and the time at which the author writes. This confusion, it can be argued, serves to obscure the chronological sequence of events being described, with the result that La Marche's readers are less critical in their acceptance of the problematical assertion that the author's very first memory was the entry of Jacques de Bourbon into Pontarlier, despite the fact that the same section of the work deals with events which occurred prior to this.

Alongside this confusion there is a further complication: the author seems to have been unsure as to whether the memory he was recounting was his first actual memory, or whether it was merely his first memory of significance. We have seen that he does make

the former claim with some force when he stresses the primacy of the event. If, on the other hand, we examine the way in which the whole account is introduced, we find a statement which suggests that the episode may be chosen for its suitability:

Pour ce que Dieu et ses glorieux faitz doivent estre commencement de toutes bonnes oeuvres, de tant je le loue et gracie [qu'] au commencement de mon eaige, et du premier temps que je puis entrer en matiere, et bailler ramentevance digne d'escrire, la premiere chose dont je puis parler est devote et de sainte memoire. (La Marche, I, 187, editorial additions are those of Beaune and d'Arbaumont.)

However this statement itself is far from being unequivocal, for the idea of significance contained within 'digne d'escrire' is only introduced after phrases such as 'au commencement de mon eaige', which seem to suggest that it is the author's first memory which is being dealt with. It is clear that there are two ideals operating in this text: that of the first memory, the peculiar account available to the writer of *mémoires* who takes his mental existence as the starting point for his account, and that of the first relevant or suitable memory, organized by an author seeking to convey more than just a record of his personal experiences. Was La Marche aware of this contradiction? The way in which his narrative obscures the chronological order of his memories suggests that he was and sought to conflate the two criteria so that he appears as the guarantor not only of his account, which exists only for the period of his mental existence, but also of its relevance. 'Trust me,' La Marche is saying to his reader, 'because not only do you know that everything I say is true, because I write from direct experience, but it is also important, as I have made a selection of what is relevant.' The strength of the appeal to personal experience and to the personality of the author is thus twofold and, on first reading, the reader is encouraged to accept these as guarantees. However, as we have seen, the two claims cannot easily be reconciled and a closer reading of La Marche's opening section introduces a degree of uncertainty as to La Marche's reliability as witness to the events of his own life.

This uncertainty is increased when La Marche's account is compared to other contemporary accounts of the same events. La Marche's reflections upon Jacques de Bourbon stress the sacrifices of the former king in giving up his life of luxury in favour of the austerity of the religious life:

Quant deppuis j'ay pensé et mis devant mes yeulx l'auctorité royale, les pompes seigneurieuses, les delisses et aises corporelles et mondaines, lesquelles en si peu de temps furent par cestuy Roy mises en oubly et en nonchaloir, certes, selon mon petit sens, j'en faiz une extime plaine de merveille; et à tant me taiz et faiz fin en ma premiere adventure. (La Marche, I, 195)

In this context his account of Jacques de Bourbon's progress through Pontarlier stresses the king's youth and vigour which La Marche contrasts with the poverty of his surroundings. Jacques de Bourbon was carried 'en une civiere telle sans aultre differance que les civieres en quoy l'on porte les fiens et les ordures communement', he was semi-reclining on a 'povre meschant desrompu oreillier de plume' but, against this backdrop of poverty, his physical vigour appears to be undiminished. La Marche describes him thus:

De sa personne il estoit grand chevalier, moult beaul et moult bien formé de tous membres. Il avoit le visaige blond et agreable, et portoit une chiere joyeuse en sa receuillotte vers ung chascun, et pouvoit avoir environ quarante ans d'eaige. (La Marche, I, 194)

It is a striking description and one which has not met with the sympathy of all its readers.

Montaigne, in his *Essais* writes

Il a beau aller à pied, dit-on, qui meine son cheval par la bride: et nostre Jacques, Roy de Naples et de Sicile, qui, beau, jeune et sain, se faisait porter par pays en civiere, couché sur un meschant oreillier de plume, vestu d'une robe de drap gris et un bonnet de mesme, suyvy ce pendant d'une grande pompe royale, lictieres, chevaux à main de toutes sortes, gentils-hommes et officiers, representoit une austerité tendre encores et cancellante; le malade n'est pas à plaindre qui a la guarison en sa manche.¹

¹ Michel de Montaigne, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Pléiade, 1962), p. 805 (*Essais*, Book III, Chapter 3).

However, it is a description which seems to have been modified to give a moral lesson seeing Jacques de Bourbon as an example of the voluntary relinquishing of worldly pleasure whilst at the height of one's powers. In fact Jacques de Bourbon was over sixty five when he became a Franciscan tertiary in 1435.¹ This fact alone modifies the import of his account of what La Marche saw in Pontarlier. Rather than being the vigorous middle-aged man whom La Marche describes, choosing to be carried on a litter as a mark of humility, Jacques de Bourbon was an old man, particularly for the fifteenth century, who may have needed to be carried. Once again, then, La Marche's chronology seems to have more to do with the message that he wants to present than with actual historical events.

A closer examination of the sections which follow suggests that this may also be true of the self-consistent chronological schema presented in the opening sections of the *Mémoires* up to La Marche's entry into the Burgundian court. The date of 1435, with which the sequence begins, is confirmed by independent sources, including the letters of Jacques de Bourbon. However, reference to external documents has demonstrated that the other two dates given by La Marche in his opening pages; that of the death of his father in 1437 and of his entry into the Burgundian court at Chalon in 1439, are unlikely to have happened when they said they did. Philippe de La Marche, Olivier's father, appears still to have been alive at the beginning of 1439, when he entered into a lease which is referred to in a document from 1641.² More definitely, the Burgundian court was not in Chalon-sur-Saône, nor even in Burgundy in the year 1439. In fact Philippe le Bon did not come to Burgundy until the end of 1441 and did not reach Chalon until March 1442.³ If Olivier de La Marche entered the Burgundian court at Pentecost in Chalon-sur-Saône he must, therefore, have

¹ Arthur Huart, *Jacques de Bourbon Roi de Sicile frère mineur cordelier à Besançon* (Couvain: St Roche, 1909), p. 79.

² La Marche, IV, p. xvj and n. 8, refers to this lease, which is kept in the Archives de la Côte d'Or, B. 10740.

³ A discussion of these dates, produced largely with the aim of determining La Marche's date of birth, can be found in the *Mémoires*, IV, p. xvij.

done so at least three years after he says that he did. This has caused problems for previous readers of La Marche's *Mémoires*, who have attempted to reconcile this information with the self-consistent schema presented in the opening sections of the work. Of course, it is possible to argue that La Marche was mistaken as to where he had entered the Burgundian court, and that his claim to have done so in 1439 was correct. However, La Marche seems particularly anxious to situate himself in Chalon in the opening sections prior to his description of his entry into the court. In the same section as his account of his entry, La Marche describes how Jean de Fribourg, maréchal of Burgundy, established a court in Chalon to judge the *écorcheurs*, the soldiers who, after the peace of Arras, plundered the Burgundian countryside. This tribunal, which La Marche claims lasted between 1435 and 1438, provides a thematic link between the year in which La Marche witnessed the entry of Jacques de Bourbon into Pontarlier, and that in which he himself entered the Burgundian court for La Marche begins his description of the process whereby he came to enter the court with the words:

Et dura pour celle fois ceste pestilence depuis l'an trante cinq jusques à l'an trante huit. Celluy an trante huit, se partit de ses pays de Flandres le duc Philippe, pour venir en son pays de Bourgoingne où il n'avoit esté depuis les sieges d'Avalon, de Grancy et de Pierre Pertuys. (La Marche, I, 247-48)

Chalon is thus worked into the chronological scheme of the opening sections of the *Mémoires* and La Marche implies that he was a witness to the events of Jean de Fribourg's court when he writes that 'ay bonne memoire que le conte de Fribourg [...] se tira à Chalon sur la Sonne' and 'certiffie que la riviere de Sonne et le Doux estoient si plains de corps et de charongnes d'iceulx escorcheurs, que maintesfois les pescheurs les retiroient en lieu de poisson'.¹ In both cases, La Marche's personal comment, indicated by first-person verbal forms of words which derive their authority from the narrator's mental existence, suggest

¹ La Marche, I, 245-47.

that he is speaking with an authority which is born of experience. In introducing Chalon and the theme of the ducal court in Chalon, La Marche places himself in that town prior to the arrival of the duke and this suggests that he is not casually mistaken as to the town in which he entered ducal service. Moreover, as Beaune and d'Arbaumont have pointed out,

Il a pu en effet se tromper de quelques semaines dans l'évaluation approximative de son âge et même de quelques années sur l'époque de son admission parmi les pages; mais il est difficile d'admettre qu'il ait commis une erreur sur le lieu où il a été reçu à la cour et où il a pour la première fois fléchi le genou devant son 'très redouté seigneur. (La Marche, IV, p. xvijj)

Nevertheless, it should be recognized that La Marche's inexactitude over dates in this section is not merely a question of being mistaken. At the least it is a result of a concerted effort to make the dates accord with each other, despite the fact that La Marche does not seem to be sure when various events took place. However, I would contend that in fact the schema presented by the opening pages of La Marche's *Mémoires* is not one which has been arrived at through a process of forgetting and of consequent attempts at reconciliation of conflicting facts. Instead I believe that the opening sections of the *Mémoires* present a unified whole, not only chronologically but also thematically intended to confirm the contract between La Marche and his reader, set out in the introduction, and to present Olivier de La Marche as a certain sort of witness: one whose life is intimately associated with the political issues of his day prior even to his entry into the heart of political power that was the Burgundian court.

It is in this light that I believe the digressions in the story of Jacques de Bourbon and the account of Jean de Fribourg's court should be read. When Olivier de La Marche gives his readers a history of Jacques de Bourbon's life as background to how he came to have his first memory, he is inscribing his personal history within the context of matters of wider political significance. Throughout the opening sections, links of this sort are created so that accounts of political events are punctuated with references to Olivier de La Marche.

One of the forms which these references take is the introduction of narratorial comment, as is the case when La Marche recalls the Treaty of Arras, writing that '[la paix] m'a semblé œuvre et matière plus divine que naturelle'. La Marche, who was still only a child when the treaty was signed, subjects it to his own commentary which, by using a past tense, he suggests reflects his judgement at the time. Another way in which La Marche introduces himself into his account of matters of high political import is by reference to people, places or themes which have previously been associated with himself. One instance of this technique can be found in La Marche's account of the events of 1419. In this year, the previous Burgundian duke, Jean Sans-Peur, had been stabbed to death during diplomatic negotiations on a bridge at Montereau by men associated with the Dauphin. The event, which had intensified Franco-Burgundian hostilities, became a defining moment in Burgundian political polemic and was all the more so in 1472, when La Marche was writing this section of his *Mémoires*, against a background of renewed conflict. However old La Marche may have been in 1435, he was certainly too young to be personally associated with the killing of Jean Sans-Peur. However, he creates a personal association by mentioning the fact that the Seigneur de Saint Georges, who had been instrumental in La Marche's coming to Pontarlier and whose family had played a prominent role in his account of his first memory, was captured at Montereau. The Treaty of Arras, to which the events at Montereau have provided the context, is passed from the major players in Burgundian politics down to one person introduced in the first section and then to another until, over thirty years later, it passes into the hands of Olivier de La Marche himself:¹

De la part de monseigneur de Bourgoingne, il y fut en personne. Il estoit accompagné du duc Arnoul de Guerles, de l'evesque de Liege et du duc Buillon qui se nommoit de Huissebergues, de Jehan monseigneur, heritier du duc de Cleves, de Charles de Bourgoingne, conte de Nevers et de Reteil, de

¹ La Marche (I, 206) writes that he obtained a copy of the treaty over twenty years afterwards but, if he was writing in 1472, it would actually be nearer forty years after the event.

Loys, conte de Saint Pol, de Jehan de Lucembourg, conte de Ligny, et de plusieurs grans personnaiges de son sang, et aultres. Et les principaulx de son conseil et d'emprès luy furent messire Nycolas Raoulin, seigneur d'Authume, son chancelier, messire Antoine, seigneur de Croy, son premier chambellan, messire Pierre de Bauffremont, seigneur de Charny, le seigneur de Ternant, de Haubourdin, et aultres. [...] Et dura cestuy parlement trois mois entiers, c'est assavoir du commencement de juillet jusques à la fin de septembre, que lors fut la paix jurée, close et sceelée par tous les partiz, et fut publiée et portée par escript par tout le royaume de France, par les pays de monseigneur de Bourgoingne et ailleurs, et tellement que lesdiz traictiez vindrent au lieu de Pontarli, ce que je veiz, et en retint le double Pierre de Saint Moris, escuyer, et l'envoya à mon pere ou chastel de Jou, dont il advint que, plus de vingt ans après, je les recueilliz, et me vint si à point à ceste [heure] qu'en ces presentes memoires j'ay ceste paix enregistrée, et dont la teneur de mot à mot s'ensuit. (La Marche, I, 204-206. Editorial additions are those of Beaune and d'Arbaumont.)

The passage of the treaty from the Burgundian court, to Pierre de Saint Moris, to Philippe de La Marche and ultimately to Olivier de La Marche situates the author within an unbroken historical tradition represented by his association with these important men as a youth and his access to their political heritage in the form of the treaty as a man. Just as is the case with the author's situating himself in Chalon, La Marche's repeated references to men with whom he has been associated in the first section signal that he was already linked with the politics of Burgundy before entering its court.

Semantically too, La Marche creates this link. In describing the destruction caused by the *écorcheurs*, he writes:

Messire Jehan de Lucembourg, conte de Ligny, subget et parent du duc de Bourgoingne, ne vould point estre comprins au traicté de la paix, n'abandonner les Angloix ne son premier sement. [...] Il tenoit beaucoup et largement de villes et chasteaulx en frontiere de Henault, de Champaigne et de Barrois [...]. Pareillement sur la marche de Bourgoingne se tenoient messire Thibault, bastard de Neuf Chastel, le bastard de Vergy, et aultres Bourguignons, qui s'estoient enforcez et garnys ès places de Dernay, de Montesclaire, et aultres places prises sur le duc de Bar [...]. En Champaigne, et sur les marches de la duchié de Lucembourg qui pour lors estoit ung pays plain de haussaires et de coureurs, se tenoit le seigneur de Commersy [...] et prenoit et ravissoit de toutes pars prisonniers et butin, dont il esleva ung merueilleux avoir. Sur les marches de Metz, de Lucembourg, de Bar et de Lorraine, se tenoit Henry de la Tour, au lieu de Pierrefort, et tenoit les citez de Tou et de Verdun en rente d'apatis, et tous ses voisins en subjection. Tout le tournoiement du royaume de France

estoit plain de places et de forteresses, vivans de rapine et de proie; et par le millieu du royaume et des pays voisins s'assemblerent toutes manieres de gens de compagnie que l'on nommoit escorcheurs, et chevaulchoient et alloient de pays en pays, de marche en marche, querans victuailles et aventures pour vivre et pour gagner, sans regarder ne espargner les pays du Roy de France, du duc de Bourgoigne, ne d'autres princes du royaume. (La Marche, I, 241-43).

The repetition of *marche* in this passage can be read as a reference to the author's own surname, particularly as it appears first in the construction 'la marche de Bourgoigne'.

Such plays on 'La Marche' can be found elsewhere in the author's writings: his testament stipulates that his heart is to be buried in Villegaudin:

Et veut sondit cœur estre mis devant le grand autel de laditte chapelle en façon que il puisse faire marchepied au prestre qui dira la messe, et que ses héritiers fassent faire une pierre sur laquelle le prestre aura les pieds en célébrant la messe, et à l'entour du bord d'icelle pierre, non pas au-dessus, mais en cottière seront mises quatre lignes qui s'ensuivent:
 Pour marchepied, repos, passet et marche
 Son bon le cœur Olivier de la Marche
 Au très digne prestre saint et sacré
 Dont le Corps-Dieu est ce jour consacré.
 (La Marche, IV, p. clx).¹

It is, therefore, not implausible to suggest that, in writing of the *écorcheurs*, Olivier de La Marche may have exploited the recurrence of the words 'la marche' to associate himself further with the weighty political matters of which he writes.²

¹ It is to be presumed that La Marche's wishes were not respected, as the chapel in question, known as the *chapelle des quatre seigneurs* was listed before its destruction in 1793 as housing the tomb of 'Guillaume de la Marche père d'Olivier' (M. Courtépée, *Description générale et particulière du duché de Bourgogne*, 2 vols, 2nd edn (Dijon: Lagier, 1847), II, 460, and it would be unusual if the same records did not mention the heart of the author himself and an accompanying inscription. It should be noted that in naming La Marche's father as Guillaume, the regional historians are in conflict with the account of the author and most of his biographers who give his name as Philippe.

² Olivier de La Marche misses an opportunity to do so when writing about Jacques de Bourbon one of whose titles was 'comte de La Marche'. Chastelain (*Œuvres*, I, 168), writing about the same events uses this title and, if we are to accept that La Marche is incorporating his own name into the opening sections of his work, we must question why he does not do this. One possible reason is that Jacques de Bourbon was not actually a member of La Marche's family, and the author felt that the inclusion of the title might lead to confusion. It should be noted that Denis Sauvage and the subsequent print tradition until Beaune and d'Arbaumont amended La Marche's account to incorporate the title, despite there being no manuscript justification for this change. It is tempting to speculate that Sauvage made his intervention with an awareness of the rhetorical implications of the use of 'la marche' elsewhere in the section.

Even before Olivier de La Marche entered the Burgundian court, therefore, he was at the centre of Burgundian politics – or so at least the author would have us believe. His entry into Burgundian employ would, in this context, take on an air of inevitability; Olivier de La Marche, having been associated with the great events of the 1430s, was naturally fated to become part of the seat of power – the court itself. La Marche’s account is laced with such redolence: like an Arthurian hero, he enters the court at Pentecost and, perhaps significantly, he gives his age at the time as being thirteen. Twelve or thirteen seems to have been a significant age in La Marche’s conception. Twice in the account of the Banquet of the Pheasant, major roles are played by children aged twelve, and it seems as if this age was looked upon as the one at which a child entered the world of social and political responsibility.¹ Guillaume le Maréchal left his father’s house to become a squire at the age of eleven or twelve.² In Anthoine de La Sale’s *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, the eponymous hero enters the court of Jean II at the age of thirteen and this serves to reinforce the impression that La Marche may be drawing on a literary topos or a social convention in saying that he was thirteen when he entered the court of Philippe le Bon.³ On the other hand, given that this seems to have been a social convention, it is perfectly possible that Olivier de La Marche may have been thirteen in 1442 or 1443, when he entered the court at Chalon. Accepting this date has the advantage that La Marche would have been four or five in 1435, which is a much more plausible age from which to report one’s first memory. However, it

¹ The garland of flowers, which was presented to Philippe le Bon to announce that he was going to hold the Banquet of the Pheasant, was given to him in the course of a previous banquet, held by Adolphe de Clèves, by ‘une très belle dame, jeune, de l’age de douze ans’ (La Marche, II, 343). Similarly, in the *entremetz* of the singing deer, which appeared at the Banquet of the Pheasant, the melody to which the deer sang the accompaniment was sung by ‘ung jeune filz de l’age de douze ans’ (La Marche, II, 358). In both cases the age of twelve seems to be associated with the concept of youth but both young people are participants in ceremonies of the prime political importance. It therefore does not seem unreasonable to suggest that La Marche (who was in charge of the spectacle of the banquet, and almost certainly of composing the account of it) regarded the age of twelve as the earliest age at which one could take on such political/social roles.

² Georges Duby, ‘Les “jeunes” dans la société aristocratique’ in Georges Duby, *Hommes et structures du moyen âge* (Paris: Mouton, 1973) (pp. 213-25), p. 214.

³ Antoine de la Sale, *Jehan de Saintré*, ed. by Joël Blanchard, trans. by Michel Quereuil (Paris: Lettres Gothiques, 1995), p. 36.

cannot be proved when La Marche was born nor which features in his accounts – his age at various stages, the year in which particular events took place or the town in which they did so – have been changed. What is clear is that the opening sections of the *Mémoires* present a thematic and chronological unity which serves to inscribe Olivier de La Marche within the context of high Burgundian politics, a context which he enters fully upon reaching the age at which a child conventionally entered into a wider social milieu than that of the family. In this connection, La Marche's telling his readers that his first memory is of events which he experienced at the age of eight or nine may also be considered significant. A child of eight has passed the critical age of seven; the age at which children were held to take responsibility for their actions.¹ La Marche would thus be in a position to appreciate the moral import of the exempla provided by Jacques de Bourbon. Moreover seven was also thought to be the age at which sensory functions became fully developed and vision and perception reached the level of those of adults.² If readers were to trust La Marche as a witness to the events which he describes, he would have to demonstrate that he was a reliable observer and one way to do this would be to suggest that he had reached an age where this could be considered likely. Following his account of his entry into court, La Marche writes what may be considered a conclusion to the opening sections of the *Mémoires*:

Et soit prins en grée ce que j'ay sceu ramentevoir et escrire des choses advenues tant devant mes yeulx [qu'] en maintes conjectures, [lesquelles] ainsi josne d'eage, sans sens et experiment, toutesfois les ay recitées et escriptes à la verité et sans fable; et d'ores en avant rendray compte, se Dieu m'a donné grace de veoir et congnoistre beaucoup de grans biens, se je les ay sceus retenir et apprendre. (La Marche, I, 252, editorial additions are those of Beaune and d'Arbaumont).

¹ Seven was, for example, the age at which Jewish children could be baptized without their parents' consent: S. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the Thirteenth Century* (Philadelphia: Dropsie College, 1933), p. 14, n. 12.

² Didier Lett, 'Les Lieux périlleux de l'enfance d'après quelques récits de miracles des XII^e-XIII^e siècles' in *Hommes de pouvoir: Individu et politique au temps de Saint Louis, Médiévales*, 34 (Spring 1998), 113-25 (p. 119).

In this conclusion, La Marche demonstrates his concern that, despite his young age, he be considered as a reliable witness. The particular stress he places on the faculty of sight may suggest that he placed himself above the age of seven to strengthen his claim. Whether or not this is the case, it is clear that the opening sections of the *Mémoires* document a very specific period of their author's life; that between the age at which he became able to make moral distinctions and that at which he entered into social and political responsibilities.¹ In order to present this period, La Marche has created a coherent chronology which, together with recurring words and characters, underpins the opening sections. These sections, which should be read as a whole, provide the primal scenes of the *Mémoires*, not only because they present the first moral and political experiences of Olivier de La Marche, but because they provide the context in which the rest of the *Mémoires* are to be read. They establish La Marche as a reliable witness, despite rhetorical inconsistencies which might undermine this claim, and they inscribe the author within the political culture of Burgundy, where it is suggested that it is natural for him to operate. More than this, however, they present themes which will recur in the *Mémoires*; themes such as chivalry, religion, the unifying and reconciling influence of a prince. La Marche's *Mémoires* do not always appear to be a work of careful consistency.² It is thus significant when, as is the case with the opening sections, it seems that effort has been made to make a section self-consistent. La Marche's opening sections do this, and provide a picture of the author which strengthens the contract presented in the introduction. It is against this background that the *Mémoires* are to be read

¹ It should be recognized that, although the ages of seven and twelve seem to be significant in medieval thought, they are not the only ages privileged in this way, and that other divisions were posited, particularly for the second date, which marks the transition between childhood and adolescence (although the term 'adolescent' was not always recognized as distinct). For a discussion of various ways in which medieval and early modern society divided stages of life, see Philippe Ariès, *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime*, 2nd edn (Paris: Seuil, 1973), chapter 1 'Les Âges de la vie', pp. 1-22.

² For example, in describing the *pas d'armes* of Galiot de Baltasin and the Seigneur de Ternant, he writes 'Et fut par ung jeudy vingt septiesme d'avril l'an quarante six, et le lundy suyvant, qui fut le second jour de may [...]'. La Marche, II, 75.

and La Marche seems to have been conscious of the fact when writing the section. The opening sections of the work, from his first memory to his entry into the Burgundian court, establish the author as a political authority as well as establishing themes which will be dealt with later in the work. This section can thus justifiably be regarded as a primal scene.

The Rubempré Affair and its Biographical Importance

If La Marche's first subject matter is the entry of Jacques de Bourbon into Pontarlier, the first event which Philippe de Commines chooses to recount is one which directly concerned Olivier de La Marche: the affair of the Bâtard de Rubempré.¹ This incident was a very serious one for Olivier de La Marche personally. In 1464 the Bâtard de Rubempré arrived at Gorcum, where Charles le Hardi, at the time Count of Charolais, was.² Charles and his advisors suspected from the inquiries that Rubempré made that he had been sent by Louis XI to assassinate or to capture Charles. They therefore had Rubempré arrested and Olivier de La Marche was dispatched to Philippe le Bon in Hesdin to inform him of what had taken place. Philippe, possibly fearing that his own life was in danger, departed in haste from Hesdin, leaving others to receive Louis, whom he had arranged to meet. La Marche was sent back to Charles with advice from his father. Louis, slighted by Philippe's apparent suspicion of him and angry at the arrest of his subject, sent ambassadors to Philippe in Lille, demanding the release of the Bâtard de Rubempré and the arrest and handing over to French authorities of Olivier de La Marche. La Marche, it was alleged, had, together with a Franciscan preacher, spread rumours in Bruges that Louis had wanted to arrest the Count of Charolais. Philippe resisted the claims of the French ambassadors, saying that La Marche

¹ Philippe de Commines, *Mémoires*, ed. by J. Calmette and G. Durville, 3 vols (Paris: Champion, 1924-5), I, 1-9.

² No contemporary account, nor the work of any subsequent historian that I have found, ascribes a first name to the Bâtard. It appears to be an unfortunate consequence of illegitimacy that identity is in this way diminished.

had indeed come to inform him of Rubempré's capture 'mais de ce qu'il deust avoir publié les nouvelles en la ville de Bruge, telles que vous dites, je n'en sçai rien, et ne cuide point'.¹

Thus supported by his duke, La Marche escaped arrest by the French while the Bâtard de Rubempré remained in Burgundian imprisonment for the next five years. The incident had further political repercussions, for, as Richard Vaughan points out, relations between Philippe and Charles, which had previously not been good, improved markedly after these events, with Philippe becoming increasingly convinced of the justice of his son's suspicions of Louis XI.²

The affair of the Bâtard de Rubempré thus sees Olivier de La Marche at the centre of Franco-Burgundian politics in the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the Guerre du Bien Public. Indeed La Marche includes his account of the Rubempré affair in the same section as that of the Guerre du Bien Public, implying, as do both Richard Vaughan and Urbain Legeay, that the latter was at least in part a consequence of the tensions inherent in and engendered by the former.³ Given La Marche's tendency to stress his association with Burgundian political affairs, one might expect his account of the affair of the Bâtard de Rubempré to concentrate on his own personal involvement. In fact La Marche gives surprisingly few details of the event and those which he does give differ from those found in other contemporary accounts. For example, where Chastelain gives an account of the behaviour which led Charles and his supporters to become suspicious of Rubempré, La Marche presents an entirely different view. Chastelain says that

[II] dressa son chemin vers Gorkem tout de pied, là où estoit le comte de Charolois; et venu à Gorkem, entra en une taverne, là où faintement et sous aucune couleur d'estre des gens du comte, commença à interroger aux gens du pays de l'estat dudit comte et de sa manière du faire, assavoir: quand il alloit

¹ Words taken from the court documents, published in Philippe de Comines *Mémoires* ed. by Lenglet du Fresnoy 4 vols (Paris: Rollin, 1747), II, 417-20 (pp. 418-19).

² Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy* (London: Longmans, 1970), pp. 374-76.

³ Urbain Legeay, *Histoire de Louis XI* 2 vols (Paris, Didot, 1874), I, 303

par mer, en quelle sorte de nef il se mettoit, ne s'il alloit fort ou à petite compagnie, ne devers le matin ou devers le vespre; et toutes si telles questions mettoit avant, sans faire semblant de nulle chose.¹

Moreover, he alleges, the Bâtard compounded this suspicious behaviour by being unable to justify his presence in Gorcum.² La Marche, on the other hand, gives an entirely different reason for Rubempré's capture:

Ledit bastard estoit homme de faict, couraigeulx et entreprenant; et fut tantost souppeonné contre luy qu'il ne venoit pas pour bien faire; car le conte de Charrolois, qui estoit josne, se tenoit lors en Hollande, et se alloit jouer à son privé de lieu en aultre; parquoy les saiges qui estoient autour de luy ne s'asseurerent point dudit bastard, mais fut envoyé gens pour le prendre. (La Marche, III, 3).

In this version of events, it seems unclear as to why Charles's entourage should be suspicious of Rubempré, except for the fact that Charles is in a vulnerable position by virtue both of his youth and of his solitude. Far from being the suspicious character of Chastelain's account, the Rubempré of La Marche's *Mémoires* seems to possess all the ideal military and personal qualities that one might find desirable. Indeed, La Marche seems to suggest that it is these very qualities which lead to Rubempré's arrest, because they make him seem a more formidable opponent. Any conflict that there might have been in an account such as that of Chastelain, where Rubempré's dubious mutability is contrasted with Charles's stability prior to Rubempré's arrival in Gorcum, is absent from La Marche's account, which portrays the incident as an unfortunate clash of two essentially good men.³

Again, when giving his account of the role that he played in the affair, La Marche appears to empty it of much of the human conflict. The Franciscan, who Louis XI claimed had preached that he had ordered the capture of the Count of Charolais, does not appear in

¹ Chastelain, *Œuvres* ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1971) V, p. 82.

² 'Et varioit et changeoit propos diversement, par quoy la note y estoit toute claire qu'il y avoit du mal.', Chastelain, *Œuvres*, V, p. 83.

³ Chastelain writes that, prior to Rubempré's arrival, Charles 'tenoit son mainage tout quoy avecques la comtesse.', Chastelain, *Œuvres*, V, p. 81.

La Marche's version of events at all, despite La Marche's usual enthusiasm for Friars Minor. This is perhaps a consequence of the way in which La Marche presents the charges against him. Rather than saying, as do all other accounts and the court records, that Louis accused him of having spread rumours in Bruges, La Marche writes that

[Le roy] me mectoit sus que je avoie esté cause de la prinse du bastard de Rubempré, et aussi que le duc de Bourgoingne s'estoit party de Hesdin sans dire adieu au Roy de France (La Marche, III, 4).

Rather than presenting himself as the possible source of slander against the King of France, La Marche suggests that he was held responsible for events which his previous account has shown to have taken place. This makes the accusation against him seem more politically respectable; in his account he is merely a player in a diplomatic incident and not an irresponsible servant, unable to keep silent about his master's affairs. On the other hand, La Marche's account also fails to include Philippe le Bon's defence of him, quoted above, in which he said that he didn't believe that La Marche was responsible for such rumour-mongering. Instead, La Marche writes that:

Le bon duc, qui fut amesuré en tous ses faiz, leur respondit que j'estoye son subject et son serviteur, et que se le Roy ou aultre me vouloit riens demander, il en feroit la raison. Toutefois ces choses se pacifierent; et pour guerdon de toute la grande despense qu'avoit fait le Roy de France, luy estant daulphin, à la maison de Bourgoingne, il luy donna, transpourta et acquita vingt mil escuz que le Roy Charles, son pere, avoit paiés, pour avoir le droit de la duchié de Lucembourg en heritaige paisible au duc de Bourgoingne, pour luy, ses hoirs et posteritez quelxconques. (La Marche, III, 4-5)

If La Marche's failure to report the charges levelled against him in the Rubempré affair were attributable to a wish to present himself in the best possible light, one might expect him to report the fact that his duke sprang to his defence, saying that he did not believe La Marche capable of such conduct. Instead, La Marche's account concentrates on the issue of jurisdiction which meant that he was not handed over to the French not because he had no

case to answer but simply because, as subject of the Duke of Burgundy, he was to be tried under Burgundian justice.

Again the matters at issue in the Rubempré affair are presented as less a conflict of personalities and more a matter of conflicting structures. Just as neither Charles nor the Bâtard de Rubempré is portrayed as inherently untrustworthy in La Marche's account, neither he nor Louis XI is exonerated by the dialogue with French ambassadors at Lille. Indeed, the implication of La Marche's version of events, where the conclusion of the Rubempré affair is referred to in the same sentence as financial negotiations involving the transfer of claims over land, is that the real reason behind the hostility of the Rubempré affair was bound up in such financial matters and had nothing to do with the personalities involved. This reading of the Rubempré affair is further implied by the way in which La Marche frames the account: preceding it with a description of the way in which Louis XI first gave the Count of Charolais a pension and then withdrew it before buying back the Somme towns, granted to the Valois Dukes of Burgundy on lease by the Treaty of Arras. In this context, conflict between the Burgundians and the French is shown to be a matter of financial and territorial dispute rather than one of personalities and La Marche implies this all the more strongly by emptying his account of personal accusation. It has been argued by some of his readers that La Marche is politically naïve and over-interested in his personal involvement in the events which he describes.¹ As Alistair Millar has pointed out, La Marche's central position in the Burgundian administration makes it difficult to argue that he was totally innocent of political matters. If he appears naïve, therefore, this may be as much a literary device as a reflection of his character. However, in the case of the

¹ An instance of this can be seen in Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold: The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy* (London: Longman, 1973) when the author describes La Marche's involvement in the re-supplying of the town of Linz: 'Naturally the account of this little escapade takes up more space in his chronicle than his description of the entire siege of Neuss', p. 342. In La Marche's defense, it might be commented that Molinet devotes a similar amount of space to events around Linz as does Olivier de La Marche, Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 66-71.

Rubempré affair, he seems far from naïf with regard to the larger political picture and indeed appears to eclipse his personal involvement in order to better illustrate the financial machinations of Franco-Burgundian politics. The affair of the Bâtard de Rubempré is an event of biographical significance in the life of Olivier de La Marche but its significance in the *Mémoires* is not that of autobiography but of wider political history. La Marche, I would argue, deliberately avoids giving his own story in this instance in order to present that of deteriorating Franco-Burgundian relations.

La Marche Wins His Spurs: A Burgundian Roll-Call

The culmination of this deterioration in relations, at least in the short term, was the ‘Guerre du Bien Public’, at the principal battle of which, Monlehéry, La Marche was made a knight. This event, which marked a gain in personal status for the author, coincided with a major political development, the battle, which has been the subject of a number of contemporary and subsequent accounts which enable us to examine once more the way in which La Marche presents his own experience against the background of the wider field of Franco-Burgundian politics. There are as many different narratives of the Battle of Montlehéry as there are authors who present an account of it. Commynes, for whom the battle marks the beginning of his disillusionment with Charles le Hardi, presents a narrative of disorganisation, with soldiers badly armed and badly led winning a victory which only goes to show the extent to which questions of victory or defeat are attributable to divine grace rather than human agents.¹ Jean de Haynin, on the other hand, presents a narrative of difficult victory, with soldiers who have hardly eaten and who are suffering in the heat of the day encountering difficulties in carrying out their orders so that, for example, the order

¹ ‘Et en cela monstra Dieu que les batailles sont en sa main, et dispose de la victoire à son plaisir.’ Commynes, *Mémoires* ed. by Calmette and Durville, I, 26. Commynes’s account of the battle can be found I, 19-39.

to set fire to the town of Montlehéry is carried out only after stiff resistance from the French has been beaten off.¹ Olivier de La Marche's version of events is different again, although it should be noted that the battle forms part of the section probably composed after 1494, the most remote of all the sections of the *Mémoires* from the events which it describes. A result of this is that the account of the Battle of Montlehéry is shorter and much more sketchy in his work than in those of either of the other two authors quoted. Nevertheless, a distinctly different emphasis in his account can be detected, with La Marche concentrating in greater detail on the deliberations of the evening after the battle than on the military strategies employed during the battle itself.

Despite these differences in approach, however, similarities in the three accounts can be identified which suggest that they are drawing on common material in some instances and on a common conception of what should constitute the account of such a battle. One instance of this can be found in an incident where Charles is confronted by a French soldier who recognizes him and invites him to give himself up.² Charles refuses to do so and is rescued from the situation by the intervention of his doctor's son who, in La Marche's account and in that of Jean de Haynin, is named as Robert Cotterel. This fact suggests that La Marche and Haynin are drawing on the same source, which differs in some respect from that of Commynes, who gives the name of the man who intervened as Jean Cadet. As Philippe le Bon had a surgeon by the name of Caudet, Commynes's version seems the more plausible of the two.³ However, the it remains the case that La Marche and Haynin seem to have taken their material from the same source and to this observation could be added the comment that the fact that they and Commynes all include this detail in

¹ *Les Mémoires de Messire Jean, Seigneur de Haynin et de Louvegnies 1465-1477*, ed. by R Chalon, 2 vols (Mons: Hoyois, 1842), I, 27-43.

² Haynin, *Mémoires*, ed. by Chalon, I, 37, Commynes, *Mémoires* ed. by Calmette and Durville, I, 30-31, La Marche, III, 11.

³ Commynes, *Mémoires*, ed. by Calmette and Durville, I, 31.

their very different accounts of the battle suggests a common conception of how accounts of battles should be structured whereby the mass movement of the armies is set against the actions of individuals. In Haynin the incident provides the turning point for the battle, which prior to this point had not been going in the Burgundians' favour:

La vaillantise dudict comte de Charrolois causa ce recouvrement, qui autrement avoit perdu celle journée, qui luy est tournée tant victorieuse, et en laquelle il n'a perdu nul prince ny seigneur de grand estat, et bien peu de ses gens outre ceux qui furent tuez devant arriver au charroy. (Haynin, *Mémoires*, ed. by Brouwers, I, 38.)

This suggests an approach to historiography where the actions of individuals are used to illustrate and explain wider military developments. It is an approach which La Marche uses elsewhere, for example in his account of the siege of Villy during the Luxemburg campaign, when two Burgundian squires, who refuse to abandon each other when they have the chance and are both captured, form a moral comparison with Jaquemin de Beaumont, the *soudoyer* who captures them, having earlier abandoned his own men in the castle during the siege.¹ However, La Marche's account of the Battle of Montlehéry stresses the uncertainty of the Burgundians as to whether they could win the confrontation or not when, in fact, the French had already abandoned the field of combat. It would, therefore, be out of keeping with his conception of the account of the battle to present the incident with the doctor's son as a turning point in the confrontation and, accordingly, he does not do so. Instead, he gives an extradiegetic reference to the subsequent career of Charles's rescuer:

Et prestement le conte fit chevalier ledit messire Robert Cottereau, et le pourveut de l'office d'estre lieutenant des fiefz en Brabant, qui est un bel estat et prouffitable. (La Marche, III, 12)

The narrative then returns to the difficulties encountered by the Burgundians and the fact that some members of the army appeared to have deserted. It then moves on to a

¹ La Marche, II, 31-33.

description of the discussions in the Burgundian camp after nightfall. In the meantime, however, La Marche's reference to the creation of a knight on the field of battle evokes his own knighting, which has preceded his account of the battle:

Et là furent faictz chevaliers d'une part et d'aulture; et en peulz parler, car je fus ce jour chevalier. Le seigneur de Clecy, Jehan de Montfort, Hemar Bouton, et pour nostre chef le seigneur de Chasteau Guyon, filz du prince d'Orange et de la seur du conte d'Armignac, et plusieurs aultres fusmes chevaliers à ce premier rencontre. (La Marche, III, 11.)

The use of the first person plural verbal form in this last sentence strikes us as unusual but it need not do so if we remember that punctuation and division into sentences is not fixed in fifteenth-century texts. However only one manuscript source (*B*, at fol. 297^r) contains the more probable reading: 'Je fus ce jour chevalier, le seigneur de Clecy, [...] et plusieurs aultres fusmes chevaliers à ce premier rencontre.' and, even if this reading is preferred, the repetition of past tenses of *estre* strikes the reader as unusual.¹ It draws attention to the shared nature of the experience: what happened to Olivier de La Marche on the day of the Battle of Montlehéry also happened to the other men that he mentions and his repetition of the same verb, first in a singular and then in a plural form, draws attention to this fact, all the more so because of the apparent awkwardness with which it is expressed. Later too, the first person plural recurs as La Marche describes events after the battle:

Et le conte de Charrolois, ainsi blessé qu'il estoit, se tira à une grosse haye sur le champ de la bataille, où il demoura pour la nuyct; et fusmes ordonnez cinquante hommes d'armes, qui veillasmes celle nuyct à cheval, pour soubstenir le premier. Et sur le point du jour fusmes envoyez avecques le seigneur de Moroeil, lors maistre de l'artillerie, pour gaingner et recouvrer certaines pieces d'artillerie au pied du chastel de Montlehery. (La Marche, III, 13)

Here the group with which La Marche is identifying himself is unclear. The verbal forms indicate the author's presence at the event, together with forty nine other Burgundian soldiers, but La Marche does not state explicitly who these men were. The implication is

¹ *Par*, fol. 271^r, *S*, fol. 354, *H*, fol. 287, *L* (unnumbered folio), *A*, fol. 170^v.

that they represent the same people to whom La Marche was referring when he last used the first person plural, that is to say to the newly-created knights, and the intervening reference to Robert Coterel's being created a knight serves to keep this context in the reader's mind. Moreover, it can be demonstrated that these knights represent a certain category of men – members of Burgundian nobility with close links to Charles le Hardi – who are overwhelmingly the subject matter of La Marche's account of the battle.

I have said that the three contemporary accounts of the Battle of Montlehéry under consideration share common conceptions of historiography and I believe that one tradition in which all three could be said to be situated is that of the heraldic historian. One of the roles of the herald in the fifteenth century, was to participate in battles and to record the coats of arms worn by those present and the names of those who died or were captured.¹ Perhaps the account which adheres most closely to this model can be found in a letter which Guillaume de Torcy sent to the Duchess of Burgundy four days after the battle.² This letter lists both French and Burgundian dead, unlike the accounts of La Marche and Haynin, which concentrate predominantly on the Burgundian dead or Comynnes's description, which states that there were dead on both sides without naming them. Haynin's account, however, follows the heraldic model to the extent that it describes the banners of the Burgundian participants. Moreover, the very fact of listing the protagonists in a battle, and particularly those who were knighted or killed in the course of the battle, places the accounts of the Battle of Montlehéry within the heraldic tradition. La Marche is, it must be admitted, a very partisan exponent of this approach to historical narrative; with the exception of the French king, the only French soldier named in his account of the battle is Pierre de Brézé, Seneschal of Varenne, whom he claims to have found dead on the field the

¹ For an account of the role played by heralds, see Michel Stanesco, 'Le Héraut d'armes et la tradition littéraire chevaleresque', *Romania*, 106 (1985), 233-53.

² Quoted in Comynnes, *Mémoires* ed. by Lenglet du Fresnoy, II, 484-88.

morning after the battle. In his account of the incident with the doctor's son, too, La Marche marginalizes the French protagonist by failing to quote the words with which he threatened the count of Charolais: 'Monseigneur, rendez-vous je vous cognois bien'.¹ Both Commynes and Haynin quote these words, and if we are to believe that La Marche and Haynin are drawing on a common source, it might be expected that La Marche too would have access to this anecdote. That he does not, reflects the extent to which the French in his account are anonymized, operating as a faceless threat to the Burgundians around whom his account is based.

This observation serves to illuminate a further puzzling feature of La Marche's account of the Battle of Monlehéry; the fact that he gives two accounts of the night following the battle and of the morning thereafter. The first account is the one quoted above, in which La Marche and his companions remain awake in the belief that the king is camped nearby, only to discover the next morning from a passing Fransican that he had in fact left in the night. This is followed by:

Et celle nuyct le seigneur de Condé fut tellement espouventé qu'il habandonna le conte de Charrolois, et s'enfuit jusques en Bourgoingne; et le conte de Charrolois cuydant que ses ennemis le deussent landemain combatre et assailir, tint ung conseil au long de ladicte haye [a hedge that has been mentioned in the first account of the night], sur une piece de bois abatue; et là se trouvaient les grans, les saiges et les plus gens de bien de son armée. (La Marche, III, 14)

A second account of the night then follows, documenting from an eyewitness viewpoint, the deliberations of Charles's army, which conclude with the decision to hold out against whatever the French may throw at them 'Et sur cest oppinion le jour commença à poindre, et demoura la conclusion que l'on attendroit la fortune.'² There is, however no second dawning of the day and no second discovery that the king has departed following the

¹ Haynin, *Mémoires*, ed. by Chalon, I, 37 Commynes, *Mémoires* ed. by Calmette and Durville, I, 30 adds 'ne vous faictes point tuer!'

² La Marche, III, 14-15. The credentials of La Marche as an eyewitness observer are established by his initial comment that 'Là ouy je parler le seigneur de Crequy [...]'

account of the debate within the Burgundian army. Indeed such repetition is not necessary, as La Marche has already described the scene and the council of war which he describes is thus shown to be labouring under a misapprehension even before he describes it. What is unusual is that the same can also be said of his first account of the night following the battle as, even before he tells his readers of his vigil, La Marche shows them that it was unnecessary:

Pour ce que les François firent grans feuz et en plusieurs lieux, parmy le villaige de Montlehery, chascun de nostre parti cuydoit que le Roy de France se fust arresté audit villaige, pour landemain venir combattre les Bourguignons. Mais non fit; ains toute la nuyct chevaucha, et s'en alla à Corbeil, combien que le chastel de Montlehery tinst pour luy. (La Marche, III, 13)

The French have been entirely removed from the scene of the battle even before La Marche gives his first account of Burgundian misapprehensions. The effect of this to stress the isolation of the Burgundians, whom La Marche places in a position of ignorance, in comparison with the reader's knowledge, twice over. His final comment on the battle is to stress his belief, despite the arguments of French historians, that it was a victory for the Burgundians. It is an argument which he states with some force, aware of the extent to which it is open to dispute. One effect of twice presenting the fears of the Burgundian army that it had lost the battle whilst informing readers before each account that the battle was won is to address the argument that it was a French victory and to neutralize it. Another effect is to encourage identification with the Burgundians, whose doubts and whose ultimate resolve are the only human features presented in the passage. Nothing is visible of the French, not even their names, until they appear dead on the battlefield.

La Marche's personal role in this account is similar to that played in the account of his childhood. His citing of names demonstrates the extent to which he is personally involved in the events of high Burgundian politics but here the purpose is not to convince readers of his credentials as a witness to these affairs (although his drawing attention to his

status as an eyewitness inevitably serves to support his claims) but to invite them to sympathize with the people whom he describes and thus accept his analysis of the outcome of the battle. It must be remembered that this account was probably composed not under the Valois dukes but after 1494, that is after the battle of Nancy and the subsequent conflicts between the French crown and the Habsburg dynasty. In this context it may be significant that at least two of the names that he gives to Burgundian participants in the battle, Louis de Chalon, seigneur de Châteauguyon and Claude Toulangeon are of people who subsequently suffered through their support of Burgundy against the crown.¹ La Marche, writing in the 1490s, no longer had any reason to demonstrate his loyalty to the French crown and this may be why the French in his account of the Battle of Monlehéry emerge as faceless threats to the Burgundians, with whom he establishes his own, and his reader's solidarity.

Where the Personal is Political: La Marche and Louis XI and Yolande de Savoie

La Marche's meetings with Louis XI on his way to and from a diplomatic mission to the Duke of Brittany provide an event identified by many of his more recent biographers as being significant.² It is, however, an incident for which there is very little independent confirmation and most accounts which report it draw on La Marche's version of events. This is not to say that there is any doubt that La Marche was sent on such a diplomatic mission, nor that he met Louis XI in the course of this mission. However, the secrecy of such affairs and La Marche's reluctance to divulge what passed between him and the king mean that La Marche's *Mémoires* provide the only available first-hand account of the

¹ Details of the way in which Louis XI disinherited these two men can be found in Henri Beaune and Jules d'Arbaumont, *La Noblesse aux états de Bourgogne de 1350 à 1789* (Dijon: Lamarche, 1864), p. 147 and p. 309.

² La Marche, III, 33-34.

event.¹ Maybe this situation has led scholarly readers of the *Mémoires* to invest the incident with greater biographical significance than is perhaps justifiable. Henri Stein, for example, reads menace into Louis XI's questioning of La Marche and implies that this experience may be the source of the author's dislike of the king.² Other readers have followed Stein in this analysis, drawing attention to the phrase with which La Marche ends his account of the encounter:

Le Roy sceut que j'estoye à Tours, et me manda pour parler à luy à Jargueaux. Ce que je feiz, et si bonnes parolles dont il me donna charge pour les dire à mon maistre de par luy eussent esté vrayes, nous n'eussions jamais eu guerre en France. (La Marche, III, 34)

There is a temptation, demonstrated most recently in Alistair Millar's work, to speculate on the nature of what was said at this meeting. The fact that La Marche does not reveal this information has been attributed variously to diplomatic discretion or to his writing under the Habsburg dukes, when details of such negotiations were no longer important. Whilst I would not discount these motives for La Marche's silence, I would contend that it also has a structural basis.

The account of the meeting with Louis XI follows descriptions of two events with which parallels can be drawn. The first is on Franco-Burgundian negotiations over a possible marriage between Anne de France (whom La Marche refers to as Jehanne) and the recently widowed Charles.³ This is followed by a brief account of a military campaign which Charles fought against the people of Liège (La Marche, III, 30-31). In each of these accounts La Marche emphasises the untrustworthiness of those involved, describing, for example, the way in which Louis achieved peace after the 'Guerre du Bien Public' by promising to establish a council of 36 men to look after matters of the Common Weal

¹ Although there is always a possibility that diplomatic dispatches revealing what was actually said at the meeting may come to light.

² Henri Stein, *Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, p. 36.

³ La Marche, III, 27 and n. 1.

Et à la verité, ce fut soubtivement faict au Roy pour estre quicte de celle charge, et venir à paix avec les princes de son royaume; car j'en ay assez enquis, et ne sceu onques qui estoient les trente six, ne qui estoit le premier ne le derrenier, et en mon jugement, le Roy se monstra le plus subtil de tous les aultres princes, et entretenoit le conte de Charrolois du mariaige dessusdit; et ne sçay s'il avoit grant voulenté. (La Marche, III, 28-29)

Louis is thus characterized as untrustworthy before La Marche's account of their meeting, but it should be noted that the final clause in the passage quoted above is ambiguous and that the 'il' may refer to Charles as easily as to Louis. The comment on the Liégeois which follows, 'Liegeois ne sont pas bien coustumiers de tenir ce qu'ils promectent' (La Marche, III, 31) further generalizes the implication of untrustworthiness. There then follows La Marche's account of his meetings with Louis XI and a description of Louis's failure to marry his daughter to Charles and of Charles's reaction to this. In giving this description, La Marche implies that Charles only heard of Louis's plans to marry his daughter to Pierre de Bourbon, seigneur de Beaujeu, once the couple were married. In fact Anne was married to Pierre de Bourbon in 1471, after Charles too had remarried, and so La Marche's account of negotiations in which 'dissimulerent le Roy et le conte, l'ung contre l'autre, ce qu'ilz avoient sur le cuer.' has, at least, been brought forward in order to fit in with the general implication of untrustworthiness which La Marche situates in 1465.¹

Against this background of general untrustworthiness, La Marche's account of his meeting with Louis XI gives readers a further example of the same lesson: politics in 1465 was characterized by the extent to which players dissimulated. But dissimulation can have two meanings – it can mean to lie, as La Marche suggests Louis did on this occasion, and (and this is the signification that it has in the passage quoted above) it can mean to conceal facts. La Marche's argument is that everyone in this era of politics was dissimulating in one

¹ La Marche, III, 35 and n. 1.

way or another and, in order to illustrate this, he himself conceals information – details of what was said at the meeting between himself and Louis – from the reader.

In the case of La Marche's meeting with Louis XI, therefore, the absence of the first-hand knowledge that we might expect from an autobiographical account illustrates the political import of the *Mémoires*, just as it did in the instance of the Rubempré affair. To some extent the same can be said of another encounter reported in the *Mémoires*; his arrest of Yolande de Savoie and her children. Much has been said on the autobiographical nature of this account – and much will be said elsewhere in this study – particularly given that it presents the sole instance of La Marche questioning the orders of Charles le Hardi. Moreover, the fact that La Marche stresses that he only followed the orders on pain of death illustrates the image which the author wishes to present of himself – that of the loyal servant who is, nevertheless, not without his conscience. The predominance of authorial comment in this passage has led to its being considered one of the most autobiographical sections of the *Mémoires* – one in which the author is most emphatically present. However, it can, in that respect, be compared to another well-known instance of authorial comment in the *Mémoires*; the personal doubt scene at the Banquet of the Pheasant, in which narratorial presence belies authorial absence. That is not to say that Olivier de La Marche was absent from the arrest of Yolande de Savoie, but his account does seem to conceal the full extent of the role which he played, or rather, to hint at a different role by its repeated denial. In the course of his arrest of Yolande de Savoie and her children, her eldest son, Philibert de Savoie, escaped La Marche's clutches and was removed by his supporters to Geneva. Twice in his account La Marche returns to this escape, each time saying that 'me fut desrobé' (La Marche, III, 235). There is some uncertainty as to the details. Some historians

have reported that two sons of Savoye escaped, Philibert, aided by Geoffroy, seigneur de Riverol and Jacques-Louis, helped by Louis Villette.¹ However, La Marche reports that

J'estoye bien assureé du second filz, et le faisoye porter par ung gentilhomme, et cuydoye bien estre assureé du duc de Savoye, mais il m'avoit esté desrobé.
(La Marche, III, 235)

This appears to contradict the version of events whereby two princes escaped. Examination of the diplomatic documents surrounding the incident, however, reveal that both accounts are possible, as the son that Yolande de Savoie reports as being in captivity with her is not Jacques-Louis, but a third son, Charles.² Why does La Marche only report the escape of one child? And why, despite the fact that he says that those responsible for the escape were 'aucung de nostre compaignie', and despite the fact that their names appear in other accounts, does he not name them? One possible answer is that La Marche was aware of the escape and permitted it to take place. He makes no secret of his distaste for the mission and attaches no blame to the men involved: 'Et certes ilz ne firent que leur devoir; et ce que j'en fiz, je le fiz pour saulver ma vie' (La Marche, III, 235). As the purpose of the mission seems to have been to establish Charles's tutelage over Philibert, his evasion would have been sufficient to prevent its success. La Marche, who claimed that this escape was an accident, continues to present it as such in his *Mémoires*, and, indeed, it could be argued that, even under the Habsburgs, he had an interest in doing so, as his reputation continued to be that of the loyal servant. The way in which he concludes the account of the incident, however, draws attention to the risks he ran in having allowed Philibert to escape, whilst failing to deny that he may in some way have been complicit in it:

¹ Samuel Guichenon, *Histoire de Bresse et de Bugey*, 4 vols (Lyon: Hugutan & Ravaud, 1650), I, 87-88, and *Histoire Genealogique de la Royale Maison de Savoye* 2 vols (Lyon: Barbier, 1660), I, 567

² Léon Ménabréa, *Chroniques de Yolande de France, duchesse de Savoie, sœur de Louis XI* (Chambéry: Puthod, 1859), 149-50.

Et devez sçavoir que le duc fit très mauvais chiere à toute la compaignie, et principalement à moy; et fus là en dangier de ma vie, pour ce que je n'avoie point emmené le duc de Savoie. (La Marche, III, 236)

Whether or not La Marche actually did know of the escape of the young duke and his brother, it is clear that his disapproval of the order to capture them leads him to sympathize with their escape. He does not, however, state this belief explicitly and thus his account of his role in the capture of Yolande de Savoie and her children does not give an accurate reflection of his personal involvement. The role of the author/narrator in the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche is, once more, shown to be more problematic than the initial contract established in the 1473 introduction might lead us to suspect.

The Battle of Nancy and the Absence of La Marche

Ainsi perdit le duc de Bourgoingne la troisieme fois, et fut en sa personne rataint, tué et occis de coups de masse, combien que aucungz ont voulu dire que le duc n'estoit pas mort à celle journée' mais si fut, et fut le conte de Chimay prins et mené en Allemaigne; et le duc demoura mort au champ de la bataille, et estendu comme le plus pauvre homme du monde; et je fuz prins, la Mouche de Vere, messire Anthoine d'Oiselet, Jehan de Montfort, et autres, et fusmes menez en la ville de Tou en Barrois; et fut celle journée par ung grant frois merueilleusement; et povez bien entendre que quant nous fusmes avertiz de la mort de nostre maistre, nous fusmes bien deconfortez; car nous avions perdu en celluy jour honneur, chevance et esperance de resource. (La Marche, III, 240-41)

Thus La Marche describes his own involvement at the Battle of Nancy, the final act in the Valois administration of Burgundy. It is a moment of great political significance but we can imagine that it was a moment of great personal significance too, as, regardless of when La Marche had entered into the Burgundian court, he had served the Valois dukes for over thirty years, most of it in the direct service of Charles le Hardi. Indeed, La Marche gives his readers a view of his own personal reactions to the event, documenting the feelings of loss experienced by himself and his companions on hearing of the duke's death and adding the observation that the day was cold, reminding the reader of his physical presence at the

event. It is not a particularly individualized experience: La Marche is only one of a number of men to go through the same ordeal, but it appears to be that of an eyewitness which conveys the feeling of what it was like to be involved.

However, with this event too, La Marche's personal involvement can be shown to be different from that which the *Mémoires* lead us to believe. Writing the day after the battle the Seigneur de Lorraine lists the six distinguishing features by which the body of Charles le Hardi was recognized:

Et cette enseigne & celle de l'escarboucle donna son Medecin, qui est Portugalois, nommé Mathieu & les autres enseignes cogneust ses Valets-de-Chambre, & outre, fut cognu par le grand Bastard, & pareillement par Messire Olivier de la Marche, & des Valets-de Chambre, & par Denys, son Chapellain, & de tous ses gens qui y ont esté menez, n'y a point de faute qu'il ne soit mort.¹

Molinet, seems to confirm this story, when he writes that those who identified Charles were 'ses medecins, son chapellain, son valet de chambre et aultres ses privés, familiers et serviteurs, ayans aucunement cognoissance de lui', and there is a further suggestion that La Marche may have been amongst their number as his name appears in the list of those captured.² Most biographers of La Marche accept that he was one of those who was charged with this sorry task.³ Various explanations have been put forward for why the *Mémoires* do not report this. Certainly the job was a particularly nasty one: Charles was found naked and his face had been bitten by wolves, to the extent that he was identified by scars on his body. He had also been struck three times, once through the head, once through the stomach and once in the groin and it might be imagined that the task of identifying him was not one which La Marche would want to recall. However it is certainly something one would expect of a writer who had promised to record 'tout ce que j'ay veu de mon temps digne d'escripre et d'estre ramentu'. La Marche's absence in his report of this incident may

¹ Quoted in Comines, *Mémoires* ed. by Lenglet du Fresnoy, III, 495.

² Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 167. Comines, *Mémoires*, ed. by Lenglet du Fresnoy, III, 496.

³ Both Stein and Millar agree with the account taken from the battlefield report.

be intended to preserve the memory of the duke as he was when he was alive, or to protect the author from memories which were traumatic to him but, in the final analysis, it demonstrates the extent to which La Marche, the man behind the *Mémoires* is an elusive figure.

The title of this chapter, *L'Autobiographie moyenâgeuse* is a reference to Paul Zumthor's article, 'L'Autobiographie au moyen âge' on genre in the middle ages. This article argues that there was very difficult to identify anything which a modern reader would understand as autobiographical writing in the medieval period. La Marche's *Mémoires* are autobiography, of a sort: they establish an autobiographical contract in the same way that the texts identified by Lejeune and Bruss do and have been read as unproblematical eyewitness accounts, even when problems of dates or questions as to the author's presence at a particular event have been identified by previous readers. On examination, however, it seems clear that La Marche's personal identity in the *Mémoires* is something which operates in different ways according to the rhetorical and political lessons which he wants his readers to derive from his account. At times, as in his opening sections, he stresses his involvement in and association with events, to strengthen his claim to authority. At others, as in the case of the Rubempré affair, his involvement is minimized to bring out other political points. Personal involvement in the *Mémoires* is not a constant. The author can push the referential Olivier de La Marche forward when it suits him to do so, or he can leave him, and his experiences in the background. This technique, which deliberately obscures the extent of the author's involvement at any particular time, can justifiably be thought of as *moyenâgeux*.

‘L’Histoire [...] bourguignonne’ !

Et n’entens pas que ceste ma petite et mal acoustrée labeur se doibve appeler ou mettre ou nombre des cronicques, histoires ou escriptures faictes et composées par tant de nobles esperis qui aujourd’uy et en cestuy temps de ma vie ont si sollempnellement labouré, enquis et mis par escript (La Marche, I, 184)

When Olivier de La Marche writes this in his initial introduction to his *Mémoires* it is not simply a rhetorical deployment of the humility topos, but an acknowledgement of the importance of literary production, and particularly historical writing, in the court of Burgundy. The vitality of this milieu and the influences which it had on the author cannot be overlooked in an examination of the rhetoric of the *Mémoires* – particularly if we recall La Marche’s suggestion that the work be integrated into the larger Burgundian historiographical project by serving as raw material for official chroniclers such as Jean Molinet and George Chastelain. La Marche could not fail to be influenced by the culture in which he moved and for which he expressed such admiration, and it would be negligent to undertake a study of the rhetoric of the *Mémoires* without examining the extent to which the work interacts with this culture.

The retrospective application of the term *grands rhétoriciens* to writers of the period, particularly those of the Burgundian court, is evidence of the underlying assumption by subsequent scholars that the Burgundian writers formed a school.¹ Paul Zumthor, whose work on the poetics of the fifteenth century accepts the generic term ‘Grands Rétoriciens’ for its subtitle, and accords it capital letters, argues that the distinction between ‘grands’ and ‘petits’ rhétoriciens is the work of Henry Guy, who organizes his *Histoire de la poésie française au XVI^e siècle: Tome I, L’École des rhétoriciens* along these lines.² This is, however, a slight simplification of the matter,

¹ Paul Zumthor points out that the application of the term ‘rhétoriciens’ to a poetic school arises from a misreading by d’Héricault of a passage in the 1481 satire *Droits nouveaux*, which is aimed not at poets but at lawyers: Paul Zumthor, *Le Masque et la lumière: La Poétique des Grands Rhétoriciens* (Paris: Seuil, 1978), p. 9.

² Henry Guy, *Histoire de la poésie française au XVI^e siècle: Tome I, L’École des rhétoriciens* (Paris: Champion, 2nd edition 1968) This work was originally published in 1910.

as the term ‘grands rhétoriciens’ had already gained some currency in critical circles in the work of Petit de Julleville and Ferdinand Brunetière.¹ Nevertheless, the rapidity with which the generic term was accepted and was integrated into literary history reflects a belief that there was a late fifteenth-century school of writing which needed a term to designate it.² However, we should be wary of using this terminology as shorthand for Burgundian literary production or of regarding Olivier de La Marche simply as an exponent of the literature of the *rhétoriciens*. It is true that both Zumthor and Guy describe La Marche’s work in the course of their discussion of the pretended school. Zumthor, who regards one of the essential characteristics of the literature of the movement as being the fact that it originates in a court setting, even goes so far as to imply that La Marche, as the highest-placed courtier he examines, was in the best position to become a *rhétoricien*. However, a close reading of Zumthor’s argument reveals that he does not by virtue of this fact regard Olivier de La Marche as a *rhétoricien* and the same goes for Guy, who limits his discussion to La Marche’s poetry, whilst acknowledging that the most accomplished and valuable parts of La Marche’s *œuvre* are to be found in his *Mémoires*.³ Just as Jean Molinet’s *L’Art de rhétorique* is a dissertation on the different forms which a poem can take rather than on the construction of a prose argument, so *rhétoricien* is a term which, if used at all, should be reserved for the poet and not for the writer of history.⁴ That it has come to be used to designate historians – and particularly Burgundian historians – is perhaps the

¹ Pierre Jodogne, ‘Les “Rhétoriciens” et l’humanisme: Problème d’histoire littéraire’ in *Humanism in France at the End of the Middle Ages and in the Early Renaissance* ed. by A. H. T. Levi (Manchester: Manchester University Press; New York: Barnes & Noble, 1970), pp. 150-75 (156-57).

² V.-L. Saulnier dates the final acceptance of the concept into literary history to a little later than Guy’s work, writing that ‘l’idée “d’une [école des] grands rhétoriciens” s’est assez furtivement glissée dans notre histoire littéraire, apparemment depuis environ 1920, non sans une certaine confusion hâtive.’: V.-L. Saulnier, *La Littérature française de la Renaissance*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1973), p. 27 n.

³ Henry Guy, *Histoire de la poésie française au XVI^e siècle: Tome I, L’École des rhétoriciens*, pp. 343-47.

⁴ Jean Molinet, ‘L’Art de rhétorique’ in *Recueil d’arts de seconde rhétorique* ed. by M. E. Langlois (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1902), pp. 214-52. Pierre Jodogne points out that the fifteenth-century noun used to designate the practitioner of *rhétorique* is *rhétoricien*, and suggests, as a consequence, that the term *rhétoricien* should be avoided completely: Pierre Jodogne, ‘Les “Rhétoriciens” et l’humanisme: Problème d’histoire littéraire’.

result of an accident of literary transmission whereby two of the most influential figures in Burgundian historiography, George Chastelain and Jean Molinet, were not only also influential poets but were in fact better known as poets during their lifetime because both their *chroniques* were made public posthumously. As poets, Chastelain and Molinet had some claim to the status of *rhétoriciens*, but this does not mean that we should regard this as a label applicable to their historiography, or to Burgundian historiography in general.¹

Moreover, whereas Guy and Zumthor recognize *rhétoriciens* in many of the courts of France of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, most commentators are in agreement in regarding the emphasis accorded to history as a peculiar feature of the Burgundian court.² The famous dictum that, under the patronage of the dukes of Burgundy, ‘l’histoire s’est faite bourguignonne’ is often quoted to illustrate a number of different but related points.³ On the most basic level of interpretation, it reflects the status accorded to history – and to historians – within the ducal court. ‘Croniques de France’ were recognized as a literary category in the ducal library, and in the inventory made at Bruges in 1467 they were assigned a separate rubric from other traditionally

¹ Henri Chamard, one of the earliest scholars to use the term ‘rhétoriciens’, uses it in a much broader sense to designate ‘un groupe d’écrivains, à la fois historiens, orateurs et poètes, qui ont vécu dans la seconde moitié du XV^e siècle et le premier quart du XVI^e, et qu’unissent de communes tendances littéraires, une commune conception de la poésie.’ Henri Chamard, *Les Origines de la poésie française de la renaissance* (Paris: Boccard, 1920), pp. 130-31. However, it should be noted that, even using this broad definition, what unites the *rhétoriciens* is their common attitude to *poetry* and I believe that it is to this poetic output that we should apply the term *rhétorique*, rather than the other literary production of the same writers.

² The Burgundian court is not even the most prominent among those identified by Guy as ‘centres artistiques’ of the school, although it should be noted that it is often assumed that the ‘école des Rhétoriciens’ was, as Saulnier puts it ‘née en Flandre et en Bourgogne au XV^e siècle’, V.-L. Saulnier, *La Littérature française de la Renaissance*, p. 26. Regarding the superior standing of Burgundian historiography, as distinct from other modes of literary production, many commentators are in basic agreement with Luc Hommet when he writes ‘La littérature bourguignonne — de rares chroniqueurs exceptés — n’a pas la forte originalité de l’art bourguignon proprement dit.’: Luc Hommet, *Marie de Bourgogne ou Le Grand Héritage* (Brussels: Goemaere; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1951), p. 149.

³ The source of this quotation proves difficult to locate. George Doutrepoint, *La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne: Philippe le Hardi – Jean sans Peur – Philippe le Bon – Charles le Téméraire* (Paris: Champion, 1909), p. 404, attributes it to Auguste Molinier, *Les Sources de l’histoire de France des origines aux guerres d’Italie (1494)*, 5 vols (Paris: Picard, 1901-1904), vol. IV, *Les Valois, 1328-1461* (1904), p. 186. However, in Molinier’s work it already appears as a quotation: ‘comme on l’a dit souvent, l’histoire s’est faite bourguignonne’ [the italics are Molinier’s]. No reference is given for this quotation, and I have been unable to trace it any further.

historical literatures such as ‘Livres de geste’.¹ Amongst the volumes that were included under this heading were the works of writers such as Froissart, who had received the patronage of the Valois dukes of Burgundy, together with a number of the local and regional chronicles (of Brabant, Flanders, Holland and Hainault) which were produced by the town chroniclers of the Burgundian Netherlands.² Historiography in the Burgundian Netherlands was thus both a court-sponsored and a civic enterprise, with interaction between the two traditions leading to ducal purchases of manuscripts of the civic chronicles. However, we should beware of regarding the civic traditions of historiography in the Burgundian Netherlands as evidence of a native Burgundian tradition which meant that the flowering of historical culture in the Burgundian court was inevitable. Jean Molinet was a native of Boulogne, in the northern territories of the dukes of Burgundy, but his entry into Burgundian ducal service was not a foregone conclusion. Before finding employment in the court of Charles le Hardi, Molinet had presented himself at a number of courts – those of France, England, Brittany, Artois and Saint-Pol – all of whom had declined the offer of his considerable talents.³ If Molinet is known as a Burgundian historian, therefore, it is not because of the inherent vitality of the historical tradition in the Burgundian territories, but because the dukes of Burgundy were ready to supply material reward – in the form of money, but also, as Graeme Small points out, in that of tax-free wine – to historians whom it employed.⁴

¹ Joseph Barrois, *Bibliothèque protypographique ou Librairie des Fils du roi Jean, Charles V, Jean de Berri, Philippe de Bourgogne et les siens* (Paris: Treuttel & Würtz, 1830).

² The extent of Burgundian ducal patronage of Froissart was such as to lead Georges Doutrepoint to refer to the chronicler as ‘l’homme de Philippe le Hardi’, from the time of his fourth book onward: Georges Doutrepoint, *La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne*, p. 407. The titles of some of the regional chronicles in the 1467 inventory are to be found in Joseph Barrois, *Bibliothèque protypographique*, 1341-1433 and 1440-1444.

³ Paul Zumthor, *Le Masque et la lumière*, p. 43.

⁴ Graeme Small, in *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy: Political and Historical Culture at Court in the Fifteenth Century* (Woodbridge: Royal Historical Society, 1997) notes that Chastelain not only received exemption from the maltôte, a tax on wine and beer levied by the municipality of Valenciennes, but that his consumption of wine at the time was recorded to be over 1,800 litres per annum. Rejecting the implication that Chastelain was ‘an exceptionally thirsty historian’, Small concludes that Chastelain must have had a large household of collaborators to cater for.

Neither is it incorrect to use the term ‘employment’ to describe the relationship which authors such as Chastelain and Molinet enjoyed with the dukes of Burgundy for, unlike other writers who received occasional patronage, these two authors were accorded an official status, and a regular income, in return for composing chronicles on behalf of the Burgundian court. The appointment of George Chastelain to the post of historian in 1455 marked the beginning of this official relationship between the dukes of Burgundy and their historians. In 1473, a new title was given to Chastelain, that of *indiciaire*, and this title was transferred to Jean Molinet on Chastelain’s death. Molinet continued to hold the office under the Habsburg dukes during which time he, like Olivier de La Marche, was appointed a tutor to Philippe le Beau.¹ Thereafter the title passed to Jean Lemaire de Belges and thence to lesser-known authors such as Remy du Puys, Julien Fossetier and Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa.² The continued employment of an official historian reflects the importance which the Burgundian dukes – both Valois and Habsburg – accorded to the presentation of an approved version of history. It appears that from the 1480s Molinet was obliged to swear an oath to Maximilian as a condition of his continued employment that he would be

tenuz de servir audit estat et mettre et redigier par escript tous les fais, gestes, proesses et aultres vertus comendables de feuz les prédecesseurs du roy, que Dieu absoille, et de luy et au surplus faire bien, deuement et lealment, toutes et singulieres, les choses que bon et leal historiographe et chroniqueur dessys dit poelt et doit faire et qui audit estat compete et appertient.³

The contractual nature of this relationship and the implication that the position of *indiciaire* implied an obligation only to report positive judgements on the ruling family reflects another interpretation of the adage that ‘l’histoire s’est faite bourguignonne’,

¹ Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, ed. by Georges Doutrepoint and Omer Jodogne, 3 vols (Brussels: Palais des académies, 1935-37), III, 21.

² Jean Devaux, *Jean Molinet indiciaire bourguignon* (Paris: Champion, 1996), pp. 26-27.

³ Noël Dupire, *Jean Molinet: La Vie, les œuvres* (Paris: Droz, 1932), p. 20. This quotation is taken from a document of 1485, but Dupire adds that there are identical texts dated 1487, 1488, 1489 and 1490. It thus seems that the Habsburg king wished to ensure the continued commitment of his historian by reiterating the solemnity of the engagement into which he had entered.

namely that the Burgundian school of history is Burgundian not because of a distinct methodology, but because of an identifiable political commitment to Burgundian positions and ideology.¹ The Habsburg dukes who were Molinet's employers clearly fostered this political identification but it is inherent in the creation of the post of *indiciaire* itself. The position to which George Chastelain was appointed was closely modelled on that of the royal historiographer in the court of France.² The confirmation of Chastelain's status and the simultaneous creation of the neologism *indiciaire* underlined the distinction between royal historiographers and the Burgundian appointees. That the period between Chastelain's initial appointment and the conferring of the title of *indiciaire* marked growing political separation between the houses of France and Burgundy is probably not coincidental. The creation of a Burgundian court historian whose relationship to his court was analogous to that of the French court historian was almost certainly a political strategy aimed at mustering an official rhetoric which could compete with the increasingly antagonistic statement of French political positions. Molinet's continued employment under the Habsburg dukes of Burgundy can also be seen as a response to the political needs of Maximilian I, whose government in the Burgundian Netherlands was fiercely contested and who therefore invested considerable effort into producing histories which could provide justification for his

¹ For an elaboration of this argument see Jacques Lemaire, *Les Visions de la vie de cour dans la littérature française de la fin du moyen âge* (Brussels: Palais des Académies; Paris: Klincksieck, 1994), p. 228. Lemaire argues that Georges Doutrepoint in particular reads Molinier's opinion purely as a description of the literary technique of the *rhétoriciens*, but this is not the only way which Doutrepoint understands the adage. He is perfectly aware of the political project of the Burgundian historians, describing them as the successors of Froissart, who can himself be considered as a Burgundian historian 'par ses sympathies pour la politique du duc Philippe et ses antipathies pour ses ennemis; [et] par sa complaisance à retracer le pouvoir naissant de la maison de Bourgogne': Georges Doutrepoint, *La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne*, p. 408.

² This observation has been made by many commentators, most recently and persuasively by Graeme Small, who points out that 'les formes du mécénat dont jouit le chroniqueur bourguignon étaient basées sur celles utilisées à la cour de France depuis vingt ans pour l'emploi du premier historiographe royal': Graeme Small, 'Chroniqueurs et culture historique au bas Moyen Âge' in *Valenciennes aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles*, ed. by Ludovic Nys and Alain Slamagne (Valenciennes: Presses Universitaires de Valenciennes, 1996), pp. 271-96 (pp. 287-88).

rule.¹ Of particular interest to Maximilian was the development of a Trojan founding myth for his dynasty which could compete with the Trojan myths used to justify the antiquity of the civilisations of France and Britain.² Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires* are among the first to exploit this specifically Austrian version of the myth of Trojan ancestry, and Jean Molinet's *Chroniques*, whilst not incorporating the myth of Trojan origins, echo some of the motifs in La Marche's account, such as the distinction between the old and new arms of Austria, which both appear accompanying the Austrian party in Molinet's account of the funeral of Frederick III.³

The *indiciaires* of both Valois and Habsburg courts of Burgundy were thus official historians to the Burgundian court and played an important role in formulating statements of Burgundian ideology. Olivier de La Marche was not employed to contribute to the Burgundian court project in the same way and yet, as we have seen, his *Mémoires* share some of the polemical positions of the official historians, providing the Habsburgs with genealogical material with which they could justify their rule. Moreover, there are other features of the *Mémoires* which are reminiscent of the output of the official historians and which have led to La Marche's *Mémoires* being considered as semi-official Burgundian court history.⁴ Chief amongst these is La Marche's use of original documents, such as the Treaty of Arras and the Treaty of Souleuvre, in his text.

In the introduction to their edition of Jean Molinet's *Chroniques* (which, like the *Mémoires*, incorporate the Treaty of Souleuvre) Georges Doutrepoint and Omer Jodogne attribute this incorporation to Molinet's position as an official historian:

¹ For a discussion of this feature of Maximilian's policy, see Adam Wandruszka, *The House of Habsburg*, trans. by Cathleen and Hans Epstein (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1964), pp. 17-18.

² The competing Habsburg foundation myths are described in chapter 2 of Wandruszka's *The House of Habsburg*: 'Romans, Trojans or Alamanni' (pp. 14-23), while the specific deployment of the Trojan myth is discussed in Wilma Keesman, 'De Borgondische invloed op de genealogische constructies van Maximiliaan van Oostenrijk', *Millenium: Tijdschrift voor middeleeuwse studies*, 8/2 (1994), 162-72.

³ Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, ed. by Georges Doutrepoint and Omer Jodogne, 3 vols (Brussels: Palais des académies, 1935-37), III, 382-83.

⁴ Henri Stein, *Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon* (Paris: Picard, 1888), p. 113; Michael Zingel, *Frankreich, das Reich und Burgund im Urteil der burgundischen Historiographie des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Vorträge und Forschungen, Sonderband 40 (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1995), pp. 119, 125.

On ne saurait douter que [...] il a été secouru *officiellement*, ou que, pour son métier d'historiographe de Charles le Téméraire, de Maximilien d'Autriche et de Philippe le Beau, il a été en situation de l'archiviste informé de première main grâce à des pièces justificatives, des documents publics ou privés (traités de paix, lettres, récits de cérémonies). Certes, il n'était pas le premier à le faire: d'autres écrivains de son époque ont agi de même.¹

Although Doutrepoint and Jodogne recognize that other historians employed the same technique, they imply that there was a Burgundian archive to which official historians had privileged access. In fact, this assumption is borne out by some of the early passages in Molinet's *Chronique*, which appear to make use of documents which George Chastelain had prepared for use in his own work:

pour ce qu'il [Charles le Hardi] estoit fort triumpphant, de très ardu et excellent volloir, messire George Chastellain, chevalier, son indiciaire et historiographe, mon precepteur et predicesseur immediat, lequel trespassa de ce siècle durant le siège de Nuisse, volt rédiger par escript aucuns les principaulx exploits en armes d'icelui duc Charles, lesquelz aveuce .III. que g'y ay enserré par manière de recollection, seront icy notéz en brief.²

Molinet then goes on to give an account of Charles's military exploits based, as he claims, on Chastelain's plans for his own *Chronique*. The claim is a plausible one: Molinet had spent the last four years of Chastelain's life living in Valenciennes and acting as some sort of assistant to the first Burgundian *indiciaire*. Chastelain too had used the texts of treaties, letters and speeches in his history and it is likely that the documents which Molinet uses reached him by the same route that they had reached his former master. Jean Devaux has found further documentary evidence confirming this supposition in the form of a letter, written from Philippe de Croÿ to Chastelain, containing a metaphor which appears in Molinet's *Chroniques*.³

However, the *indiciaires* are not the only historians in the fifteenth century to use documents: we have seen that Olivier de La Marche does the same, so too do Mathieu d'Escouchy and Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy. The tendency has been for

¹ Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, III, 54. The emphasis is that of Doutrepoint and Jodogne.

² *Ibid.*, I, 170. The addition is mine.

³ Jean Devaux, *Jean Molinet indiciaire bourguignon*, p. 158. The metaphor in question is applied to a group of soldiers who have occupied a monastery, so that the monks 'firent places aux religieux de Mars qui sont d'autre profession', Molinet, I, 36.

commentators to interpret this as a sign of the author's position in society: he had access to the areas of society where this sort of document circulated, therefore he must have had a central position in the Burgundian polity.¹ Thus, for example, Michael Zingel attributes d'Escouchy's use of official documents to his judicial position.² The question that must be asked, however, is how much this conclusion is promoted by the texts themselves – how far a historian like Olivier de La Marche, in incorporating the text of treaties into his work, was claiming an official status derived from familiarity with the workings of Burgundian state power – in short, how far the use of documentation is a rhetorical device intended to give the work the authority of something written by a state insider.

Critical opinion on this point is divided. In Doutrepoint and Jodogne's comments on the technique as used by Molinet, quoted above, it seems that the modern editors regard Molinet as a modern historian, whose concern in presenting 'pièces justificatives', is to support his account of events, not to justify his own status as an intimate of the dukes. However, in a footnote, Doutrepoint and Jodogne refer to the opinions of A. Wauters who writes that 'Molinet, à l'exemple de plusieurs autres écrivains de son pays et de son temps, a voulu donner à son travail une plus grande valeur et plus d'autorité en y insérant le texte de plusieurs traités de paix.' This suggests that Molinet's intention was primarily to give force to his writing rather than to add to his reader's understanding of events. Within fifteenth-century literary circles the incorporation of documents does appear to have been interpreted along generic lines that suggest that it was regarded as a validating strategy employed by official court historians. Thus, for example, there are two near-identical accounts of the Ghent wars of

¹ An interesting variation on this interpretation is that of Hélène Wolff who seems to regard La Marche's use of *realia* as constituting some sort of mental scrapbook of the Burgundian Netherlands: 'les *Mémoires* sont conçus comme un album de souvenirs, un recueil de documents relatifs à l'histoire de la maison de Bourgogne et de ses héros', quotation, from her doctoral thesis on *Style historique au XV^e siècle*, published in Jean Dufournet, 'Commynes et l'invention d'un nouveau genre historique: les mémoires' in *Chroniques nationales et chroniques universelles* ed. by Danielle Buschinger (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1990), pp. 59-77 (p. 68).

² Michael Zingel, *Frankreich, das Reich und Burgund*, pp. 98-99.

1453, one of which is included in Chastelain's *Chronique* and one of which appears in the *Livre des faits du bon chevalier Jacques de Lalaing*.¹ The fact that this substantial section of the *Livre des faits* also appears in Chastelain's *Chronique* has been regarded as evidence that Chastelain is the author of the *Livre des faits* but this work remains anonymous.² The only substantial difference between the two redactions is that, while the version included in Chastelain's *Chronique* contains the full text of the speeches made in negotiations between representatives of the dukes and the Ghent delegation, the *Livre des faits* merely gives a summary.³ Leaving aside the question of whether the section was originally composed for the *Livre des faits* or for Chastelain's *Chronique*, the adaptation illustrates that the lengthy citation of official documents was thought appropriate to the work of the official court chronicler, but not to the anonymous narrative of the life of an individual Burgundian knight. This suggests that verbatim quotation from official documents was regarded as to some extent the preserve of official historians of Burgundy and, in turn, that a historian, such as Olivier de La Marche, who incorporated such documents into his work was adopting the rhetoric of the official historiographer and thus claiming the authority of officially-sanctioned history. However, the evidence of Chastelain's *Chronique* is not unambiguous. In another instance Chastelain incorporates a treaty between France and England, signalling again the official nature of the document, but the manuscript upon which Chastelain's editors are relying at this point does not include the full text of the treaty

¹ *Œuvres de Georges Chastelain*, ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Brussels: Heussner, 1863-66 ; repr. Geneva: Slatkine, 1971), II, 221-364; *Chronique de J. de Lalaing par Georges Chastelain* in *Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur l'histoire de France avec notices biographiques* ed. by J. A. C Buchon, vol. 10 (Paris: Desrez, 1839), pp. 601-726.

² Indeed, Jean-Claude Delclos, in an as-yet unpublished section of his thesis on Chastelain's *Chronique*, argues that the incorporation of this section is entirely the work of Chastelain's editor, Kervyn de Lettenhove. I have not yet had the opportunity to consult Delclos's work, and therefore am unable to comment on the treatment of speeches by the editors of the different versions of the *Livre des faits*. It may well be that the difference in rhetoric which I identify can be attributed to different treatments by nineteenth-century editors rather than fifteenth-century authors or scribes, but it is an editorial decision which is in keeping with the focus of the two works: Chastelain's *Chronique* contains many such records of official transactions, whereas the instance is unique in the *Livre des faits*.

³ There are several examples of this phenomenon: Chastelain, *Œuvres*, II, 334-40/ *Chronique de J. de Lalaing*, p. 72; Chastelain, *Œuvres*, II, 348-56/ *Chronique de J. de Lalaing*, p. 722.

but only the preliminary remarks before abbreviating with an ‘etc.’¹ Clearly then, not everyone involved with the production and circulation of Chastelain’s work felt that the inclusion of the texts of treaties and other official documents was a necessary feature of the rhetoric of the *Chronique*. If official documents could be dispensed with even in official histories, how far can we regard La Marche’s use of official documents as a device intended to signal that he had the authority of official history? The reasons La Marche gives for the inclusion of those documents which he inserts into his *Mémoires* are not clear on this point. La Marche includes two lengthy official documents: the Treaty of Arras and the Treaty of Souleuvre. In the first case, the treaty is exploited as a means of creating the author’s authority, by signalling the elevation of the circles in which he moved for, as we saw in the previous chapter, La Marche claims to give his readers the text of the very copy of the document which he saw in 1435, and which his father had sent to him by Pierre de Saint Moris:

[...] lesdiz traictiez vindrent au lieu de Pontarli, ce que je veiz, et en retint le double Pierre de Saint Moris, escuyer, et l’envoya à mon pere ou chastel de Jou, dont il advint que, plus de vingt ans après, je les recueilliz, et me vint si à point à ceste [heure] qu’en ces presentes memoires j’ay ceste paix enregistrée, et dont la teneur de mot à mot s’ensuit. (La Marche, I, 206, the addition is that of Beaune and d’Arbaumont)

Thus the Treaty of Arras is incorporated into La Marche’s *Mémoires* in such a way as to underline the position of the author, who has access to such important documents of Burgundian history. However, it does not signal that La Marche is an official historian in the same way that Chastelain is. La Marche’s connection to the Treaty of Arras is, at least initially, not professional but personal; he does not read the treaty because he has been sent it through the official network which supplied the *indiciaire* with documentation, nor even by the judicial channels by which Mathieu d’Escouchy would have received laws, treaties and edicts. Instead Olivier de La Marche sees the Treaty of Arras because his father is sent a copy. La Marche is claiming a sort of authority here,

¹ Chastelain, *Œuvres*, I, 135-36.

but it is a private corporate authority, not the official authority of the court historiographer. In La Marche's case, the individual is not a significant person within the Burgundian hierarchy, but he knows people who are. The detailed description of how the treaty reached his father makes this point and is contrasted with the sparse details of how, twenty years later, La Marche came to lay his hands on the same copy of the text. Perhaps the implication is that he has now passed into the same circles and has the authority to claim the document from the castle to which his father had been posted, but it is no more than a faint intimation of his status, contrasted with the detailed portrait of the Burgundian chain of command in 1435. The inclusion of the Treaty of Souleuvre in the *Mémoires* is accompanied by no such provenance and instead is justified by the desire to inform the reader:

En ce temps ou peu par avant, les contes de Chimay et de Maigne, en intencion de fortiffier la paix qui estoit faicte entre le Roy et le duc de Bourgoingne, conclurent unes tresve de neuf ans pour le Roy, pour le duc et leurs hoirs, où fut compris nommement monseigneur le daulphin, filz du Roy, et madame Marie de Bourgoingne, fille du duc de Bourgoingne, car ilz estoient nez et vivans; et fut celle tresve jurée et accordée du Roy et du duc. Et affin qu'il en soit memoire, j'ay incorporé et enregistré ladicte tresve de neuf ans en ces presens Memoires, et dont le contenu de mot à mot ensuyt. (La Marche, III, 213-14)

The passage could be read as a piece of fifteenth-century name-dropping; certainly the powerful figures of French and Burgundian politics feature large in the text. However, La Marche himself is not personally associated with this group and no indication is given of how he came by his copy of the treaty. Perhaps the intention is for the reader to conclude that his court connections were the source of his documentation, but this is not made explicit. It is thus difficult to know whether to read La Marche's use of the text of documents as an imitation of the techniques of the *indiciaires* because he believed that this provided an important service to the reader, as an imitation of the *indiciaires* because he wanted to appropriate some of the authority that their official status conferred, or as a decision taken without reference to the practices of the *indiciaires* at

all. In the course of this chapter, I will examine La Marche's use of other techniques and his adoption of other polemical positions to determine the ways in which the author of the *Mémoires* interacted with the literary traditions of his time. However, the field of Burgundian historiography is, as will already have become apparent, vast, and in order to keep this study to a manageable length, it is first necessary to define which aspects of the field are to be examined.

La Marche in Context

It is not easy to place Olivier de La Marche in any sort of context, partly because of the wealth of material produced in and around the Burgundian court at the time that he was writing, and partly because of the speed with which this material fell into disrepute after the end of the fifteenth century. As a consequence, any number of historiographers could be regarded as having an influence on – or having been influenced by – Olivier de La Marche, but there is an absence of a scholarly tradition of criticism which would provide some sort of guidance in the matter. What is interesting though is that, whereas critics of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries tend to regard La Marche as the frivolous end of the Burgundian market, the century immediately after La Marche's death saw him overshadow the *indiciaires* with whom he is now unfavourably compared. This meant that, while large sections of Chastelain's work have been lost (through, as Graeme Small suggests, the selective copying of the nobility of the Burgundian Low Countries who saw no use for passages dealing with the internal politics of France¹), and while Molinet's chronicle did not find a publisher until 1827, La Marche's work was edited in the century after his death and has continued to find

¹ Graeme Small, *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy* and 'Qui a lu la Chronique de George Chastelain?', in *A la cour de Bourgogne: Le duc, son entourage, son train*, ed. by Jean-Marie Cauchies (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 115-25. First published, with the same title, in *Publication du Centre européen d'études bourguignonnes (XIVe-XVe s.)*, 31 (1991); *Rencontres de Middelbourg/ Bergenoop-Zoom (27 au 30 septembre 1990): Les sources littéraires et leurs publics dans l'espace bourguignon (XIVe-XVIe s.) Actes publiés sous la direction de Jean-Marie Cauchies*, Neuchâtel, 1991 pp. 101-11.

editors in each century that followed. By what is perhaps a fortuitous accident, the first of these editors, Denis Sauvage, was also the editor of the first edition of the *Mémoires* of Philippe de Commines and it is possibly this fact, and the common title of *Mémoires*, which led subsequent commentators to regard Olivier de La Marche and Philippe de Commines as forming a pair.¹ The varying reception accorded to the work of fifteenth-century chroniclers could thus be said to have stripped Olivier de La Marche of his natural context and grafted on a context of its own making. Nevertheless, there are interesting parallels between the work of La Marche and Commines, which have led some, most notably Jean Dufournet, to speculate that La Marche retained some contact with Commines who had, of course, begun his career in the court of the dukes of Burgundy.² This has led me to conclude that an examination of Commines may well be beneficial in a discussion of the work which formed the background to La Marche's *Mémoires*, even though La Marche himself does not mention Commines as a literary influence – or indeed protégé. Similar considerations have brought me to a consideration of another body of work with which La Marche certainly had contact but which has been assumed to have had no influence over the *Mémoires*: the Dutch-speaking culture of the city of Brussels in which La Marche spent the last thirty years of his life. However, primary attention must be accorded to those authors for whom La

¹ So that, for example, M. Petitot argues in his introduction to the *Mémoires* that they 'forment pour l'histoire de Louis XI un complément nécessaire aux Mémoires de Commines, qui ne commencent qu'en 1464': *Collection complète des Mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France*, ed. by M. Petitot. vols 9 and 10 (Paris: Foucault, 1825), p. 3. Jean Dufournet, who has devoted a considerable portion of his career to the study of Commines, remarked in a plenary session at the *Fifteenth Century Congress* in Antwerp 2-7 July 2000, on this tendency to regard the two memorialists as two sides of the same coin, particularly in the century following their deaths. However, I have been unable to locate an instance where he reproduces this observation in print.

² Jean Dufournet, 'Commines et l'invention d'un nouveau genre historique: les mémoires', p. 73: 'il n'est pas téméraire de penser que Commines, qui avait gardé des liens avec la cour de Bourgogne, a sans doute eu connaissance du projet d'Olivier de La Marche, et qu'il a voulu récrire les mémoires de celui-ci aussi bien que la chronique de Georges Chastelain.' Since the publication of this article, it appears that Dufournet has become inclined to the opinion that Commines had read the work of Olivier de La Marche, and he suggested as much in the plenary session cited above. However, it seems that this conclusion is, for the moment, speculative: to date, Dufournet has published nothing further on the subject.

Marche did express admiration and who therefore form the explicit background to the *Mémoires*.

Three times in the course of his *Mémoires*, Olivier de La Marche mentions the work of the Burgundian historians who were his contemporaries. Two of these mentions occur in the introductions to the work and they can properly be regarded as passages in which La Marche signals to his reader the context in which he wishes his work to be read. In each case La Marche situates his work in the context of an extended modesty topos, in which his own insufficiency is contrasted with the proficiency of other writers of history.¹ Given the stability of La Marche's conception of the *Mémoires* identified in the previous two chapters, it is perhaps not a total surprise that La Marche's frame of reference in the two passages is strikingly similar. In the earlier passage he writes

Et n'entens pas que ceste ma petite et mal acoustrée labour se doibve appeler ou mettre ou nombre des cronicques, histoires ou escriptures faictes et composées par tant de nobles esperis qui aujourd'uy et en cestuy temps de ma vie ont si sollempnellement labouré, enquis et mis par escript, et principalement ce très vertueux escuyer George Chastelain, mon pere en doctrine, mon maistre en science et mon singulier amy, et celluy seul je puis à ce jour nommer et escrire la perle et l'estoille de tous les historiographes qui, de mon temps, ne de pieça, ayent mis plume, ancre ne papier en labour ou en œuvre; seullement est mon entendement, pour ce que coustumierement je vois et chemine en divers lieux et en maintes places, et luy est occupé en songneuse labour et estude, et en ce secret de sa chambre il amasse et rassemble plusieurs rapportz, opinions, advis et ramentevances à luy rapportées, dictes et envoyées de toutes pars et dont de tout, et de toutes parties, il fait si notablement le prouffict de sa matiere, qu'il n'en fait pas seullement à loer, mais à gloriffier, priser et aymer de tous les nobles cueurs du monde, dont et à ceste fin, et pour faire mon debvoir et moy acquitier de la verité des choses advenues devant mes yeulx, me suis desliberé de mectre par memoire ce que j'ay veu et retenu au passé temps de ma vie, tendant à fin que, s'il y a chose dont ledit George ou aultre, en leurs haultes œuvres, se puissent ayder ou servir, ilz le preignent et le retirent, s'ilz me survivent, hors des ronces et espines de mes ruydes et vaines labours, pour les coucher ou noble lict paré et embasmé de ces nobles et riches termes, inventions et fruicts, dont le goust et l'entendement ne peult jamais empirer ne mourir. (La Marche, I, 184-85)

¹ The modesty topos is discussed in detail in Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. by Willard R. Trask, Bollingen Series, 36 (New York: Pantheon, 1953), pp. 83-85. Curtius identifies the dedication to a patron whose request is the sole reason the author presumes to write as a variation on this topos, but he does not discuss the unfavourable comparison of oneself with one's contemporaries.

The declaration that La Marche's writing cannot aspire to Chastelain's high style nevertheless implies that this is the standard against which La Marche measures his work. The suggestion that Chastelain – or other unnamed artists in the same position as Chastelain – should use La Marche's work as raw material for their own 'haultes œuvres' further serves to associate the *Mémoires* with the official Burgundian historiographic project, and in this context the reference to other historians suggests that La Marche, whilst expressing particular admiration for Chastelain personally, is aware of the soon-to-be *indiciaire*'s role in the official historiography of Burgundy. It will be noted that La Marche envisages his *Mémoires* serving as source material for other historians, but only 's'ilz me survivent'. The *Mémoires* are only to be exploited by practitioners of high rhetoric after La Marche himself has died. The author could not guarantee which of his contemporaries he would predecease, but Chastelain was twenty years his senior and the likelihood of La Marche's *Mémoires* fulfilling their stated function as source material for his *Chronique* must have seemed remote even in 1473. For this reason, it is not surprising that scholars have failed to identify any passage in Chastelain which draws its inspiration directly from a corresponding passage in La Marche.¹ The dedication of the work to 'ledit George ou aultre' demonstrates that La Marche was aware of the likelihood that the official Burgundian historian at the time of his death would not be George Chastelain, but at the same time he was sufficiently aware of the extent of the Burgundian historiographical project to anticipate that Chastelain would have a successor, to whom the *Mémoires* could be passed after La Marche's own demise.

¹ I would, therefore, dispute the conclusions of Jean-Claude Delclos when he writes that Chastelain 'a certainement pris connaissance des mémoires que Jean Le Fèvre et Olivier de la Marche affirment lui avoir adressés', particularly on the grounds that La Marche does not in fact make any such affirmation. Moreover, as Delclos goes on to state 'Rien dans sa *Chronique*, en revanche, ne dénote un emprunt direct à Olivier de la Marche', Jean-Claude Delclos, *Le Témoignage de Georges Chastelain: Historiographe de Philippe le bon et de Charles le Téméraire*, Publications romanes et françaises, 155, (Geneva: Droz, 1980), pp. 33-34.

By the time that La Marche came to write the second introduction to his work, Chastelain had been dead for over a decade. It might be expected, therefore, that Chastelain would be absent from any passage in which La Marche situates his *Mémoires* against the context of other historians. In fact, Chastelain is still cited as one of La Marche's influences:

Helas, mon prince, mon seigneur et mon maistre, je plains et regrette, pour mener ces trois poins jusques à vostre cognoissance, que je suis lay, non clerc, de petit entendement et de rude langage, et regrette que je ne puis avoir le stile et subtil parler de messire George Chastellain, trespasé, chevalier de ma cognoissance, natif flameng, toutesfois mettant par escript en langaige franchois, [et] quitant a fait de belles et fructueuses choses de mon temps, que ses euvres, ses fais et la subtilité de son parler luy donront plus de gloire et de recommandations à cent ans à venir que jourduy, ou que n'ay je, par don de grace, la clergie, la memoire ou l'entendement de ce vertueux et recommandé escuyer, Vas de Lusane, portugalois, eschanson à present de madame Marguerite d'Angleterre, ducesse douairiere de Bourgoingne, lequel a fait tant d'euvres, translations et aultres biens dignes de memoires, qu'il fait aujourd'huy à extimer entre les sachans, les experimentez et les recommandez de nostre temps, ou que ne m'a Dieu donné l'influence de rethorique si prompte et tant experte, comme à maistre Jehan Molinet, homme venerable et chanoine, et lequel je sçay estre laborieux et songneux de mettre par escript toutes haultes et vertueuses adventures venues à sa cognoissance. Et la cause pourquoy je parle de ces trois est pour ce que je les ai hantez et cogneus, et puisque je ne puis atteindre à la pratique de leur sçavoir, je au moins feray et adrece ray mes memoires cy après escriptes devant ceulx d'iceulx qui me survivront, affin que s'il y a chose qui puisse amplier et aydier leurs haultes et solempneles euvres, ilz s'en aident et servent, comme celui qui fait ung chappel de marguerites, roses et aultres fleurs plaisans et precieuses, et à la fois y met aultres flourettes de moindre extime, pour paracomplir et parfaire son chapelet et donner couleur et lustre au demourant. (La Marche, I, 14-15)

This statement, which is only slightly longer than that found in the 1473 prologue, incorporates a number of new elements into his generic definition: Chastelain has been joined by two further Burgundian writers: Molinet and Vasque de Lucène. The work of the latter, which mainly consisted of translations from Latin into French and from French into Portuguese, will be discussed at greater length in the following chapter. It is, however, worth noting that, whilst most of his work was not original, Vasque de Lucène can still be regarded as working in the historiographical tradition, producing translations of works of history including the *Traité des faiz et haultes prouesses de*

Cyrus, a *Histoire d'Alexandre* and a *Vida e feitos de Júlio César*.¹ In choosing Vasque de Lucène as a model to aspire to, La Marche underlines his continued association with the traditions of historiography in the Burgundian court. The selection of Jean Molinet, Chastelain's successor as *indiciaire*, can be said to perform the same function: Chastelain is dead but his post has been filled by another and La Marche takes account of this change by addressing his *Mémoires*, once addressed to the dead man, to his successor. However, the dedication is ambiguous in the way that it is expressed. Once again La Marche exploits the humility topos by suggesting that he is unable to perform the feats of rhetoric of the official historians, and once again he suggests that his own effort should be incorporated, if the official historians should survive him, into this official history. This time, however, La Marche names the specific qualities in which he feels each of his three models surpass him. One of the recurring themes in this passage, absent from his previous admiration of Chastelain, is that of education; Molinet is referred to as a 'maistre', a title probably conferred on him by the University of Paris, and Vasque de Lucène is admired for his 'clergie', a word which can refer to knowledge or to formal learning.² In this shift in emphasis, La Marche may be reflecting a change of culture within the Burgundian court where a higher value was placed on university education as the fifteenth century progressed.³ Whatever the reason, La Marche's second prologue is much more specific about his failings relative to those of his contemporaries. However, the increase in the extent to which he abases himself is counteracted by the greater degree to which he is personally identified with the men

¹ For a discussion of these works and of Vasque de Lucène's career, see Danielle Gallet-Guerne, *Vasque de Lucène et la Cyropédie à la cour de Bourgogne (1470): Le Traité de Xénophon mis en français d'après la version latine du Pogge*, (Geneva: Droz, 1974).

² Molinet's education is discussed in Philip August Becker, 'Jean Molinet 1435-1507', *Zeitschrift für Französische Sprache und Literatur*, 59 (1935), 1-21 (pp. 2-3).

³ This development is discussed at length in Francis Rapp, 'Universités et principautés: Les États bourguignons' in *A la cour de Bourgogne: Le duc, son entourage, son train*, ed. by Jean-Marie Cauchies (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 51-65, First published, with the same title, in *Publication du Centre européen d'études bourguignonnes (XIVe-XVIe s.)*, 28 (1988): *Rencontres de Milan (1er au 3 octobre 1987): Milan et les Etats bourguignons: deux ensembles politiques princiers entre Moyen Age et Renaissance (XIVe-XVIe s.)*. Actes publiés sous la direction de Jean-Marie Cauchies, Bâle, 1988, pp. 115-31.

whom he admires. The terms describing a hierarchical relationship between La Marche and his 'pere en doctrine' and 'maistre en science' have disappeared, leaving only the identification with Chastelain as his 'singulier amy', expressed in the second prologue by the comment that he was a knight 'de ma cognoissance'. The two new role models are described in similar terms, with La Marche explaining that he writes of the three men because 'les ai hantez et cogneus', and this is where the ambiguity arises. Having declared that he has been acquainted with all three men personally, La Marche says that if any of them should survive him, his *Mémoires* will be at their disposition. The terms are exactly the same in which he stated his position in 1473 but the situation has changed: Chastelain, the original beneficiary of the promise of the *Mémoires*, is no longer alive. Nevertheless, when La Marche writes that his *Mémoires* are available to whichever of his three acquaintances should survive him, he does not exclude Chastelain from the arrangement. Technically, of course, Chastelain is already excluded, but by not stating this fact La Marche once again stresses a belief in the continuity of the Burgundian historiographical project; the memorialist can still dedicate his work to Chastelain precisely because there are other historians, such as Vasque de Lucène and Jean Molinet, who can take up his mantle. The third time that La Marche mentions contemporary historians, George Chastelain is once more one of the names mentioned: La Marche says that both he and Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy, herald at arms to the Order of the Golden Fleece are writing a history of contemporary deeds, and hopes they will not forget those of Jacques de Lalaing (La Marche, II, 310). George Chastelain is thus a recurring presence in the *Mémoires*, central to the way in which La Marche defines his work in relation to the wider Burgundian project, yet Molinet, as Chastelain's official successor, was no less part of that project, whose continuity is implicit in the way that La Marche envisages his *Mémoires* being used by one man, or the other, or whomever should succeed them. Thus, it is imperative that La Marche's

Mémoires are studied not only in the context of the author's 'pere en doctrine' but also of the 'homme venerable et chanoine' who succeeded him as *indiciaire*.

'Homme très éloquent et très expert orateur': The Influence of Chastelain

The persistent presence of George Chastelain in La Marche's *Mémoires*, surviving even the death of the *indiciaire*, is perhaps not as surprising as might at first be thought, given the central importance of Chastelain as a literary figure in both Burgundian and wider francophone literary circles. I have demonstrated above that Molinet's work exploits some of the documentation which Chastelain presumably intended to include in his own *Chronique*, and this signals not only the access which Molinet had to his former master's papers but also a desire on the part of the new *indiciaire* to draw attention to his familiarity with his predecessor. By incorporating Chastelain's draft of a passage describing Charles le Hardi's military victories, and by adding three defeats which Chastelain did not live to see, Molinet associates himself firmly with the first *indiciaire*, whose work is continued – and supplemented – in his own *Chroniques*. However, it was not only Chastelain's official successor who expressed such admiration for him: both Olivier de La Marche and Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy expressed a wish that their *Mémoires* be used as source material for Chastelain's *Chronique*.¹ Nor was it only writers of history who admired 'le grand George'; Paul Zumthor, in his study on the *rhétoriciens*, identifies as a feature common to all the poets he considers that 'pour tous, le grand maître est Chastelain'.² It was Charles d'Orléans himself who, reading his personal manuscript of his poems and coming across Chastelain's rondeau *Les serviteurs soumis a l'observance*, added the simple rubrication 'de George', as if no

¹ Jean le Fèvre de Saint Rémy, *Chronique*, ed. by F. Morand, 2 vols (Paris: Société de l'Histoire de France, 1876-81), 1, 2.

² Paul Zumthor, *Le Masque et la lumière*, p. 16.

other George was worthy of the name.¹ However marginal a literary figure Chastelain is today, he was regarded as hugely influential by his contemporaries and near contemporaries, not only for his historiography, but also for his poetry. In fact, his poetry was arguably more influential than his historiography, because Chastelain's *Chronique* did not circulate at all during the chronicler's lifetime, and only in partial form after his death.² Any effort to read Chastelain's rhetoric, as Jean-Claude Delclos attempts to do, in terms of what interested the author and which subjects were omitted, is, therefore, a fruitless task, as it is impossible to determine precisely what was discussed in the passages of Chastelain's *Chronique* which have not survived. I shall not, therefore, comment on what is absent from George Chastelain's chronicle and attempt to contrast this with passages that are present in La Marche's *Mémoires*, nor shall I presume that La Marche was familiar with passages of the *Chronique* which are lost to today's readers. This is possibly the case, but it cannot be demonstrated. Indeed, it is not certain that La Marche was acquainted with any of Chastelain's historical writings although it is likely that he was. A note on the flyleaf of one of the manuscripts of the *Chronique* says that it belonged to Engelbert II, count of Nassau, who died in 1504, suggesting that the *Chronique* was already in circulation by the time that La Marche himself died in 1502. Moreover, another manuscript of Chastelain's *Chronique*, the most complete to survive, belonged to Claude Bouton, Olivier de La Marche's second cousin on his mother's side.³ La Marche moved in the circles, both court and family, in which Chastelain's *Chronique* was available. He certainly wished to define

¹ The identification of this rubrication in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français, 25458, p. 435 is that of Champion, Pierre Champion, *Le Manuscrit autographe des poésies de Charles d'Orléans* (Paris: Champion, 1907; repr. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1975). Having examined the manuscript, I would agree completely with Champion's conclusion that the hand which he identifies as that of Charles d'Orléans is indeed responsible for this rubrication.

² In fact Graeme Small goes so far as to say that 'Few historians – if any – have considered Chastelain's Chronicle to be a failure. When the work is approached from the perspective of the patronage nexus [...] that conclusion seems inescapable. Instead of the sustained, coherent, accessible narrative which Philip the Good or his son might have hoped for, the Chronicle survives in a series of disjointed fragments', *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy*, p. 128.

³ The ownership of the different manuscripts of Chastelain's *Chronique* is detailed in Graeme Small, *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy*, pp. 204-211.

his enterprise against the standards of the official Burgundian historiography, as represented by Chastelain, what remains to be examined is the extent to which La Marche's work reflects this intention.

In undertaking this examination, it is important to recognize that Chastelain's *Chronique* is not the expression of the Burgundian political position that later writers such as Molinet and La Marche were to espouse. Jacques Lemaire has identified this position in the work of Burgundian historians as a twofold strategy – to support the Burgundian dukes in their conflict with the kings of France and to celebrate a Burgundian national identity distinct from that of France, whose roots could be traced to Trojan ancestry.¹ Although the conflict with France was not new, it became more entrenched over the period between George Chastelain's appointment and Olivier de La Marche's death, particularly after the separation of the ancestral lands of Burgundy and the Burgundian Netherlands following the death of Charles le Hardi. It is thus not surprising that La Marche should display a much greater degree of separation from the French crown, particularly in those portions of the *Mémoires* composed under Habsburg rule. Chastelain, on the other hand, opens his *Chronique* proclaiming himself to be 'léal François avec mon prince', a claim which seems bewildering to a modern reader, coming as it does from someone born in a region of the Dutch-speaking Burgundian Netherlands held not under the French crown but under the Holy Roman Empire.² Nor does Chastelain's statement necessarily mean that the author regards himself as a French historian rather than a Burgundian one: it is made in the context of a passage in which Chastelain begs his audience, whether French, Burgundian or English, to regard him as an impartial observer who does not intend to criticize the French or the English. In saying this, Chastelain acknowledges the existence of three separate national

¹ Jacques Lemaire, 'La Conception de l'histoire chez les chroniqueurs bourguignons d'après les prologues de leurs œuvres' in *Histoire et littérature au moyen âge. Actes du Colloque du Centre d'Etudes Médiévales de l'Université de Picardie (Amiens 20-24 mars 1985)* ed. by Daniëlle Buschinger (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1991), pp. 235-49 (p. 249).

² *Œuvres de Georges Chastelain*, I, 12.

identities, and (by his appeal to the French and the English to regard him as impartial) that he is most likely to be considered as a Burgundian. However, he argues, despite the differences between the two groups, to be a Burgundian is really to be French, and there is no conflict between a Burgundian identity and a French one. In his *Histoire de la littérature française* Désiré Nisard sums up the situation by saying that Chastelain ‘a deux patries, le duché de Bourgogne et la France’ and I believe that it is an important part of his polemic that he states that he sees no conflict of interest between the two.¹ Chastelain’s appointment as official historian under the same terms as the French court historian was surely intended as a means of producing Burgundian history which was able to compete with – or counteract – the material produced by the French court. If Chastelain states that his identity as a Burgundian does not negate his identity as a Frenchman, this does not mean that he was unaware of a potential conflict of interest, merely that he – or his ducal masters – wished to present an image of a Burgundian identity which was not inherently antagonistic to France.² We should not, therefore, regard Chastelain’s expression of his – and his master’s – loyalty to France as signalling, as Nisard seems to believe, that of Chastelain’s two ‘patries’ ‘la première [le duché de Bourgogne] est la petite, la seconde [la France] la grande’, still less should we accept Hélène Wolff’s argument that, in this attitude ‘voici exprimée la grande idée de Chastelain, son acte de foi le plus profond; la dignité du trône français, l’attachement inconditionnel à la France, et, disons le mot, son nationalisme ardent.’³ Chastelain’s partisanship for France is never divorced from his political adherence to Burgundy.

Jean-Claude Delclos has argued that one of the central themes of Chastelain’s work is his advocacy of a dual Franco-Burgundian identity and his progressive

¹ Désiré Nisard, *Histoire de la littérature française*, 4 vols, 15th edn (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1889), I, 107.

² A description of the deterioration of relations between Burgundy and France can be found in Richard Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy* (London: Allen Lane, 1975), pp. 53-55.

³ Désiré Nisard, *Histoire de la littérature française*, I, 107; Hélène Wolff, ‘Histoire et Pédagogie princière au XV^e siècle: Georges Chastelain’ in *Culture et pouvoir au temps de l’Humanisme et de la Renaissance* ed. by Louis Terreaux (Geneva: Slatkine; Paris: Champion, 1978), pp. 37-49 (p. 44).

disillusionment as he witnesses the deterioration of Franco-Burgundian relations and realizes that his political masters do not share his aspirations.¹ Delclos regards this as reflecting Chastelain's political philosophy, but it also is indicative of a wider pessimistic attitude which is divorced from the context of specific political circumstances. Chastelain's *Chronique* opens with a prologue detailing the decay of the world after the Fall. The first murder is followed by a succession of empires, each of which falls into ruin, confirming the opinion of the first men that human affairs are 'conduites par aucune puissance et espouvantable main de là sus, les uns peut-estre l'attribuant à Dieu, les autres ignoramment à une souveraineté inconnue, depuis appelée Fortune'.² The conclusion that Chastelain seems to draw is not that the world is getting ineluctably worse – improvement is possible on a micro level, as the conquest of the idolatrous Romans by the newly-baptised French attests – but that the general progression is downward. This is history emplotted as satire; society is spiralling towards its inevitable doom, and it is not surprising that the first event in Chastelain's chronicle, whose prologue opened with the fratricidal murder of Abel by Cain, should be the murder of Jean Sans-Peur at Montereau.³ The disappointment which Chastelain experiences at the frustration of his national aspirations is hinted at from the outset, and it is permissible to speculate whether certain features of Chastelain's disillusion are structured in such a way as to make the disappointment seem greater. One example of this could be Chastelain's unwillingness to acknowledge Charles le Hardi's increasing

¹ Jean-Claude Delclos, *Le Témoignage de Georges Chastellain*.

² Chastellain, *Œuvres*, I, 1.

³ In identifying the mode of emplotment of Chastelain's narrative, I borrow my terminology from Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1973). It might be thought that the inevitability of doom which I argue is characteristic of Chastelain's *Chronique* is history emplotted as Tragedy, rather than as Satire, but White distinguishes between Tragedy, in which the fall is escapable by some spectators, who do not share the flaws of the protagonist, and Satire, where fate is inescapable, regardless of the moral or personal qualities of the characters involved. See especially pp. 9-11.

ties with the English, the traditional enemies of France.¹ The narrative voice presenting Burgundian links with England as arising out of necessity rather than affection signals that this is the explanation that the author would like to be true, and this makes the reader all the more acutely aware of his disappointment when it proves not to be the case.

Chastelain has been regarded as the only Burgundian historian who succeeds in marrying French and Burgundian identities, and it must be recognized that later writers such as Molinet and La Marche had much less need to strike this balance.² However, Chastelain's disillusion with Franco-Burgundian relations was not simply the result of his political stance but was a consequence of his belief that the world was falling into decay, and this is an attitude which we find reflected in the histories written by his successors, particularly Molinet and Philippe de Commines but arguably also in La Marche's *Mémoires*. The decaying world in Chastelain's *Chronique* is mirrored by the declining calibre of the princes with whom the author comes into contact: Charles le Hardi does not live up to the standards of Philippe le Bon and Louis XI fails to match Charles VII, and 'au fur et à mesure qu'avancera le règne des deux princes, le pessimisme de la *Chronique* s'accroîtra, les reproches se multiplieront, les craintes deviendront de plus en plus vives.'³ When Molinet took over the task of writing the official Burgundian history, he also appears to have adopted his predecessor's analysis of events and even, as Jean Devaux has demonstrated, a certain amount of Chastelain's vocabulary, most notably when he describes the pride that was Charles le Hardi's downfall.⁴ Devaux believes Molinet's writing to be essentially optimistic, in contrast to Chastelain's pessimism but, when he identifies a deterioration from the government of

¹ This may also be the conclusion Jean-Claude Delclos draws when he writes 'Selon son habitude, Chastelain ne reconnaît cette anglophilie, qu'il redoutait depuis longtemps, qu'après de longues hésitations et lorsqu'aucun doute n'est plus possible', *Le Témoignage de Georges Chastelain*, p. 244.

² Michael Zingel recognizes Chastelain's ability to reconcile the two national identities available to him and attributes it explicitly to the early period in which he was writing: *Frankreich, das Reich und Burgund*, p. 233.

³ Jean-Claude Delclos, *Le Témoignage de Georges Chastelain*, p. 167.

⁴ Jean Devaux, *Jean Molinet indiciaire bourguignon*, p. 258.

Philippe le Bon to that of Charles le Hardi, Molinet is in accord with Chastelain's assessment. Of course it could be argued that, in the light of the defeat of Nancy and the division of Burgundian lands, no other assessment was possible, but many commentators have seen in the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche a counter-example: a courtier who remained unreservedly uncritical of Charles le Hardi when all other historians were attacking him.¹ In fact, as will be demonstrated in the final chapter of this thesis, La Marche did have some criticisms to make of Charles le Hardi's government, and in at least one instance these are very personal and somewhat strident. Michael Zingel recognizes this criticism of Charles le Hardi but does not attribute it to the influence of the prevailing Burgundian orthodoxy that Charles was not as good as his father. Instead, he points out that those criticisms of Charles which do appear in the *Mémoires* occur in passages written after Charles's death, when the author was in a position to reflect on the duke's failures.² Whilst this cannot be disputed, it should not be forgotten that all of the sections dealing with the period in which Charles was duke of Burgundy were written after his death. It is difficult to see how Olivier de La Marche could have expressed the prevailing view that the government of Charles was inferior to that of Philippe in the parts of his *Mémoires* which were written before Charles died and about the period before he began to govern.

Chastelain's perspicacity was to recognize the deficiencies of Charles's government before they ended in the disaster of Nancy. Perhaps he did so because they accorded with his emplotment of history as satire. Molinet, who did not share Chastelain's pessimism with regard to the ultimate fate of the world, agreed with his assessment that Charles le Hardi was an inferior ruler to Philippe le Bon. If Olivier de La Marche too agrees, it may be out of genuine conviction, or it may be because the

¹ Thus, for example, Jean Devaux, *ibid.*, pp. 258-59 cites La Marche, I, 144-45 as an instance where the author supports Charles le Hardi in an area of policy – that of his relations with the ecclesiastical hierarchy – where other writers found greatest grounds for criticism.

² Michael Zingel, *Frankreich, das Reich und Burgund*, p. 209.

opinion has become a commonplace of Burgundian historiography. The fact that Philippe de Commynes, who began his career in the court of Philippe le Bon, also shares this assessment may be regarded as justification for the transferral of his allegiance from the court of Burgundy to that of France.¹ But Commynes goes on to repeat the pattern with his new masters, regarding Louis XI as superior to his successor, Charles VIII. This again may reflect Commynes's personal experience for, while he was a valued – and well-remunerated – counsellor to Louis XI, he fell out of favour during the regency of Charles VIII and became involved in a conspiracy to overthrow the regents which led to his imprisonment under strict confinement.² However, as Jean Dufournet has demonstrated, Commynes's relations with Louis XI were not as smooth as the memorialist liked to present them. In his final assessment of Louis's reign, Commynes suggests a much greater intimacy than was in fact the case, obscuring the fact that he had been excluded from the court in the final years of the reign and stressing only that he had been present during the king's final illness.³ Commynes's view of princes was much less positive than that of either Chastelain or La Marche; his *Mémoires* can be read as a catalogue of princely failings in which no ruler escapes criticism, and all kings are revealed as mere mortals.⁴ In this context, his attenuation of his disagreements with Louis XI could be interpreted as fitting into the pattern established by Chastelain, whereby the second master does not fulfil the promise of the first. Commynes's mistreatment at the hands of Charles VIII, which leads the author to conclude that 'j'ay esté l'homme du monde à qui il a faict plus rudesse', is made seem

¹ This progression, and Commynes's justification of it, are described in Jean Dufournet, *La Destruction des Mythes dans les Mémoires de Ph. De Commynes* [sic] (Geneva: Droz, 1966), particularly pp. 29-148.

² The severity of the conditions of Commynes's imprisonment are the subject of speculation by Jean Dufournet in his *Études sur Philippe de Commynes* (Paris: Champion, 1975), p. 1, where he draws attention to the fact that Commynes was forbidden any contact with the outside world and concludes that this probably meant that he had no access to writing materials during his time in prison.

³ Jean Dufournet, *La Destruction des Mythes dans les Mémoires de Ph. De Commynes*, p. 160.

⁴ For such a reading see Jean Dufournet, *Sur Philippe de Commynes. Quatre études* (Paris: Bibliothèque du Moyen-Âge, 1982), 'Les Princes de Philippe de Commynes', pp. 111-46.

all the more serious by the fact that the author does not mention similar mistreatment which he received from Louis XI.¹

The deterioration of princes from one generation to the next can be identified as a topos of fifteenth-century historiography and as central to Chastelain's conception of political history which is essentially pessimistic. In the work of Molinet, the same idea is introduced in such a way as to show the influence of Chastelain. In the *Mémoires* of Comynnes or La Marche it is less prominent, but I believe it can still be identified. However, it should be recognized that Chastelain's political thought is not the aspect of his work which has the greatest impact on La Marche's *Mémoires*. Instead, it is in the details of La Marche's rhetoric, in the way that he presents himself and how he provides supplementary details, such as dates, as additional verification for his account that we find the closest parallels with the work of the 'grand George'.

The previous chapter examined the way in which La Marche sought to establish his authority in his *Mémoires* by clearly situating the generic position of the text as *mémoires* and stressing the centrality of his personal experience as the principle informing the selection of material in the work. These strategies all serve to distinguish the emergent genre of *mémoires* from the official history of official *chroniques*. However, La Marche also deploys strategies from more established historical genres to signal the authority of his work as a piece of historical writing. Amongst these genres are the *chroniques* from which, in other contexts, La Marche wishes to disassociate himself. The desire to establish the authority of his work thus tugs Olivier de La Marche in two different directions: on the one hand he wishes to underline the specificity of their status of *mémoires*, based on personal identification with the author, and yet on the other he wants to associate them with the wider historiographical tradition – a process which implies the negation of the personalized individual relationship. We can perhaps

¹ Philippe de Comynnes, *Mémoires*, ed. by J. Calmette and G. Durville, 3 vols (Paris: Champion, 1924-25), III, 313.

read La Marche's statements of admiration for George Chastelain in both his prologues as expressing this tension. Chastelain is the archetypal figure of official Burgundian historiography, and to praise Chastelain in one's opening remarks appears to have been a topos of Burgundian history. However, La Marche's praise is supplemented by the comment that the *indiciaire* was known to him personally. What appears at first to be a recourse to topical discourse and thus an association with the conventions of traditional historiography, is transformed by this comment into an statement placing La Marche's personal experience at the centre of his contract with his reader. The transformation is not so complete as to undermine the force of the traditional topos, however; the two arguments exist side by side, suggesting that La Marche's *Mémoires* are at once in the accepted tradition of the official Burgundian chronicle, and at the same time slightly different from it.

An analogous movement, but one that takes place in exactly the opposite direction, may be identified in the way in which La Marche introduces himself into his discourse in his first prologue. This might be expected to be the ultimate expression of individuality, the point at which the author names himself and draws attention to what makes him different from other literary knights of the Burgundian court. La Marche writes, following his statement offering his work to Chastelain and his successors,

Je doncques Olivier, seigneur de la Marche, chevalier, conseiller, maistre d'hostel, et capitaine de la garde de très hault, vertueux et victorieux prince Charles, premier de ce nom, par la grace de Dieu duc de Bourgoingne, de Lotrich, de Brabant, de Lembourg, de Lucembourg et de Gueldres, conte de Flandres, d'Artois et de Bourgoingne palatin, de Haynnault, de Hollande, de Zeellande et de Namur, marquis du Saint Empire, seigneur de Frize, de Salins et de Malines, leur [ledit George ou autre] ayderay à mon pouvoir louhant et graciant mon redempteur Jesus Crist et sa glorieuse mere qui m'ont donné et imparty leur grace, et especialle misericorde, dont je suis venu jusques au milieu de la voye et du chemin, terminé par le tour de nature, selon le cours de la vie presente. (La Marche, I, 185)

It is a statement of Olivier de La Marche's individuality but the form of words used is conventional in historical prologue writing. Christine Marchello-Nizia identifies the

emergence of this form of words around 1300, and gives one of the earliest examples as

Joinville's prologue to his 1309 *Vie de Saint Louis*. Joinville writes

En nom de Dieu le tout puissant, je, Jehan sire de Joyngville, seneschal de Champaigne, faiz escrire la vie nostre saint roy Looÿs, ce que je vis et oÿ par l'espace de .VI. ans que je fu en sa compaignie ou pelerinage d'outre mer, et puis que nous revenimes. ¹

Marchello-Nizia describes the formula as follows:

JE, pronom de 1^è personne du sg. 'nom propre de tout locuteur', seul, terme de la langue qui désigne par excellence et ne puisse désigner, avoir pour référent, que le locuteur; *je* qui, chaque fois, désigne à neuf. suivi, en apposition, du nom, du surnom, suivi également, c'est important, du titre ou qualité, ou fonction, termes qui situent géographiquement, généalogiquement, et, surtout, socialement; et ce premier ensemble commande un verbe ou un groupe verbal, toujours à la 1^è personne du singulier donc, toujours à l'un des 'temps' de l'énonciation, présent ou passé composé de l'interlocution (et jamais au parfait), et signifiant l'action d'écrire. ²

She draws attention to the similarity of this formula to that used in legal depositions from the beginning of the thirteenth century and concludes that writers of history exploit judicial modes of discourse to establish a truth-contract with their readership. In the case of Joinville, the analysis is particularly fitting: Jean de Joinville played a major role in the process of canonizing Saint Louis; his deposition to the pontifical court inquiring into the matter lasted two whole days. ³ Joinville's *mémoires* had a semi-judicial purpose which justified their innovative use of judicial vocabulary. However, Olivier de La Marche was writing nearly two centuries after Joinville, when the formula had passed into the conventions of historical discourse. By using it in this way, he stresses not his individuality, but his connection to the traditional modes of historiography. The moment at which he names himself as an individual is paradoxically that in which his claim to authority through tradition is stronger than his claim as an innovator. And yet there are

¹ Joinville, *Vie de Saint Louis*, ed. by Jacques Monfrin (Paris: Dunod, 1995; illus. ed., Paris: Garnier, 1998), p. 8 (para. 19).

² Christine Marchello-Nizia, 'L'Historien et son prologue: Forme littéraire et stratégies discursives' in *La Chronique et l'histoire au Moyen-âge* ed. by Daniel Poirion, Cultures et Civilisations Médiévales, 2, (Paris: Sorbonne, 1984), pp. 13-25 (p. 16).

³ Joinville, *Vie de Saint Louis*, p. 374 (para. 760).

two departures from the formula which can be interpreted as signalling La Marche's innovative tendencies and re-establishing his individual voice within the traditions of established historiography. The first is that the verbal group meaning to write (in this case 'me suis desliberé de mectre par memoire') precedes, rather than follows the conventional naming formula. The second is that the naming formula itself is interrupted by the introduction of the word 'doncques'. In all the prologues that Christine Marchello-Nizia cites, and in all the Burgundian prologues that I have examined, only one other prologue separates the 'je' from the name of the author in this way – that of George Chastelain, whose name (together with that of Socrates) precedes even that of La Marche in the 1473 prologue to the *Mémoires*. In Chastelain's prologue the phrase 'Je, doncques, GEORGE CHASTELLAIN' stresses the author's identity phonologically as well as semantically.¹ The separation of the 'je' from the name of the person referred to emphasizes not only the name itself, thus held in suspension, but also the personal pronoun – this is necessary both to pronounce the schwa of 'je' and to leave a space after it in order to form the occlusion necessary to pronounce the plosive [d] of 'doncques'. At the same time, the emphasis thus placed on the 'je' serves to bring out the number of fricatives in the author's name: George Chastelain. In the case of Olivier de la Marche the phonological effect of the device is much less. However, the use of the same form of words as Chastelain further suggests a wish on La Marche's part to situate his work as part of the historiographical tradition represented by Chastelain at the same time that he emphasized his departure from it.

Olivier de La Marche's relationship with the official chronicler of the Burgundian court, thus seems somewhat contradictory. On the one hand La Marche and Chastelain were in close collaboration, working together on a play performed at Nevers in 1454 featuring Hector, Achilles and Alexander; La Marche also contributed a poem

¹ Chastelain, *Œuvres*, I, 11.

entitled 'Dames' in the same metre and using the same rhyme scheme as Chastelain's 'Princes', which had spawned a number of imitators in the Burgundian court.¹ On the other hand, La Marche's *Mémoires* seek to distance themselves from official Burgundian history, claiming an entirely new status for the text as *mémoires*. At the same time the *Mémoires* exploit pre-existing topoi used in official Burgundian history to give an air of authority. It is almost as if La Marche is unsure as to whether or not he wants to be writing in the official Burgundian mould and so simultaneously employs strategies which bring his work closer to it and those which proclaim their separateness. The same can be said of the way in which the *Mémoires* include the dates of events, which is reminiscent of the work of the official chroniclers of Burgundy yet reveals significant differences.

Full dates (in the form day, date, month year) are hard to remember and even those who believe their memory to be particularly reliable usually make mistakes when attempting to recall them. The inclusion of a full date in an account of a historical event, therefore, points to one of two methodologies on the part of the author: either the history is being written shortly after the events commemorated or the author is using detailed written documentation. It might, therefore, be expected that La Marche's *Mémoires*, which ostensibly rely on the author's memory as their source of information and which are written at a great distance from events, would not include dates in this form. In fact, the *Mémoires* include twenty-two such dates, all in the portions of the work written in the early 1470s and dealing with the years 1443-1453. Similarly, the citation of full dates is to be found in the work of Chastelain, Molinet, Jacques Du Clercq and Philippe de Commynes. However, whereas verification with a perpetual calendar almost invariably confirms that the dates given by these other authors did

¹ Details of the play performed in 1454 in Nevers can be found in Pierre Champion, *Vie de Charles d'Orléans (1394-1465)* (Paris: Champion, 1969). An analysis of 'Princes' and its influence on four of its successors; 'Dames', 'Gouges' (written by Philippe Bouton, La Marche's cousin), 'Coquards' and 'Serviteurs' can be seen in Arthur Piaget, 'Les Princes de Georges Chastelain' in *Romania*, 47 (1921), 161-206.

actually take place, those quoted by Olivier de La Marche frequently have no basis in reality.¹ In fact, if one leaves aside the section of La Marche's *Mémoires* dealing with the *Pas d'armes de l'Arbre Charlemagne*, in which ten of La Marche's dates appear (La Marche, I, 290-335), only two of the remaining dates are correct, in the sense that they take the form of a day, date and year which does actually appear on the calendar. The account of the *Arbre Charlemagne* was probably compiled with reference to documentation which supplied La Marche with his dates. Elsewhere in the *Mémoires* his success rate is little better than random, a fact which one of the instances clearly illustrates. La Marche is right to say that 2 May 1446 was a Monday, but he makes it the Monday following Thursday 27 April (La Marche, II, 75). Such inconsistency suggests that La Marche was not concerned about the accuracy of the dates which he supplies – indeed on the other occasion that he gives a plausible date, Beaune and d'Arbaumont have demonstrated that it is inconsistent with the known movements of the Burgundian army.² Instead, I would argue that La Marche is using dates in this form to give his work the patina of authority that a researched work would have, knowing that most readers are unlikely to check the accuracy of his account. It is not plausible to attribute La Marche's inaccuracy to scribal error, because this would raise the question as to why scribes were particularly inaccurate in the case of La Marche's *Mémoires*, while works of other Burgundian historians were transmitted without problems. In fact, error –

¹ Commynes very rarely cites full dates. I have been able to identify two such dates: Sunday 30 October 1468 and Sunday 5 July 1495 (Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*, ed. by J. Calmette and G. Durville, 3 vols (Paris: Champion, 1924-25), I, 153; III, 169-70), both of which are genuine. Du Clercq gives four dates in this form, all of which are correct (*Mémoires de Jacques du Clercq, escuier, Sieur de Beauvoir en Ternois, commençant en 1448 et finissant en 1467*, ed. by Michaud and Poujoulat, Nouvelle Collection des Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France, 3 (Paris: l'Éditeur du Commentaire analytique du Code Civil, 1837), pp. 605-640). I have only been able to identify one date in Chastelain's extensive *Chronique*, which is not correct: he claims, in an indirect way, that 30 April 1456 was a Friday, whereas it was actually a Saturday (Chastelain, *Œuvres*, III, 90). Molinet, too, supplies only one date that I have found to be incorrect: 27 May 1492 was a Sunday, and not as Molinet claims (Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 288), a Friday.

² La Marche, II, 29-30. The date which La Marche gives for the supply of the besieged town of Villy is Thursday, 5 September 1443. This is a date which did in fact occur but, as Beaune and d'Arbaumont add (La Marche, II, 30, n. 1) 'En 1443, le 5 septembre tombait un jeudi et le 5 octobre un samedi; mais on remarquera qu'à la date du 5 septembre les hostilités n'étaient pas encore commencées; le duc [...] n'arriva à Mézières que le 8 de ce mois. Il faut probablement lire le jeudi 3 ou le samedi 5 octobre 1443.'

whether scribal or authorial – can be identified on at least one occasion, where the combats of the *Pas de l'Arbre Charlemagne* are mistakenly transposed by a decade and are said to begin in 1453 rather than 1443 (La Marche, I, 297). This is a potentially serious error, as all the (exceptionally for the *Mémoires*) accurate dates which follow depend upon this initial statement of the year. However, the positioning of the event in the sequence of the *Mémoires* makes it easy for the reader to see what has happened, and to restore the event to its rightful year. In other cases, it is not so easy to determine what the correct date should have been, and one is left with the suspicion that La Marche, having seen dates in this form in the work of official historians such as Chastelain and realizing what a powerful signifier of authoritative information they are, has adopted the form of words without adopting the methodology which the casual reader would presume lay behind them. In this context, it is perhaps significant that La Marche ceases to provide his readers with dates in this form after he recommences his work under the Habsburg dukes. In the new prologue to the *Mémoires* that he wrote at this time, La Marche presented a new formulation of the semi-judicial formula:

Je, Olivier, seigneur de la Marche, chevalier, natif de Bourgoingne, grant et premier maistre d'ostel de vostre maison, plain de jours, chargé et furny de diverses enfermetez et persecuté de debile viellesse, neantmoins par la grace celeste plain de pluseurs et diverses souvenirs, [...] me suis resolu de labourer et mettre par escript certaines memoires abregées. (La Marche, I, 9-10)

The 'doncques', which echoed that of Chastelain and which expressed the same ambiguous relationship with official historiography which can be seen in La Marche's use of dates which prove to be inaccurate, has gone. La Marche still has a debt to Chastelain, which he acknowledges, and he continues to define his work in the context of official historiography in the same way. However, Chastelain is dead and the Valois Burgundian court has fallen. La Marche no longer needs to ape their rhetorical strategies quite so closely.

‘Un molinet sans vent et sans fourment’

The same can be said of Jean Molinet whom Pierre Jodogne has identified as providing, with Olivier de La Marche, the final flowering of Burgundian historiographical culture in a Burgundian Netherlands which now ‘n’étaient plus qu’une province germanique’.¹ The fact that La Marche and Molinet were active at the same time, and that La Marche predeceased Molinet, means that we cannot talk about a textual influence of Molinet’s incomplete and posthumous *Chroniques* on La Marche’s *Mémoires* in the same way that we can speculate on the influence of Chastelain’s *Chronique*. However, we may regard the contents of Molinet’s work as indicative of the presentational strategies employed in the Habsburg Netherlands and the demands – both political and financial – which these strategies were intended to address. We have seen that Molinet’s work shares the anti-French perspective of Olivier de La Marche, and that it integrated some of the same Habsburg genealogical myths, but there are other parallels between the work of the two authors, and particularly between the way in which the authors signal their presence in their work.

Perhaps the most obvious instance of a presentational strategy in a medieval work is that of the illustration of the author offering his or her work to the patron. If, as is often the case, the author had a guiding role in the production of presentation manuscripts containing such illustrations, they provide the clearest indication of the image that the author wished to project. For that reason the present thesis returns to an examination of Olivier de La Marche’s presentation manuscript on a number of occasions. The illustration of Jean Molinet offering his *Roman de la rose moralisé* to Philippe de Clèves presents a parallel with the depiction of Olivier de La Marche in at

¹ Pierre Jodogne, ‘La Rhétorique dans l’historiographie bourguignonne’ in *Culture et pouvoir au temps de l’Humanisme et de la Renaissance* ed. by Louis Terreaux (Geneva: Slatkine; Paris: Champion, 1978), pp. 51-69 (p. 54).

least one respect: the author is clothed in a monastic habit.¹ In the case of Jean Molinet, however, the clothing is appropriate, Molinet was a canon of Notre-Dame in Valenciennes. However, in each case I believe that the presentation illustration contains not one but two depictions of the author. In La Marche's case, the presentation takes place in the court setting in which he exercised his function of *maître d'hôtel* and, standing beside Philippe le Beau's throne, we see a man performing this role: holding back the surrounding crowd using the white baton of his office. He has his back to the prince, and therefore appears in profile just as the figure presenting the book does. It is my contention that this is a second portrait of Olivier de La Marche. He appears to be shorter than those surrounding him, and this is in accordance with Molinet's description of La Marche as 'homme de petite estature, mais de très grant prudence'.² In fact, the only significant difference between the two figures is that the kneeling man is white haired, while the man who is standing has dark hair. It is possible that the portrait is intended to represent two stages of La Marche's life, one in which, as a young man, he serves the court in a physical capacity and one in which, in his old age, he does so by presenting the fruit of his mental labours. The dual nature of the portrait of Molinet is less open to dispute, even though the second representation of the author is not his portrait at all but is in fact a picture of the windmill which he used to represent his surname. Cynthia J. Brown has traced the development of Molinet's use of the depiction of the windmill in his works from word games which hint at the author's identity, through pictures such as this, where the author is shown standing next to a windmill, to the illustration of a child's windmill which appeared in his later printed works and in his coat of arms when the author was ennobled.³ She argues that one possible reason for the strength of Molinet's desire to include such strategies identifying him as the author of

¹ A colour reproduction of this illustration is to be found in Graeme Small, 'Chroniqueurs et culture historique au bas Moyen Âge', p. 288.

² Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 50.

³ Cynthia J. Brown, 'L'Éveil d'une nouvelle conscience littéraire en France à la grande époque de transition technique: Jean Molinet et son moulin poétique', *Le Moyen Français*, 22 (1988), 15-35.

the work was the publication, in 1493, of an unauthorized edition of his *Art de Rhétorique* by the Paris printer Vérard. However, there is no need to put such a precise date to Molinet's concern. Collaboration between authors and printers was not infrequent in the fifteenth century and Molinet provides an example of this when he summons the printer Jean de Liège to Valenciennes. Jean de Liège was subsequently to print three of Molinet's works.¹ As part of this contact between authors and those who produced and sold their work, increased stress was placed on the identity of the author, which appears to have been regarded as a selling point in a market where initial print runs involved considerable financial outlay and bootleg copies circulated freely.² It may be this general concern, rather than a specific incident, which prompted Molinet to indulge in the word-play which identified him with the mill. Nor is it only in Molinet's minor works that the mills appear; although neither Brown nor any other commentator whose work I have read draws attention to the fact, Molinet's *Chroniques* are full of windmills, and the way in which they are included casts light on the conclusions on the opening passages of La Marche's *Mémoires* which I drew speculatively in the previous chapter.

The first major event that Molinet describes in his *Chroniques* is the siege of Neuss, which had already begun when Chastelain died and Molinet succeeded him as *indiciaire*. The description of the siege is one which Jean Devaux regards as signalling a break from the approach of George Chastelain, in that it is described in a way that takes account of the topography in which events take place, enabling readers to understand the siege from a military perspective. This is undoubtedly true, but one of the topographical features to which Molinet keeps returning in his account is the presence of mills in both the besieged city and in the camp laying siege to it. Moreover, the way

¹ Cynthia J. Brown, 'L'Éveil d'une nouvelle conscience littéraire en France à la grande époque de transition technique: Jean Molinet et son moulin poétique', p. 28.

² For an analogous case, see Alex Gillespie, 'Framing Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*: The Evidence of Book History' in *Framing the Text: Reading Tradition and Image in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Kate L. Boardman, Catherine Emerson and Adrian P. Tudor, *Mediaevalia*, 20 (2001), 153-78.

in which he does so stresses the importance of the mills to the military campaign for he says of the besieged city

Nuisse, laquelle, de sa propre nature, estoit hutineuse, arrogante, espineuse et adonné à la guerre; et, pour ce qu'elle amoit le mestier, elle avoit d'ancyenneté deux molins à chevaulx fors et rades pour soy aydier en pestilence de siège et diversité de bastons deffensoires et d'artillerie pour saluer les passans et bienvegnier ses voisins, desquelz elle attendoit la très espoentable et soudaine venue.¹

Mills here are a military necessity, placed before even defensive and offensive weapons in the order of things which prepare the city for war. But mills are also the symbol by which the author has chosen to identify himself, and they are very prevalent in the opening passages of Molinet's *Chroniques*. By contrast they are entirely absent from La Marche's account of the same siege and it is tempting to speculate that Molinet includes them in his opening passages so that, from the outset, his work should be clearly identified with him. If this is the case, it would strengthen the supposition, advanced in the previous chapter, that La Marche's references to borders in his opening passages are intended to be read as a reference to his name, situating him at the centre of Burgundian politics. La Marche may or may not have read Molinet's work as it was in progress, but he certainly seems to have deployed some of the same rhetorical techniques as the *indiciaire*, particularly in the opening pages of his work.

'j'ay entendu par ceulx qui le cuydoient sçavoir': Philippe de Commynes and Olivier de La Marche

If the opening passages of Molinet's and La Marche's works seek to define their authors in the context of contemporary political events, the first episode in Philippe de Commynes's *Mémoires* appears to do something similar but with different intent. The way that it opens is reminiscent of the opening of Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires*; Commynes writes that

¹ Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 33.

Au saillir de mon enfance et en l'aage de pouvoir monter à cheval, fus amené à Lisle devers le duc Charles de Bourgoigne, lors appellé conte de Charroloys, lequel me print en son service, et fut l'an mil quatre cens soixante quatre.¹

The beginning of Commynes's narrative is thus, like the beginning of La Marche's, the account of an experience from childhood, and this is in accordance with the generic position of the two works as *mémoires*, deriving their material from the mental life of the author. What is interesting about Commynes's experience, as I indicated in the previous chapter, is that it involves an event in which Olivier de La Marche had a central role – the affair of the Bâtard de Rubempré. If Olivier de La Marche's primal scene is intended to place the author, from his earliest memory, in a position of political significance within the Burgundian court, then it is possible that Commynes had similar intentions. Can the passage be read as Commynes positioning himself in the context of another memorialist in the same way that La Marche's opening episode situates him in the context of Burgundian court ceremonial and observant Franciscan spirituality? Certainly Commynes does not explicitly acknowledge the influence of Olivier de La Marche, nor of any other contemporary historian. Nevertheless, there are parallels between the work of the two authors – beyond even their common definition of their work as *mémoires* – which suggest that there may have been a degree of cross-influence between them. This, certainly, is the view of Jean Dufournet, who identifies a progression, common to both Commynes and Olivier de La Marche, from the use of the singular 'mémoire' in phrases such as 'mettre par mémoire' to describe their act of writing, through the increased use of the plural used to describe a work 'par manière de mémoires' and finally to the generic term in the strict sense: 'mes mémoires'.² Dufournet's conclusion, as we have seen, is to speculate that the two authors remained in contact after Commynes's departure from the Burgundian court and to suggest that there may have been an exchange of documents. However, it is a conclusion which must

¹ Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*, I, 4.

² Jean Dufournet, 'Commynes et l'invention d'un nouveau genre historique: Les Mémoires', pp. 60-61.

be disputed, at least as far as the analysis of La Marche's work is concerned. Dufournet has dated the commencement of Commynes's *Mémoires* to 1489, the period in which La Marche restarted work on his own *Mémoires*. However, the earliest usage of 'mémoires' as a generic term, accompanied by the first person possessive adjective, in La Marche's *Mémoires* occurs in the section written in the first period of composition. It appears in a passage where La Marche is explaining to his readers the effect of the murder at Montereau and excusing himself for the necessary departure from 'ce que j'ay mis avant au prologue de mes memoires', namely his promise to provide only an account of what he has personally witnessed (La Marche, I, 198). Thereafter, the generic usage, 'mes mémoires' is present throughout the work, with the obvious exception of those sections not originally intended for inclusion in the *Mémoires*. The evolution which Dufournet identifies in Commynes, therefore, is present in La Marche to the extent that 'par maniere de mémoires' and 'mettre par mémoire' precede the use of 'mes mémoires' (La Marche, I, 183, 185), but the three terms appear in such close proximity in a passage written over a short period of time that it is difficult to argue that it should be regarded as an evolution at all. Commynes has perhaps been regarded as the father of the genre of *mémoires* because his work has met with greater success and possibly because Denis Sauvage appeared to regard him as such when he produced his edition of Commynes's *Mémoires*.¹

If Commynes's primal scene is the moment in which La Marche was most prominent in Franco-Burgundian politics, it is possibly an oblique way of acknowledging his debt to the man who had refined the generic definition which he was applying to his own work. However, to argue that it was La Marche and not Commynes

¹ Jean Dufournet cites Sauvage's preface to this effect, but this may be based on a misreading of Sauvage's text. It is true that Sauvage says that 'le pere mesme en a esté le parrain (comme l'on dit communément) le nommant Memoires' (*Les Mémoires de Messire Philippe de Comines, cheualier, seigneur d'agenton, sur les principaux faicts & gestes de Louis onzième & de Charles huictième, son fils, Roys de France*, ed. by Denis Sauvage (Paris: Roigny, 1552), fol. aa ij^v) but the argument seems to be in support of his decision to have 'changé l'ancien tiltre de ce present volume' using Commynes's preferred designation for his work. Sauvage is not necessarily claiming that his author is godfather of an entire genre, merely that his work should be referred to by the name that he himself chose for it.

who was pre-eminent in this generic formulation is not to negate the validity of the question raised by Dufournet as to the nature of communication between the two men. The parallels between the two sets of *Mémoires* suggest that such communication may have occurred. However, the most striking example occurs in the authors' accounts of an event that took place before Commynes transferred his allegiance to the French, a battle against the Liégeois which preceded the signing of the Treaty of Souleuvre. Both memorialists are agreed that the weather was incredibly cold. La Marche writes that it was so cold that tea froze in a silver pot and broke it, while Commynes comments that wine froze entirely in the barrel, and had to be broken into ice cubes before it could be consumed.¹ In each case the severity of the cold is represented by the freezing of a liquid that one would not usually expect to freeze and in each case it is the ordinary 'gens' who suffer. Does the presentation of such similar accounts of the same event by two authors writing twenty years after it took place signal that the two were in correspondence, either reading each others' work or discussing possible representational strategies, or is it merely evidence of the unforgettable nature of extreme weather? Certainly there are other indications that, even after Commynes's departure from the court of Burgundy, he retained some links with those with insider information and at times his account contains information also present in La Marche's *Mémoires*. Thus, before the battle of Nancy, Commynes gives an assessment of the strength of the Burgundian forces which is reminiscent of that of La Marche who was, of course, present at the battle. Commynes writes that 'j'ay entendu par ceulx qui le cuydoient sçavoir qu'il n'y avoit point en l'ost quatre mil hommes, dont il n'y en avoit que douze cens en estat de combattre', while La Marche is slightly less specific, saying only that 'pren sur ma conscience qu'il n'avoit pas deux mille combattans'.² Is Olivier de La Marche himself the source of Commynes's information? Commynes indicates that he

¹ La Marche, III, 212-13; Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*, I, 168.

² Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*, II 153, La Marche, III, 239.

may indeed be when, in his description of Charles le Hardi's death, he writes 'Je ne veulx point parler de la manière, pour ce que je n'y estoie point; mais m'a esté compté de la mort dudict duc par ceulx qui le veïrent porter par terre et ne le peürent secourir pour ce qu'ilz estoient prisonniers.'¹ La Marche was one of those captured at Nancy and it is possible that in this, as in other instances where Commynes appears to have inside information from the Burgundian camp, Olivier de La Marche was his source. If this is the case, however, it is unlikely that the text of the *Mémoires* was the source for Commynes's account as the latter contains information – such as the killing of the duke by a crowd who did not recognize him – not present in La Marche's *Mémoires*. Thus, if Commynes's 'm'a esté compté' refers to an account provided by Olivier de La Marche, it must be to an oral account, perhaps collected while La Marche was a prisoner, or to a written account resulting from private correspondence between the two authors.

The textual evidence of the *Mémoires* of La Marche and Commynes, therefore, does not exclude the possibility that they provided source material for each other, but it does not provide proof of such contact. Certainly it indicates that Commynes wished to associate himself in some way with the figure of Olivier de La Marche, and this may have been his way of claiming a literary inheritance. Features identified by Jean Dufournet as characteristic of Commynes's conception of *mémoires* are also features of La Marche's work, such as a conscious disregard for chronology which Commynes holds as being of lesser importance than the substance of his narrative: 'Il me suffist de ne faillir point à la substance, et si je faulx aux termes, comme d'ung moys, peu ou moins, les liseurs m'excuseront s'il leur plaist.'² Such uncertainty over chronology can, as we saw in the previous chapter in the case of La Marche's *Mémoires*, lead to manipulation of dates in order to tell a particular tale. And in Commynes's *Mémoires* too, we find dates being manipulated to rhetorical effect so that, for example, the future

¹ *Ibid.*, II, 153.

² *Ibid.*, II, 258.

Charles VIII's age is raised by two years, from seven to 'neuf ans ou environ' at a time when Commynes and others were proposing that he should marry Marie de Bourgogne. One of the objections to this match was that the age difference between the two was too great, and Dufournet argues that the purpose of Commynes's manipulation is to puncture this criticism.¹ The technique is analogous to that displayed in the opening passage of La Marche's *Mémoires*, where the author's own age is manipulated to rhetorical ends. Once again it is not only Commynes's generic conception of *Mémoires* that coincides with that of Olivier de La Marche, it is decisions of the detail of presentation. Again too, the presence of a device in Commynes serves to confirm the conclusion that the same presentational strategy is at play in the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche. The two men may not have cited each other as influences, but it is clear that the reading of one's *Mémoires* can shed useful light on the rhetoric of the other's.

'gent mutine et têtue': Olivier de La Marche and the Dutch

Similar illumination – although with much more limited implications – can be derived from examination of La Marche's relationship with the Dutch-speaking culture of Brussels, the city in which he lived for the last three decades of his life. No mention of this culture has been identified in the *Mémoires* and it has been generally presumed that this is because La Marche was both personally and culturally hostile to Dutch and Dutch speakers. However, in recent years, some modification has been made to this interpretation, leading to La Marche's having been claimed as a truly Belgian author with linguistic and cultural awareness of both Low Country traditions. In examining this claim, I have chosen to use the modern term 'Dutch' to refer to that language spoken in the Low Countries in the fifteenth century which was not French. This may be regarded as a generalization: some commentators have analysed the linguistic map of the Low

¹ Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*, II, 250; Jean Dufournet in his *Études sur Philippe de Commynes*, p. 163.

Countries in terms of regional languages, distinguishing Flemish or Brabantish from other, very similar languages, while others have regarded these as dialects of the same language, which they term Middle Dutch or Diets. Whilst I tend to the latter approach, I have avoided the use of the terminology ‘Diets’, as this seems to imply an identity between this language and ‘Deutsch’, Modern German. Modern speakers of Dutch and German do not agree on whether their languages are mutually comprehensible or not. Those who do understand the other language frequently allege political motivations behind others’ claims that they do not. However, it does seem that some speakers of German and Dutch can understand each other and some genuinely cannot. The same may well be true of the fifteenth century and, in order to avoid confusion between the two linguistic communities, I have decided to refer to the languages by their modern English names. Such linguistic distinctions are not always in accordance with the practices of nineteenth-century editors of fifteenth-century texts, who frequently seem to regard Dutch words as poorly-spelled German ones and ‘correct’ their text accordingly.¹ Nevertheless, it is important that these distinctions should be made wherever possible, particularly in the case of Olivier de La Marche, who makes explicit claims that he cannot speak German. Writing in the Burgundian Habsburg court, which was at least partially German-speaking, La Marche undertakes an explanation of Philippe le Beau’s German ancestry saying that he does so ‘combien que je ne soye pas, par nature ou par aprise, de la langhe d’Alemaigne, sy ay je enquis à la verité de ceste genealogie le plus qu’il m’a esté possible ne facil.’ (La Marche, I, 27). It certainly seems that other authors of the Burgundian court who could speak German could also speak Dutch and regarded the two as one language. Molinet, for example, appears to have had some familiarity with Dutch, which is not surprising given that he had grown

¹ Whilst this does not appear to have occurred in the case of La Marche’s *Mémoires*, this was the fate of the *Livre des Faits* where a phrase which appears in the redaction contained in Chastelain’s *Chronique* as ‘en celui logis estoit tout l’orgueil des Gantois, et là estoient les hoefmans et ceux de la loi de Gand’ (II, 247) is rendered in the 1839 Buchon edition as ‘en celui logis étoit tout l’orgueil des Gantois, et [...] là étoient les hauptmans et ceux de la loi de Gand’.

up in Boulogne, where French was the dominant language but there was a large degree of interaction between it and Dutch. He also reports negotiations which took place in German without referring to the need for an interpreter, and gives the texts of documents written ‘en langaige theutonicque’.¹ However, he frequently uses the term ‘thiois’ to refer to German, a term which is more normally applied by Belgian writers to Dutch. It seems, therefore, that Molinet was someone who spoke both Dutch and German and regarded the two as the same language. This does not mean that this was a generalized attitude in the fifteenth century, nor that we should regard La Marche’s protestations that he does not speak German as indicative of whether or not he was familiar with Dutch.

Perhaps it is the tendency to do so which led critics in the past to presume that La Marche had no familiarity with Dutch culture. However, there may be other reasons for this belief. One of these is the association between La Marche and the Burgundian court, often held responsible for the promotion of French in the Burgundian Netherlands, and particularly in Brussels, a Dutch-speaking city at the time but now 70% French-speaking. The argument, as stated in 1788 by J. Verlooy, was that Dutch was the native language of the city, but the imposition, under the Dukes of Burgundy, of a French-speaking administrative class, ensured that anyone who wanted to get on had to learn French.² Recently this argument has been challenged by scholars who have pointed out that, while there was some increase in the use of French in Brussels under the Burgundian dukes, the overwhelming majority of documents were produced in Dutch, and that the dukes, knowing that their power relied upon the support of the people and was, in Molinet’s words ‘trop plus flamengue que wallonne’, encouraged

¹ For example, Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 76-77.

² ‘Deze stad Brussel heeft het Nederduytsch en het frans. Het Nederduyts is d’oude moederlyke tael. Het frans is ons toegebracht, gelyk gezeyd is, als het huys van Burgondiën aen de souveryniteyt dezer landen gekomen is, als het hier een geheel frans Hof, fransche raden en een frans Gouvernement gevestigd heeft’. Quoted in Paul de Ridder ‘Onderzoek naar het taalgebruik in de archieven der brusselse schepengriffies, ambachten, kerkelijke instellingen en hospitalen (voor 1500)’ *Taal en Sociale Integratie*, 6 (1982), 339-63 (340).

this.¹ Indeed, during the fifteenth century Dutch actually extended its influence, taking over from Latin in many areas such as that of medical literature. Brussels had a flourishing artistic culture in the period and many of its leading figures had their originally French names translated into Dutch, evidencing the continued vitality of the Dutch language in the city, even under the Burgundian dukes. Thus Roger de la Pasture became Rogier van der Weyden and the writer Colin Caillou became Colijn Caillieu.²

Dutch culture was thus thriving in Brussels in the fifteenth century, without any apparent attempts by the francophone dukes of Burgundy to eradicate it. Indeed, the idea of this sort of linguistic struggle is anachronistic: the idea of language communities having to correspond to political identities did not hold the currency that it was to gain in later years.³ However, there may be another reason for Olivier de La Marche's perceived hostility to the Dutch-speakers of Brussels – his well-known animosity towards the people of Ghent. As we saw in the opening chapter of this thesis, the image of La Marche as hostile to the people of Ghent was largely fostered by Jean Lautens de Gand, but it is one which has gained widespread currency. In the nineteenth century, for example, Aloysius Bertrand opens his *poème en prose* entitled 'Les Flammands' with an epigram supposedly taken from La Marche's *Mémoires* in which the Flemish are described as 'gent mutine et têtue'.⁴ The quotation is one which is wholly fictitious: the word 'mutine' does not appear in the *Mémoires* at all, and 'testu' appears only once where it is in combination with 'de' and means 'wearing on their heads'. However, the

¹ Quoted from *Ressource du petit peuple*, in Dupire, *Jean Molinet: La Vie, les œuvres*, p. 239. See Paul de Ridder 'Onderzoek naar het taalgebruik in de archieven der brusselse schepengriffies, ambachten, kerkelijke instellingen en hospitalen (voor 1500)' and Gilbert Degroote, 'Taaltoestanden in de Bourgondische Nederlanden', *De Nieuwe Taalgids*, 49 (1956), 303-309.

² Paul de Keyser, 'Nieuwe gegevens omtrent Colijn Caillieu (Coellin), Jan de Baertmaker, Jan Steemaer (Percheval) en Jan van den Dale', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, 53 (1934), 269-79 (278).

³ Paul de Ridder 'Onderzoek naar het taalgebruik in de archieven der brusselse schepengriffies, ambachten, kerkelijke instellingen en hospitalen (voor 1500)'.

⁴ Aloysius Bertrand, *Gaspard de la Nuit: Fantaisies à la manière de Rembrandt et de Callot*, ed. by Max Milner (Paris: Gallimard, 1980), p. 164. Milner's note (p. 319), points out that this was not Bertrand's original epigraph to the piece, which was a quotation from 'Les Annales et Chroniques de France', but the editor does not indicate that the quotation from La Marche is spurious, nor whether the original epigraph had any more claim to authenticity.

fact that Bertrand has chosen Olivier de La Marche as the chosen mouthpiece for this view demonstrates the persistence of Jean Lautens's reading of the *Mémoires* as an anti-Flemish text. However, to be anti-Ghent is not necessarily to be anti-Flemish, nor does it necessarily imply hostility to all culture in the Dutch language. La Marche's opposition to Ghent is political, not cultural. He opposes the 'orgueil' of the Ghenters because they rebel against their political overlords and this is a political position which Michael Zingel has identified as being common to many Burgundian historians, with Mathieu d'Escouchy adopting it in relation not only to the Burgundian conflicts with the Ghenters but also to the disputes between the French crown and the city of Metz.¹ Chastelain too adopts the same stance with regard to Ghent, reporting on one occasion at some length, the judgement of the Chancellor Rolin that the people of Ghent were

pires que juifs; car si les juifs eussent véritablement sceu que nostre benoît sauveur Jésus-Christ eust esté Dieu, ils ne l'eussent point mis à mort, mais les Gantois ne pouvoient, ne peuvent ignorer que monseigneur le duc ne fust et soit leur seigneur naturel et lequel leur avoit tant de biens fait, et que c'estoit la ville de tous ses pays à laquelle il avoit fait plus de biens.²

Chastelain's report of Rolin's words demonstrates that La Marche was not alone in the Burgundian court in thinking that the people of Ghent were exceptionally culpable in their rebellion. Indeed, there is a striking parallel with Jean Chartier's assessment of the treachery of the people of Bordeaux

qui pouvoient bien estre comparez à Judas, car ils avoient fait serment sur les saincts Evangiles de Dieu d'estre bons et loyaulx au roy et à la couronne de France, et ils avoient conspiré faulse et mauvaise trahison, qui estoit directement et évidemment aller a l'encontre d'iceulx sermens qu'ils avoient faits.³

Disapproval of towns which disobeyed their feudal overlords was, therefore, a convention of fifteenth-century historiography, and Olivier de La Marche's criticism of

¹ Michael Zingel, *Frankreich, das Reich und Burgund im Urteil der burgundischen Historiographie des 15. Jahrhunderts*, p. 97.

² Chastelain, *Œuvres*, II, 297.

³ Quoted, from manuscript sources, in Eric Bousmar, 'Les Emprunts de Jacques du Clercq à Jean Chartier. Note sur l'historiographie Franco-Bourguignonne au 15^e siècle', in *Serta Devota in memoriam Guillelmi Lourdaux, Pars Posterior: Cultura Mediaevalis* ed. by Werner Verbeke and others (Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1995), pp. 115-48 (p. 122).

Ghent was not couched in the strong terms used by Chastelain when reporting Rolin's words, or by Jean Chartier. Elsewhere in Chastelain's *Chronique*, the author expresses opinions on his own behalf which are much more critical than those of La Marche, saying that the people of Ghent naturally have a 'mauvaise et déloyale volonté', which drives them to attack their feudal lord.¹ La Marche is thus one of the more moderate critics of the politics of the city of Ghent and there is no reason to regard him as especially hostile to Dutch culture because of this essentially political position.

It becomes all the more necessary to bear in mind the separation between La Marche's political condemnation of Ghent and his possible attitude to Dutch-speaking culture when we realize that one of the most vocal Burgundian critics of the actions of Ghent, George Chastelain, was himself a native speaker of Dutch, born in the jurisdiction of the city of Ghent. This fact has been regarded as the discovery of Graeme Small, whose *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy* sets out Chastelain's background in detail. However, as we have seen, La Marche was fully aware of Chastelain's linguistic background and made no attempt to conceal it, saying in his 1489 prologue that he was 'natif flameng, toutesfois mettant par escript en langaige franchois'. Indeed, in the same prologue La Marche expresses admiration for another writer whose first language was not French, the Portuguese translator Vasque de Lucène. Two of the three people whom La Marche claims to admire in his later prologue are working in a language which is not their own and La Marche draws attention to this fact. At that time he had been living in Brussels, a town with a thriving artistic culture in a language which was not his native French, for over a decade. Is it really plausible that La Marche made no attempt to learn Dutch?

Increasingly the answer of Dutch-speaking scholars is that La Marche, like his contemporaries Chastelain and Molinet, was familiar with Dutch and used Dutch words

¹ Chastelain, *Œuvres*, II, 227.

in his work. A list of words used by the three authors: ‘cloqueman, drincquaert, hossepot, manequin, sacqueman, tasse, vraue, cacquesanne’ is frequently cited as evidence of their familiarity with Dutch.¹ In addition scholars point to La Marche’s membership of *De Leliebloem*, a Dutch-language rederijkerskamer or chamber of rhetoric. These organizations were responsible for organizing literary events, mainly religious plays and a number of them existed in Brussels, most exclusively Dutch-speaking but some bilingual and some French-speaking. La Marche could, therefore, have joined a French-speaking chambre de rhétorique, but he does not appear to have done so. All the evidence would therefore suggest that Olivier de La Marche was a speaker of Dutch and this is supported by the fact that the author appears in the municipal accounts of Brussels in 1485, receiving payment for his literary work.²

Appearances can be deceptive, however, and the evidence for La Marche’s familiarity with the Dutch language is no more conclusive than the evidence for his hostility to Dutch linguistic culture. None of the words cited above as appearing in the works of Chastelain, Molinet and La Marche are actually to be found in La Marche’s *Mémoires*; they are all in Molinet’s work and some of them also appear in that of Chastelain.³ Moreover, La Marche’s membership of *De Leliebloem* is recorded in a way that is equivocal evidence for his speaking Dutch. The membership roll, the rubrication of which is entirely in Dutch (‘Hierna volghen de *gemeyne broders ende susters* [...] daer af de ghecruyste te voren doot zijn ende overleden doen men se hier in dit boek dede schrijven [...]’), contains some entries in French, and that of ‘Messire Olivier de la Marche; Ysabeau Machefoing, sa femme’ is one of them.⁴ The list is an eclectic one, containing, for example, three different words in Dutch for ‘wife’, ‘werdinne’, ‘wijf

¹ For example, in Herman Pleij, *De sneeuwpoppen van 1511: Stadscultuur in de late Middeleeuwen* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 1989), p. 153.

² *Ibid.*, p. 180.

³ Molinet’s use of words from a variety of sources is described in Noël Dupire ‘Mots rares des *Faictz et dictz* de Jean Molinet, *Romania*, 65 (1939), 1-38.

⁴ J. Duverger, *Brussel als kunstcentrum in de XIV^e en de XV^e eeuw* (Antwerp: De Sikkel, 1935), pp. 87-88.

and 'huysvrouw', and so it appears that each member has been allowed to define his or her position in relation to other members and these descriptions have simply been recorded, without editorial intervention. If La Marche's name appears in French, therefore, it is probably because, even within this Dutch-speaking environment, he felt happiest defining himself in French. One view is that La Marche's role was to provide French material for his Dutch speaking colleagues to translate, and indeed two of La Marche's poems, *Le Chevalier délibéré* and *Le Parement et triumphes des dames*, were rapidly translated into Dutch by members of the *Leliebloem*.¹ Even if this were the extent of La Marche's involvement with the Dutch culture of Brussels, it would be grounds for rejecting the view of La Marche as hostile to Dutch culture. Certainly his Dutch-speaking contemporaries did not think so: a second translation of *Le Chevalier délibéré* was published, showing an enthusiasm for La Marche's work improbable in a community to which the author was known to be hostile.² Even after La Marche's death, his work continued to be influential, with *Le Chevalier délibéré* providing material for the Brussels poet J. B. Houwaert's *Generalen Loop der Werrelt*.³ Olivier de La Marche thus provided a context in which the production of some of the Dutch literature of Brussels is to be read, but does this mean that there is a Dutch context to the *Mémoires*?

Given La Marche's stated admiration for those who worked in a language other than their native tongue, his long period of residence in Brussels and his membership of a Dutch rederijkerskamer, it seems unlikely that he made no attempt to learn the language. His wife Ysabeau de Machefoing almost certainly spoke Dutch, as she signed

¹ Alistair Millar, 'Olivier de la Marche and the Court of Burgundy, 1425-1502', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1996, p. 98: 'Although the evidence is at best circumstantial, it is reasonable to suggest that [his role] may have been to provide the *chambre* with French literature, perhaps originating from the court, in order that it be circulated throughout the Dutch-speaking world.'

² M. E. Kronenberg, 'Een onbekende nederlandsche vertaling van *Le Chevalier délibéré*, door Pieter Willemsz. gemaakt', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlansche taal- en letterkunde*, 51 (1932), 178-96.

³ J. F. Vanderheijden, 'J. B. Houwaert en O. de La Marche', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlansche taal- en letterkunde*, 51 (1932), 49-64.

legal documents in the language.¹ Indeed, as a couple they appear to have been involved with a number of Dutch-speaking institutions in the city. Both were members of *De Leliebloem* and both appear to have had an involvement, the extent of which will be explored in chapter five of this thesis, with the church of Saint-Jacques-sur-Coudenberg. The documents of this parish are in Latin and Dutch and, although it is possible to imagine that someone who did not speak Dutch could have survived in such an environment, there were other parishes in Brussels whose use of French was greater and to which the couple could have attached themselves, had one – or both – of them been uncomfortable with Dutch. Ysabeau de Machefoing was a member of the francophone Burgundian hierarchy just as much as La Marche was, so this was not a case of a native speaker of Dutch interesting her husband in the language.² However, together they appear in contexts which suggest a common interest in Dutch and there are some items of Dutch vocabulary in La Marche's *Mémoires* which can be situated within a particular historiographical tradition and can demonstrate more fully what his attitude to the language was.

Describing an uprising in Audenarde, La Marche names the leader of the rebels as 'Lievin Bonne, qui estoit autant à dire en françois Lievin Fève'. (La Marche, II, 228) Boone in Dutch, does indeed mean bean, and the detail enables La Marche to portray this as a popular uprising, an aberration in an aristocratic society where someone with such a lowly name can be 'obei comme si ce feust leur seigneur naturel'. A similar strategy can be identified in the work of Commynes, who reports a meeting between the seigneur de Humbercourt and 'ung chevallier appellé messire Guillaume de Vilde, qui

¹ For example, Henri Stein, *Nouveaux documents sur Olivier de la Marche et sa famille*, Mémoires de l'académie de Belgique, Classe des lettres – Mémoires – Collection in 4^o, 2nd series, vol. 9 (Brussels : Lamertin, 1922), pp. 54-55.

² Courtiers with the surname Machefoing appear in Burgundian ordinances from 1415: Werner Paravicini, 'Die Hofordnungen Herzog Philipps des Guten von Burgund. Edition': 'I, Die Hofordnungen Herzog Johans für Philipp, Grafen von Charolais, von 1407, 1409 und 1415', *Francia*, 10 (1982), 131-66; 'II, Die verlorene Hofordnung von 1419/1421. Die Hofordnung von 1426/1427', *Francia*, 11 (1983), 257-301; 'III, Die Hofordnung für Herzogin Isabella van Portugal von 1430', *Francia*, 13 (1985), 191-211; 'IV, Die verlorene Hofordnungen von 1431/1432. Die Hofordnung von 1433', *Francia*, 15 (1987), 183-231; 'V', *Francia*, 18/1 (1991), 111-23.

veult dire en françois le Sauvage.’¹ Elsewhere, we find Commynes glossing the names of people and places in Italian to rhetorical effect.² Commynes is known to have spoken Italian, albeit with a strong accent, and the fact that he and Olivier de La Marche take such similar approaches to words in languages other than French suggests that La Marche viewed Dutch much in the same way that Commynes saw Italian: it was a foreign language which he did not expect his readers to speak but which was not so foreign that it could not give some insight into the events he was describing. La Marche was not a Dutch speaker in the way that Chastelain was, nor even in the way that Molinet was, but his interest in bilingualism and in Dutch literary culture, fostered by thirty years living in a city which was still overwhelmingly Dutch-speaking, meant that Dutch was a resource which he could call upon in his explanations. Thus, another Ghent rebel has his lowly status signalled by the humbleness of his professional symbol, ‘Si eust ung coustelier qui faisoit couteaulx et canivetz à la marque du wibrekin, qui en françois est appelé ung foret à perser vin.’ (La Marche, II, 273). The use of the Dutch word demonstrates La Marche’s local knowledge and gives his account regional colour.

L’histoire [...] bourguignonne?

Thus the *Mémoires* interact with the Dutch culture of the Burgundian Netherlands, just as they interact with the *Chroniques* of Chastelain and Molinet, the *Mémoires* of Commynes. What is perhaps surprising, given the well-known extent of the Burgundian ducal library and the culture of book production – both manuscript and print – in the Low Countries, is that most of this interaction appears to have taken place on the level of oral rather than written transaction. Of the influences discussed in this chapter, whether acknowledged or not by Olivier de La Marche, only the translations of his work into Dutch are based on documentable circulation of written texts. Dutch influence on

¹ Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*, I, 132.

² So that he tells us that the French king was ‘logé à Forenoue (qui vault à dire ung trou nouveau)’, Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*, III, 162.

La Marche's *Mémoires* can be identified, but it is the influence of the language, rather than of specific texts. Chastelain, Molinet and Vasque de Lucène, whom La Marche openly admires, do not provide texts which La Marche integrates into his work. Neither, despite his overt intentions, do the *Mémoires* provide material which finds its way into their work. Instead influence operates on the level of narrative strategies which serve to establish authority and mark La Marche's work as belonging to the wider Burgundian historiographical project. In the case of Commynes, the project is wider still, and the parallels are just as evident. La Marche's *Mémoires* are the product of a representational culture which was Burgundian but not solely Burgundian and which was in turn influential in shaping the culture of the generation which followed.

Exemplaire, miroir et doctrine: The Didactic Import of the *Mémoires*

Tradition and Translation

Manuscript fonds français 2868 is alone amongst surviving manuscripts of the *Mémoires* in having been produced before the author's death, but it contains only those sections of the work addressed directly to Olivier de La Marche's pupil, Philippe le Beau. The picture of the *Mémoires* painted by its content is, as this thesis has already demonstrated, to some extent unrepresentative in that it sets out a programme of the work which is not pursued by the text as a whole and fails to define the contract of eyewitness reliability which continued to circumscribe the other sections of the *Mémoires* even after the 1488 Book One had been completed. However, as the only part of the *Mémoires* which we know to have been 'published' in La Marche's lifetime, it has the potential to provide valuable insights into the way in which La Marche and his audience viewed the work. One of the reasons that it is able to give us such insights is that – again alone amongst manuscripts of La Marche's *Mémoires* – it is illustrated, with pictures to which the text refers. The first of these illustrations presents a topos of the medieval illustrated book: the author presenting his work to his patron.¹ It is a conventional presentation of a conventional theme, and yet there are a number of features which peculiarize the illustration – setting it apart from a simple stock image. The walls and floor of the room in which the scene takes place are decorated with Philippe le Beau's coat of arms, and La Marche's own coat of arms appears in the decorated border at the foot of the page.² Coats of arms are thus given prominence in this opening scene, and this prefigures the way that coats of arms have a significant role in the text which follows and in the accompanying illustrations. In these illustrations heraldic shields are displayed, draped over trees which show them off to their best

¹ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français, 2868, fol. 5^r, which forms the frontispiece to the present thesis.

² For the identification of La Marche's arms in BnF, f. fr. 2868, see Henri Stein, *Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon* (Paris: Picard, 1888), p. 100.

advantage. The opening illustration thus introduces some of the themes which are to be important in the text and illustrations which it precedes. At its centre we see La Marche, dressed in the habit of a monk, and his pupil, seated on a high-backed throne. La Marche is kneeling, accompanied by a large dog – perhaps intended to symbolize the virtue of fidelity, which led him to remain with the grandson of his last Valois master. He is handing Philippe a book. In this depiction La Marche is both teacher and preacher: providing Philippe with the history of his ancestors whilst dressed in monastic garb. These two roles are difficult to distinguish, understandably so as the moral message of didactic writing is often the message of religion.¹ Georges Doutrepoint makes this point when describing the diversity of didactic literature at the Burgundian court:

Didactique, la littérature l'est (au moins, comme nous l'entendrons) de bien des manières différentes. Elle va d'un extrême à l'autre, elle parcourt ou elle comprend tous les degrés ou toutes les phases de la culture intellectuelle et morale. Elle part, si l'on peut dire, de ce qu'il y a de plus religieux pour aboutir à ce qu'il y a de plus profane.²

Nevertheless, distinctions can be drawn: didactic writing often drew explicitly on pre-Christian writings and frequently concentrated on practical advice rather than on questions of theology. For this reason, I have decided – insofar as this is possible – to separate the discussion of La Marche's teaching role from that of his preaching and this chapter will address the former while the following chapter will deal with the relationship of the *Mémoires* to religion.³

¹ One instance in which this interplay between didactic and religious literature is explicit is in the work of Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry. It was addressed to his daughters and provided them with rules of conduct but threatened them with specifically religious punishments if they failed to adhere to his strictures. These punishments included an eternity spent in hell for the sin of wearing make-up and plucking one's eyebrows. In imagining them, the author appears to have drawn heavily on the exempla of preaching manuals. For a discussion of this work, and its reception in England, see Nicholas Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry: The Education of the English Kings and Aristocracy 1066-1530* (London: Methuen, 1984), pp. 106-109.

² Georges Doutrepoint, *La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne: Philippe le Hardi – Jean sans Peur – Philippe le Bon – Charles le Téméraire* (Paris: Champion, 1909), p. 187.

³ This is in contrast to the approach of other scholars of the Burgundian court, such as Georges Doutrepoint, who treats religious and didactic literature as a single subject in the third chapter of his *La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne*, pp. 187-329.

If there were any doubt that the *Mémoires* can be read as a didactic work, the 1488 Book One, and particularly its presentation in manuscript 2868, would be sufficient to dispel it. Not only is the text addressed to Philippe, who at the time of writing is ‘soubz dix ans’ (La Marche, I, 10) but it is illustrated in a way which is reminiscent of a child’s picture book where the text makes reference to small illustrations of the coats of arms which it describes and where principal events in the narrative are depicted in larger illustrations to which the text does not refer. Of these larger illustrations only the first three date from the period in which the manuscript was produced. The others were added by a later owner of the manuscript, Petau, in the middle of the seventeenth century.¹ The first tree bearing coats of arms appears on folio 12^r, between the last fifteenth-century illustration and the first seventeenth-century one, and all the depictions of trees use the same bright pink and turquoise pigment characteristic of Petau’s work.² However, as the fifteenth-century manuscript leaves small spaces for illustrations in the text and as the text itself draws the reader’s attention to the illustrations of coats of arms which will provide further information, I think there is little doubt that the seventeenth-century illustrator is accurately responding to the intentions of the producers of the fifteenth-century manuscript. This use of illustration situates the manuscript within a didactic tradition in which works addressed to children were (and still are) accompanied with pictures to interest the perhaps still illiterate, or semi-literate, child. Works such as René d’Anjou’s *Traictié de la fourme et devis d’ung tournoy* and Anthoine de La Sale’s *Jehan de Saintré*, both works addressed to children and with a strong explicit didactic intent, received such treatment, as did works instructing adults on technical subjects, such as heraldry or medicine. The illustration of La Marche’s text, therefore, places it in the context of children’s literature, and indeed this is how the text as a whole has been read. Doutrepoint describes the *Mémoires* as

¹ Henri Stein, *Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, p. 130.

² I am indebted to Susie Speakman-Sutch for drawing my attention to this feature of manuscript 2868.

being ‘dédiés, en guise de traité d’éducation’ to Philippe le Beau, without recognizing that the contract established in the section of the work which describes itself in this manner has no retrospective effect on sections of the book written prior to this dedication, and only a limited effect on those sections written afterwards.¹ It is the purpose of this chapter, therefore, to consider not only the more explicitly didactic passages which make up Book One but also other sections of the *Mémoires* to determine the extent to which the work as a whole can be read within the didactic tradition.

However, the term in itself needs some definition, as the didactic literature of the later middle ages was vast and varied and no single reader would have had access to its entirety. Here again, manuscript 2868 is an indication of the context in which La Marche’s *Mémoires* are to be read. The illumination of folio 5^r, with its border containing pictures of flowers and insects, seemingly scattered at random across a background onto which the objects cast their shadow, is characteristic of the Ghent-Bruges school of miniaturists.² The artists of this school produced many manuscripts for the Burgundian court, including the most famous example of their work: the illustrated Book of Hours of Mary of Burgundy.³ Some of the flowers painted in other manuscripts by the ‘Master of Mary of Burgundy’, the anonymous artist who has been named after the miniatures he contributed to the Book of Hours, resemble those which appear in manuscript 2868 of the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche, particularly the daisies. And the appearance of daisies in the illustrations of La Marche’s *Mémoires* further situate the book within the culture of the Burgundian court. Daisies were a symbol of the Valois House of Burgundy, because of the number of women called Marguerite who had strengthened the ducal house through marriages bringing further lands or increased

¹ Georges Doutrepoint, *La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne*, p. 446.

² The work of the Ghent-Bruges school and of the Master of Mary of Burgundy in particular are discussed in Otto Pächt, *The Master of Mary of Burgundy* (London: Faber and Faber, [1948]).

³ A reduced facsimile of this work can be found in *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy: codex vindobonensis 1857, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek* (London: Harvey Miller, [1995]).

prestige. Jean Molinet, amongst others, exploits this flower imagery in the prologue to his *Chronique*, where he speaks of the dukes of Burgundy, ‘descendus du vergier lilifère’ (that is the household of the fleur-de-lys of France), being ‘entremelléz avec III. redolentes Marguerites’.¹ The daisy that appears above Olivier de La Marche’s coat of arms in the presentation miniature of manuscript 2868 thus associates the author personally with the Burgundian dynasty which is to be his principal subject matter. Before we even read the text of manuscript 2868 it is clear that this is a didactic work whose roots are firmly in the material culture of the court of Burgundy.

The significance of this in the context of a consideration of the likely influences over Olivier de La Marche should not be underestimated. It has been remarked that La Marche left no books in his will, and that the author seems not to have owned personally any manuscripts or printed works which could have served as sources for his writings.² However, it seems that this may have been a consequence of his close contact with the ducal court, as Georges Doutrepoint concludes that artists working in the court seem to have used a wide range of sources which can only be attributed to unrestricted access to the ducal library:

si le duc spécifie à ses écrivains la tâche à remplir et s’il leur ouvre libéralement sa bibliothèque pour d’autres ‘livrets’ et livres dont ils pourraient tirer profit dans leurs travaux, qu’il les autorise à se servir des trésors variés qu’elle renferme pour la documentation de leurs vastes compilations: ainsi Wauquelin, David Aubert, Miélot, Raoul Lefèvre, Guillaume Fillastre qui ont dû consulter de nombreuses sources.³

¹ Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, ed. by Georges Doutrepoint and Omer Jodogne, 4 vols (Brussels: Palais des académies, 1935-37), I, 25. Jean Devaux traces this imagery to a speech given by Guillaume Fillastre on 21 December 1459 and preserved in Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, manuscript 7243-7251; Jean Devaux, *Jean Molinet indiciaire bourguignon* (Paris: Champion, 1996), pp. 159-62.

² The text of Olivier de La Marche’s will is reproduced in Henri Stein, *Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, pp. 198-203. In it, La Marche disposes of his houses but mentions none of the contents specifically. With one exception, no manuscript has been traced to Olivier de La Marche’s ownership. The manuscript in question is Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français, 5413. However, Chrystèle Blondeau, who has studied this manuscript believes the attribution to be very uncertain.

³ Georges Doutrepoint, *La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne*, p. 457. This assumption is shared by Otto Pächt in *The Master of Mary of Burgundy*, p. 30, when he suggests that the techniques of the Limbourg brothers were influential in the formation of the Master’s style: ‘It is not unlikely that our artist had seen decorative compositions such as the columbine border of the “Très riches heures” and was inspired by them, since a court painter of Margaret of York and Mary of Burgundy

We could therefore expect that La Marche, in his role of both *Maître d'Hôtel* and occasional poet to the court, would also have access to the literary resources of the ducal library and that these may have influenced the way in which he presented his work.

As many commentators have pointed out, the Burgundian library was full of works which can loosely be termed didactic in nature. Although it appears that surviving inventories of the libraries do not list all the books owned by the dukes (the inventory of 1477 lists fewer than 100 books, a decrease from the number found in previous inventories), the picture which emerges from them is of a library with strong educational interests.¹ Titles such as *Le Livre de l'Instruction d'un jeune prince*, *Le Livre du gouvernement des rois et des princes*, *Le Livre de l'enseignement des enfans* and *L'Enseignement des femmes* appear frequently alongside works of classical antiquity thought to be of practical use in educating young men in the art of war. These works included Xenophon's *Cyropedia*, and the works of many of the classical authors to whom La Marche makes reference: Socrates, Aristotle, Ovid, Virgil and Livy amongst others.² However, as both Georges Doutrepoint and Arjo Vanderjagt have pointed out, caution must be exercised in assuming that these titles can be linked unequivocally with content to which modern readers have access. Many didactic works had similar or even identical titles: *De regimine principum* might equally refer to works by Giles of Rome, Thomas Aquinas, Ptolemy of Luccás or Thomas Hoccleve, while the French translation of Giles of Rome's work shared a title with yet other instructive

would have had access to the Burgundian library where manuscripts illuminated by the Brothers Limbourg could be found.'

¹ Georges Doutrepoint, *La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne*, p. xlvi, Joseph Barrois, *Bibliothèque prototypographique ou Librairie des Fils du roi Jean, Charles V, Jean de Berri, Philippe de Bourgogne et les siens* (Paris: Treuttel & Würtz, 1830).

² La Marche, I, 183; La Marche, I, 178; La Marche I, 112-13. For a discussion of the importance of classical paradigms in late medieval education, see Malcolm Vale, *War and Chivalry: Warfare and Aristocratic Culture in England, France and Burgundy at the End of the Middle Ages* (London: Duckworth, 1981), pp. 14-19.

works on government.¹ Thus, as most inventory entries did not give an author for the work that they described, it is easy to assume that Burgundian courtiers were reading one work, when in fact they were reading another.² Moreover, Burgundian translators of classical works did not necessarily have the linguistic resources to convey the content of their material accurately; Robert Bossuat has shown how Jean Miélot, a competent translator of medieval Latin, was defeated by the nuances of Cicero's syntax.³ Nor, indeed, was it always their intention to provide a faithful translation of the classical text; the editor of Vasque de Lucène's translation of the *Cyropedia* (or rather his translation of a Latin translation by Francesco Poggio Bracciolini) points out that Vasque de Lucène omits details that he found unacceptable, such as the fact that Persians in Cyrus's army were allowed to wear make-up to improve their appearance.⁴ Moreover, the fact that the Latin translation had been produced by a man who was not a professional soldier meant that the terms relating to the very military matters that the book aimed to teach were 'parfois négligés, souvent superposés ou remplacés par des mots abstraits ou des termes civils' and, in setting the translation straight, Vasque de

¹ Charles F. Briggs, *Giles of Rome's 'De regimine principum': Reading and Writing Politics at Court and University c.1275-c.1525* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 8.

² The example cited by Doutrepoint is that of the *Ordre de Chevalerie* which appears in the Burgundian inventories. This work is not, as its title may suggest, the thirteenth-century *Ordene de Chevalerie*, a pseudographical narrative in which the captured Hue de Tabarie explains the institution of Christian knighthood to his captor, Saladin (edited in *Le Roman des eles by Raoul de Houdenc and L'Ordene de Chevalerie*, ed. by Keith Busby, Utrecht Publications in General and Comparative Literature, 17 (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1983), pp. 73-131). Instead, the work identified by Doutrepoint (*La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne*, p. 271) begins with a chapter entitled 'comment le chevalier hermite devisa à l'escuier la rigle et l'ordre de chevalerie'. Nevertheless, it seems that the Burgundian court was familiar with some version of de Houdenc's material; one of the entries in the inventory of Ghent in 1485 was a work entitled 'L'Instruction d'ung jeune Prince pour se bien gouverner envers Dieu et le monde', the *dicta probatoria* on the last folio of which were 'Hue de Tabarye, seigneur de Galilée'. Joseph Barrois, *Bibliothèque prototypographique*, 2112. The contents of this anonymous work are described in Malcolm Vale, *War and Chivalry*, pp. 26-27.

³ Robert Bossuat, 'Jean Miélot: Traducteur de Cicéron', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 99 (1938), 82-124.

⁴ Danielle Gallet-Guerne, *Vasque de Lucène et la Cyropédie à la cour de Bourgogne (1470): Le Traité de Xénophon mis en français d'après la version latine du Pogge*, (Geneva: Droz, 1974), p. 107. The homosexual overtones of Cyrus's relationship with Artabaze are similarly absent from Vasque de Lucène's translation. Xénophon, *Cyropédie* vols 1 & 2 ed. and trans. by Marcel Bizos, vol. 3 ed. and trans. by Édouard Delebecque, Collection des universités de France publiée sous le patronage de l'Association Guillaume Budé, 3 vols (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1971-78), I, 30-31 (Book I, chap. 4, 27).

Lucène remodelled the army of antiquity as a modern Burgundian army.¹ Such anachronism was not out of place in the Burgundian artistic tradition in which, as was conventional throughout the Middle Ages, classical heroes were frequently presented in fifteenth-century dress. Nor was it necessarily unconscious. Arjo Vanderjagt has argued that many of the classical works read in the Burgundian court were deliberately shaped by their compilers and translators to support distinctively Burgundian political positions.² We should bear this in mind when studying the influence of classical authors on the Burgundian writers who cited them; the Socrates La Marche cites at the beginning of his 1473 introduction may be not only the Socrates of his memory, but also a peculiarly Burgundian Socrates, circumscribed by the conventions and philosophy of his Burgundian translators.

Or, indeed, the Socrates of La Marche's memory, may not be Socrates at all, but an *auctor*, an authority cited by the medieval writer to give his work greater rhetorical force.³ The medieval historian was, as Gabrielle Spiegel has put it, 'a compiler, cloaking his authorial persona behind the authoritative works of others, with which he tampered only at great moral risk', and this meant that, to achieve recognition, a work of history had to be supported by quotations from recognized authorities: the *auctores* of the medieval world.⁴ La Marche's citation of Socrates functions in this way, and we find the same topos in Enguerran de Monstrelet's *Chronique* supported by a different classical reference:

Selon ce que dit Saluste, au commencement d'un sien livre nommé Cathilinaire, où il raconte aucuns merueilleux fais, tant des Rommains, comme de leur adversaires, tout homme doit fourir oiseuse et soy exerciter

¹ Danielle Gallet-Guerne, *Vasque de Lucène et la Cyropédie à la cour de Bourgogne (1470)*, p. 50.

² I am indebted to Professor Vanderjagt for providing me with two of his as yet unpublished articles on this subject: 'Expropriating the Past: Tradition and Innovation in the Use of Texts in Fifteenth-Century Burgundy', forthcoming in a volume edited by R. Suntrup and J. Veenstra (Peter Lang) and 'Practicing Nobility in Fifteenth-Century Burgundian Courtly Culture: Ideology and Politics', forthcoming in a volume edited by E. Vance and D. Knechtges (University of Washington Press).

³ For a discussion of this phenomenon, see A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1988).

⁴ Gabrielle M. Spiegel, 'Genealogy: Form and Function in Medieval Historical Narrative', *History and Theory*, 22 (1983), 43-53 (p. 45).

en bonnes œuvres, afin qu'il ne soit pareil aux bestes, qui ne sont utiles qu'à elles seulement se à autres choses ne sont contraints et induites.¹

Indeed, Sallust does advance this argument at the beginning of *Catilina* and it is one which is to be found in the writings of a number of authors of antiquity, from Plato to St Jerome.² However, even the fact that Monstrelet cites Sallust correctly does not mean that he had read *Catilina*, as the most common form in which Sallust's work circulated in the later Middle Ages was in collections of extracts from classical writers. What is more, the frequency with which Burgundian prefaces stated that the work which followed had the dual purpose of education and the avoidance of idleness means that Monstrelet and La Marche may have come across the reference in the work of one of their colleagues and be incorporating it into their own writing without ever having read the work from which it is taken.³ Learned references in themselves, then, are not sufficient to identify possible sources for the didactic material in the *Mémoires*. In fact they do little more than mark the work as a particular sort of literature: as an authoritative work of erudition.⁴ In La Marche's other works we find the citation of classical sources used to similar effect: lending weight to the author's moral message without necessarily adding to its factual accuracy. At the beginning of his *Parement des dames*, La Marche writes

Boece nous dit que cest amour haultaine
Daymer sa dame tousiours et en tout lieu

¹ Enguerran de Monstrelet, *Chronique*, ed. by L. Douët d'Arq, 6 vols (Paris: Société de l'Histoire de France 1857-62), I, 1-2.

² Sallust, *Catilina, Jugutha, Fragments des histoires* trans. and ed. by Alfred Ernout (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1964), p. 54 'Omnis homines qui sese student praestare ceteris animalibus summa ope niti decet ne uitum silentio transeant ueluti pecora, quae natura prona et atque uentri oboedientia finixit.', 'Tout homme jaloux de s'élever au dessus des autres êtres doit travailler de toutes ses forces à ne point passer sa vie dans un obscur silence, comme font les animaux que la nature a penchés vers la terre et asservis à leur estomac'. Ernout argues that this is based on a passage in Plato, (*Republic*, IX, 586 a-b) which also draws an analogy between animals and those who have their physical needs but not their mental needs satisfied.

³ Doutrepoint identifies these arguments as almost universal features of Burgundian prefaces, *La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne*, p. 519.

⁴ Bernard Guenée, *Histoire et Culture historique dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris: Aubier, 1980), pp. 115-16 supports this observation: 'Ces listes d'auteurs étalées dans les prologues se révèlent trop souvent des trompe-l'œil. Dans le texte même, l'absence de toute référence est fréquente. Et quand référence il y a, il n'est pas rare qu'elle soit imprécise, voire imaginaire.'

Pour lexaulcer et mettre deuant Dieu¹

The reference to Boethius gives this assertion its didactic authority, but it is highly unlikely that the historical Boethius ever expressed such sentiments. His *Consolation of Philosophy* does, it is true, exalt the supreme virtue of love, but this is a love which, the author stresses, is identical with God (and indeed with happiness) and it is difficult to imagine him implying, as La Marche's passage does, that love for another person is separable from love of God.² When La Marche cites the example of Boethius, therefore, the quotation gives his readers little information on the views of the classical author, but it connotes that they are reading a work which, like that of Boethius, is to be read in the didactic tradition of the Middle Ages.³ It is therefore not surprising that the majority of the *Mémoires*'s references to classical authors occur in the 1488 Book One, the section of the *Mémoires* which is explicitly didactic in intent.

Such references are, in any case, fleeting and generally serve to support a particular point of fact or as a source for a specific moral dictum rather than underpin a fully elaborated didactic philosophy. Not that we should find anything particularly surprising in this, for, as Wilhelm Berges pointed out, the didactic tradition of the Middle Ages, whilst admiring – and drawing on examples to be found in – the work of classical authors, did not take its form from a genre of classical literature.⁴ The didacticism of the Middle Ages was a medieval product which took its material from classical authors without finding in these authors a model. It is true that some classical authors were especially valued by didactic writers of the later medieval period: the

¹ Olivier de La Marche, *Le Parement et triumphes des dames* (Paris: Veusve feu Jehan Trepperel et Jehan Jehannot, [1510?]; facsimile edition, Paris: Baillieu, 1870), fol. B i^r.

² Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. by Victor Watts (London: Penguin, 1969, rev. edn, 1999).

³ La Marche may, of course, be referring to the work of another medieval writer, the early thirteenth-century Pseudo-Boethius, author of *De Disciplina Scolarium*, described in Nicholas Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry*, p. 86. It could be argued that this figure himself plays a similar role to that which I suggest is at work in La Marche's quotations of classical sources, in that he takes on the name of an established classical author to lend weight to the lessons presented.

⁴ Wilhelm Berges, *Die Fürstenspiegel des hohen und späten Mittelalters*, Schriften des Reichsinstituts für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde (Monumenta Germaniae historica), 2 (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1938), p. 41.

writings of Aristotle, Plutarch and Seneca in particular found favour. However, this was not because of the perceived qualities of their writings but because of their personal standing with individual princes of antiquity, to whom they had been tutors: Alexander the Great, Trajan and Nero respectively.¹ That the authors should be valued for their personal connections rather than the qualities inherent in their writing, reflects an attitude to education in general which concentrated on the upbringing of princes and applied the lessons of their education to the wider public. This attitude had its literary expression in a 'genre' of writing known as the *Miroir aux princes*.

Reflection

The inverted commas around 'genre' are necessary to highlight the uncertainty with which the term can be applied to *Miroirs aux princes*. Although attempts have been made to define the genre, limiting it, for example, to works produced mainly by mendicant friars, the frequency with which the term is used to describe works of the later Middle Ages defies such taxonomy.² The term *miroir* seems to prescribe neither form nor content: *miroirs* may contain practical advice on warfare, hunting or household management, or theological discussions on whether or not it is ever legitimate to kill a ruler; they could take the form of a letter from father to son, as was the case with the *Enseignements Saint Louis*, they could be composed of a series of exemplary tales, or they could present a sustained argument, in which the *exemplum* had little or no role.³ The use of the term *miroir*, therefore, did not presuppose content, but it

¹ Kate Langdon Forhan, 'Reflecting Heroes. Christine de Pizan and the Mirror Tradition' in *The City of Scholars: New Approaches to Christine de Pizan*, ed. by Margarete Zimmermann and Dina De Rentiis (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), pp. 189-96 (p. 191). The presence of Nero's teacher in this list of venerated educators might seem unusual, given the brutality with which this emperor is generally associated. However, Seneca seems to have been regarded as a calming influence upon his pupil, one which was removed only when Nero persuaded his teacher to commit suicide.

² Chief amongst those who have attempted to define this genre is Jean-Philippe Genet. See especially his introduction to *Four English political tracts of the later Middle Ages* ed. by Jean-Philippe Genet (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977).

³ The *Miroir aux princes* is comprehensively discussed in Wilhelm Berges's *Die Fürstenspiegel des hohen und späten Mittelalters*. Further explanation can be found in Nicholas Orme's, *From Childhood to Chivalry* and in Bernard Guenée's *L'Occident aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles: Les États*, Nouvelle Clio, L'Histoire et ses problèmes, 22 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971), particularly pp. 85-159.

does seem to have reflected intent, drawing on meticulously elaborated theories of government and education which evolved in both a wider European and a specifically Burgundian context to shape the way in which literature addressed to young rulers was written and read.

Miroir, and its Latin equivalent *speculum* are frequently used as generic markers in medieval literature to denote literature intended to be instructive and frequently composed of extracts from longer works. This use of terminology had the weight of scriptural authority to support it:

Quia si quis auditor est verbi, et non factor, hic comparabitur viro consideranti vultum nativitatis suæ in speculo: consideravit enim se, et abiit, et statim oblitus est qualis fuerit. Qui autem perspexerit in legem perfectam libertatis, et permanserit in ea, non auditor obliviosus factus, sed factor operis: hic beatus in facto suo erit.¹

Here, scripture is compared to a mirror, in which the reader can see clearly and whose lessons can therefore be easily assimilated. The extension of this metaphor to any instructive text, particularly to a text which supplies its lessons through *exempla*, posits the mirror as an unproblematic optical device, reflecting a world in which the same causes, if recreated, will inevitably produce the same effects. Past events are adduced to teach the presumed reader – the prince – how he should behave in future circumstances. This, in turn, assumes a cyclical view of history, in which the same events will be reproduced without fail if the original conditions are recreated.² Past events can therefore be proposed as both positive *exempla* – the prince can pursue a course of

¹ 'Whoever listens to the word but does not put it into practice is like a man who looks into a mirror and sees himself as he is. He takes a good look at himself and then goes away and at once forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks closely into the perfect law that sets people free, who keeps on paying attention to it, and puts it into practice – that person will be blessed by God in what he does.' *Biblia Sacra vulgatae editionis* (Milan: San Paolo; Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1995) (text established 1946), James, 1. 23-6. The English version is that of the Good News Bible (text established 1976). I quote from the Vulgate Bible because this is the text closest to those available in the fifteenth century. However, the Vulgate did not become the translation officially sanctioned by the Catholic Church until the Council of Trent in 1546. Indeed, many of the Bibles in the Burgundian court were in French translations, and it is entirely possible that the text with which La Marche had greatest familiarity was French.

² The observation is that of Joël Blanchard in 'L'histoire commynienne. Pragmatique et mémoire dans l'ordre politique', *Annales, Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 46-5 (September-October 1991), 1071-1105 (p. 1078).

action which proved successful in the past in the confident expectation of recreating this success – or as negative ones – the failures previously suffered by princes can be avoided if the root causes of those failures are eliminated. Olivier de La Marche opens his 1488 Book One saying ‘j’espoir que vous lirez et pourrez veoir par mes escrips trois parties qui seront à la haulteur de vostre seignourie exemplaire, miroir et doctrine, utiles et proffitables pour le temps advenir’ (La Marche, I, 10). In saying this, he clearly situates the work within the mirror tradition. However, as is so often the case in the *Mémoires*, slight changes to the punctuation decisions made by Beaune and d’Arbaumont throw new light on the way that La Marche’s text can be interpreted, which, in this case, allows us to explore the nuances of the Burgundian mirror tradition. Another possible way of reading the phrase would express La Marche’s hopes thus: ‘j’espoir que vous lirez et pourrez veoir par mes escrips trois parties qui seront, à la haulteur de vostre seignourie, exemplaire, miroir et doctrine, utiles et proffitables pour le temps advenir.’ Here ‘exemplaire’ and ‘miroir’ become synonymous and the text is presented, in keeping with the theories outlined above, as an unproblematic collection of *exempla* reflecting a world whose cyclical stability allows us to draw didactic conclusions. This is not simply a view espoused in those sections of the work written after 1488. In a passage describing the events of 1449, La Marche draws conclusions about the death of a Portuguese nobleman:

O princes, hauls et nobles personaiges, mirez vous ou cas du saige duc de Coymbres, filz, frere et oncle de Roy! Ne temptez Dieu, ne son executeresse fortune; ne vous fiez en force de chevalerie, de peuple ne d’armures, quant celle fortune a monsté la puissance de sa permission, pour avoir conduit l’impetuosité d’une saiette si juste et si alignée, que d’avoir accidentalement occiz ung si noble prince au milieu de sa chevalerie, et sur luy seul, entre telle compaignie, monsté sa fureur et sa cruelle vengeance. (La Marche, II, 139)

Long before the didactic conception of the *Mémoires* was made explicit in the 1488 Book One, therefore, La Marche was using the vocabulary of the *Miroir aux princes* to persuade his readers of the folly of becoming involved in hazardous military enterprises.

Whether or not the author had conceived of his work as being addressed to a princely patron at this stage, the image of the work as a mirror in which practical examples can be reflected was clearly already present. Indeed, prior to this, before the idea of a princely patron is explicitly stated, La Marche seems to regard his work as potentially useful and interesting to readers other than himself precisely because it is a work of instruction. This is particularly marked in passages dealing with combat, which will be discussed more fully in the final chapter of this thesis. It is, however, important to note at this stage that the terminology employed by the author to explain the relevance of the first combat he witnessed, is strikingly similar to that which he was to use later in setting out the didactic purpose of his *miroir*. His account of the form in which a challenge is issued will, he argues, serve as ‘escolle et [...] doctrine aux nobles hommes qui viendront cy après’ (La Marche, I, 190). ‘Escolle et [...] doctrine’ in the 1470s, the *Mémoires* have become ‘exemplaire, miroir et doctrine’ in the 1480s, and in both cases their author imagines them as providing lessons which will be of use in days to come.

It is perhaps significant that La Marche’s first conception of a didactic purpose to his *Mémoires* should be a military one, and that this should be followed by a ceremonial conception, whereby the *Mémoires* are viewed as a way of transmitting information about the proper organization of court festivities.¹ La Marche was employed within the Burgundian hierarchy with the dual roles of soldier and *maître d’hôtel* and the fact that the *Mémoires* first find an addressee when the author is dealing with these areas of expertise suggests that his earliest instructive purpose was to inform an audience about his profession.² However, with the development of Philippe le Beau

¹ La Marche ends his account of the ceremonies of the chapter meeting of the Toison d’Or ‘Et ainsi se departit icelle feste, et, comme dit est dessus, force m’a contrainct d’escrire celluy noble estat pour une fois, pour delecter les lisans qui verront mes Memoires cy après, si à veoir et à sçavoir les cerimonies passées, par eulx non veues, et où je ne plains le travail, si non en tant que ne le sçay faire ou y atteindre selon mon desir et affection.’ (La Marche, II, 95-96). It is clear that La Marche here envisages his work being read by an audience who will be interested in court ceremonial, in the same way that he had earlier envisaged them being interested in the ceremonial of combat.

² This continues to be the focus of those later works of La Marche which do not find a place in the *Mémoires*, particularly the *Epistre pour tenir et célébrer la noble feste du Thoison d’or*, in *Traité du duel*

as narratee, the didactic scope of the *Mémoires* broadened so that the 1488 Book One envisages a structure in accordance with a different interpretation of the concept of the *Miroir aux princes*.

The *miroir* of didactic writing was not merely a simple optical device, reflecting the situations and attitudes of the physical world. It was also a metaphorical construct in which the ideal world was displayed with the purpose of improving the physical world to which it was related. In a society where political theory was closely related to Christian cosmology, this ideal world was commonly held to be the celestial order, of which earthly political structures were only a poor reflection.¹ Thus a theory of societal structures was developed in harmony with what was believed to be the tripartite order obtaining in a heaven ruled by a Trinity and a three-tiered hierarchy of angels.² The three estates of earthly society: nobles, priests and commoners, reflected this heavenly order and *Miroirs aux princes*, whose job it was to reflect both earthly and heavenly orders, were frequently divided into three parts, each addressing a different section of society.³ The 1488 Book One of Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires* envisages a tripartite

judiciaire: Relations de pas d'armes et tournois, ed. by B. Prost (Paris: Léon Willem, 1872), pp. 97-133, which is addressed to Philippe le Beau and written, according to the prologue, when the author was in the 76th year of his life (p. 97).

¹ I use the term 'political theory' in the sense of a concept of theory of societal order. There are those, including Jean-Philippe Genet, who regard this as displaying a tendency towards anachronism; arguing that 'political theory did not and could not exist in the fourteenth century' and was still very much in an emergent state in the fifteenth, developing from distinct but related genres including political theology and political poetry. Genet is, however, commenting on the state of evolution of practical theories of *politics*, whereas I am referring to theoretical constructs of *polity*, which have a longer history and more in common with what he terms political theology. Jean-Philippe Genet, 'Ecclesiastics and Political Theory in Late Medieval England: The End of a Monopoly', in *The Church, Politics and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by Barrie Dobson (Gloucester: Sutton; New York: St Martin's Press, 1984), pp. 23-44.

² Wilhelm Berges, *Die Fürstenspiegel des hohen und späten Mittelalters*, p. 56, sets out this theory, which was espoused most notably by Bernard of Clairvaux.

³ This technique, and its exploitation in the work of Christine de Pisan, is explored in Kate Langdon Forhan, 'Reflecting Heroes. Christine de Pizan and the Mirror Tradition', p. 194. In fact, as Robert H. Lucas points out in his comments on Pisan's *Livre du corps de policie*, her division of society in this work is unusual in that clerics form part of the third estate, while nobles are the second estate and royalty the first: Christine de Pisan, *Le Livre du corps de policie* ed. by Robert H. Lucas (Geneva: Droz, 1967). A Burgundian instance of a more traditional treatment of the topos can be found in Chastelain's *Traité par forme d'allégorie mystique sur l'entrée du roy Loys en nouveau règne*, *Œuvres* ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Brussels: Heussner, 1863-66; repr. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1971), VII, 1-35, in which each of the three estates in turn is compared to the Virgin Mary, who has appeared to the author in a vision.

structure for the author's *miroir*, but it is not one in which the different sections have different addressees; in each case Philippe le Beau is the intended recipient of the work. Nevertheless, I believe that the new conception of the *Mémoires* reflects an interest in the heavenly order in keeping with this cosmographical understanding of the meaning of the *Miroir aux princes*.

The 1488 Book One opens with the words 'Reverence, honneur, oblacion et gloire soit rendue, attribuée et présentée à la sainte Trinité' (La Marche, I, 7) and the outline of the work that follows seems to have a strong trinitarian flavour. In setting out his project for the *Mémoires* La Marche writes that he envisages the work being in three sections, the first describing Philippe le Beau's ancestry, the second describing the manner in which Philippe has come into his inheritance and the third setting out 'les choses dignes de memoire, prosperes [et] adverses, advenues de mon temps en ceste noble maison [...] qui pourra server à la haulteur de vostre entendement de trois choses' (La Marche, I, 10-13). This then introduces another tripartite sequence in which La Marche sets out the aims for his work:

La premiere, comme j'ay dit dessus, de vous regler ès nobles et vertueuses euvres et fais de voz ancesseurs. La seconde, afin de louer et gracier le hault Dieu celeste des gloires et bonnes fortunes advenues à voz ancesseurs et dont encoires vous vous en sentez en honneur et prouffit. Et tiercement, se vous trouvez que Dieu ait permis à la fortune que toutes emprinses ne soient pas venues à souhait et selon le desir des haulx entrepreneurs, que ces coups de foüetz et divines batures fierent et hurtent à la porte de vostre pensée pour ouvrir le guichet de sage memoire, affin que vous doubtiez et creniez les persecutions du ciel, et que outrecuidance d'amis, d'avoir ou de seignourie ne vous facent ung tempteur de Dieu, ung deslieur de fortune et ung cuideur de valoir, pour mener à fin les choses impossibles, sans avoir regart à la perdicion de noblesse et [à la] destruction du peuple, et estre oublieux de requerir Dieu en souverain ayde, sans lequel nulle emprins ne peut venir à bonne fin. (La Marche, I, 13-14)

Both tripartite series seem to be making the same point, and one might be forgiven for thinking that La Marche has fallen into the error of redundant repetition. However, I believe that this is not the case, as the repetition serves to underline the threefold nature of La Marche's didactic conception which, taken with the fact that the work as a whole

opened with a dedication to the Trinity, can be understood to mirror the threefold structure of the celestial order. And the correspondence is not merely numerical; La Marche differentiates the purpose of his projected three books along lines which echo those of Christian cosmology. In the first book La Marche promises to explain Philippe le Beau's ancestry, and this desire to root all things in their ancestry can be compared to the Christian view of the Old Testament as an exposition of Israel's inheritance or to the person of God the Father. With the second section La Marche proposes to bring his history up to date, showing Philippe, the inheritor of the tradition described in the first book, coming into his kingdom. This again may be compared to the Christian view of Jesus as inheritor of the legacy of the Old Testament. In the same way that the second person of the Trinity is considered to be the child of the first, Philippe is to be shown as the inheritor of the tradition outlined in the first book, and therefore the planned Book Two is envisaged as the descendant of Book One. Finally, the third section appears to be aimed at greater enlightenment on Philippe's part and, in setting out his aims for Philippe's understanding, La Marche implies that this phase should see the prince's adoption of the correct attitude towards God. In terms of Christian epistemology this phase of enlightenment could be regarded as akin to the effect of the Holy Spirit. Once again, therefore, La Marche's *Mémoires* are to be situated within the mirror tradition in that they are emplotted as a mimetic representation of the divine order in which Book One begets Book Two and Book Three brings with it the understanding that proceeds from the previous two books.

La Marche's *Mémoires* were not from the outset cast in this mimetic mould: their original reference to a religious patron had been not to the Trinity, but to the Madonna and Child and the tripartite structure of the work was conceived at the same time as the reference to the Trinity was introduced.¹ However, the rededication of the

¹ La Marche opens his 1473 introduction saying that he does so 'graciant mon redempteur Jesus Crist et sa glorieuse mere qui m'ont donné et impartir leur grace, et especialle misericorde', La Marche, I, 185.

work in the late 1480s allowed La Marche to reconsider the extent of his potential readership and produce a work with a more explicitly defined instructive purpose and this went hand in hand with a schema which reproduced the hierarchical structures of Christian cosmography. The *Mémoires* thus adopt a more universal frame of reference with the plan elaborated in the 1488 Book One, and this might seem paradoxical in view of the fact that this is the very moment in which La Marche abandons his former strategy of addressing the nobility in general and adopts a single noble patron, Philippe le Beau. In fact, there is no conflict between this widening in scope and the apparent narrowing of audience, because the patron in question was a prince and fifteenth-century writers had elaborated a particular theory of the role of princes in their mirrors.

The organic model of society postulated by Saint Paul had gained currency in didactic writing in the work of the twelfth-century English bishop John of Salisbury, particularly in his *Policraticus*.¹ This work presented a wide-ranging survey of the body politic, outlining the responsibilities of its individual members: kings, priests, judges, knights and citizens. Central to the *Policraticus* was the argument that the body politic was just that – a body whose members depended upon each other as an organic whole for their existence.² Thus, John of Salisbury contends ‘quod lesio capitis [...] ad omnia membra refertur et cuiusque membri uulnus iniuate irrogatum ad capitis spectat iniuriam.’³ The head in question is the prince himself, an analogy which had a number of political advantages, outlined by Bernard Guenée thus:

¹ Ephesians, 4. 12-30 argues that Christ’s body is made up of individual Christian worshippers, each of whom has a role to play in the organic whole similar to that of an individual part of the body.

² This was an argument that resonated in Burgundian circles: Christine de Pisan’s *Livre du corps de policie*, a copy of which (now Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fonds français, 12439) belonged to Philippe le Bon, borrows the same imagery, although the subject matter is not that of John of Salisbury but principally that of Valerius Maximus. John of Salisbury’s work was present in the Burgundian library, but the example once again illustrates the dangers of presuming that identical titles refer to identical contents.

³ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, ed. by C. C. I. Webb, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1909), II, 73, ‘that an injury to the head [...] is brought home to all the members, and that a wound unjustly inflicted on any member tends to the injury of the head’ translation in John Dickinson, *The Statesman’s Book of John of Salisbury* (New York: Knopf, 1927), p. 259.

[C]ette banale image est lourde de thèmes politiques précis. Non seulement elle fait de l'inégalité et de la hiérarchie des évidences, mais encore elle renforce la conviction que l'Etat est plus que l'addition de ses membres, elle soutient la mystique de l'unité, et elle justifie sans plus de raisonnements la monarchie, car si des hommes ont pu vivre sans main ou sans pied, aucun n'a jamais pu vivre sans tête.¹

The king as head of his nation is therefore its undisputed leader and this is borne out by the passage from the *Policraticus* quoted above. Here, in what is a prelude to John of Salisbury's remarks on the crime of *lèse-majesté*, the medical fact that a head injury is potentially more serious than an injury to another part of the body is used as a metaphor for the primacy of the prince over his subjects. However, as the organic model indicates, the two were not viewed as two classes separate from each other but interdependent, with the good of one party considered as being beneficial to the other. The head remains an integral part of the body to which it belongs and this view of the prince as indissociable from his society may account for some of the popularity of the genre of *Miroirs aux princes*. *Miroirs* were often, as is the case with La Marche's Book One, addressed to individual princes, but their readership was not limited to these patrons. Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum*, originally dedicated to Philippe le Bel, survives in around 350 manuscript copies making it, as a recent commentator noted, 'one of the most numerous survivals of a non-religious work from the Middle Ages'.² Not all of the owners of these manuscripts can have been princes and so Giles of Rome's work reached an audience beyond the patron to whom it was explicitly addressed and indeed beyond the class of princes, who might be expected to draw practical, professionally relevant, lessons from it. It is thus not such a paradox that La Marche's *Mémoires* take on a wider frame of reference at the very time that they were dedicated to an individual: such works were frequently read by a public to whom they were not explicitly addressed. Indeed, in some cases they were more widely read amongst those who were not their implied audience. Nicolas Orme has pointed out that

¹ Bernard Guenée, *L'Occident aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles*, p. 107.

² Charles F. Briggs, *Giles of Rome's 'De regimine principum'*, p. 3.

most copies of the *Policraticus* in late medieval England were kept in the libraries of religious institutions rather than those of the nobility.¹ This interest in literature addressed to princes amongst those who were not princes themselves can be understood in terms of the organic model of society, which held that prince and people were part of the same organism. The logical conclusion of this belief was that literature addressed to a prince was of interest to others in society because they shared a common purpose with the prince in the good government of the body politic.

This fact of consumption of didactic literature meant that the author of such a work was faced with an even more acute version of the problem confronted by all medieval historians working for a patron:

L'historien occupe une place ambivalente: il dépend du prince réel mais il doit produire le prince possible, et pour cela il met en jeu à la fois ce que fait le prince et ce qui plaît au public.²

In the case of the author of a *Miroir au prince* the complexity of the situation was increased by the fact that the genre demanded two *princes possibles*, both of which were intended to serve as *exempla*, imparting moral codes, one to the prince himself and one to the public. Furthermore, all this had to be done without suggesting to the *prince réel*, upon whom the author depended for his patronage, that he fell too far short of the ideal being taught. The Portuguese translator Vasque de Lucène, for whom Olivier de La Marche expresses admiration at the beginning of the 1488 Book One (La Marche, I, 14), found a way of circumventing some of these difficulties when, in his prologue to his translation of Xenophon's *Cyropedia*, he suggested that there was no difference between the *prince réel* to whom he addressed his work (Charles le Hardi) and the *prince possible* represented by Cyrus. Vasque de Lucène writes that

quant aucuns orront lire ceste histoire du premier Cirus translatee par moy de latin en françois, ensemble quant ilz regarderont la tres grant similitude de sa vye, meurs et condicions aux vostres, je me doute qu'ilz ne pensent

¹ Nicholas Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry*, p. 90.

² Elisabeth Gaucher, *La Biographie Chevaleresque: Typologie d'un genre (XIII^e-XV^e siècle)* (Paris: Champion, 1994), p. 101.

que je ne l'aye point translatee mais faicte et composee, pour deux causes: la premiere, affin de vous complaire en approuvant tous voz faiz et affections, par ce que de tous poins ressemblent ceulx de Cirus qui certes fut roy tres glorieux et de grant renom; la seconde, affin d'y faire apparoir que les estatus et ordonnances dudit Cirus estoient de plus grant rigueur et austerité que ne sont les vostres; car se vous desirez obeissance des subgietz, Cirus la vouloit par trop plus; se vous les voulez retraire aucunement de delices, Cirus les en retrayoit de tous poins; se vous vouldriez les instruire a aucune pacience de labeurs, et Cirus a ce que jamais ne cessassent de labourer. Car la hardiesse, le soing, l'extreme dilligence, la prompteté, la congnoissance de tout, l'ordre merueilleux en toutes choses, la clarté d'entendement et l'actemprance semblent en vous et en lui conne parailles.¹

In writing this, the translator has eliminated – or at least neutralized – two of the three possibly contradictory princes inherent in the *miroir*. There is no longer a conflict between the *prince réel* and the *prince possible* who is intended to instruct him: Charles is in every way identical to Cyrus and thus does not need to learn anything from him. The only remaining prince with any didactic potency is therefore the *prince possible* identified by Gaucher, that intended to instruct a public who is not the addressee of the work. Despite the fact that Vasque de Lucène's prologue is ostensibly addressed to Charles, it deals with the potential points of resistance that this non princely audience might present. In this work the *Miroir aux princes* is not actually aimed at teaching the prince at all, for the prince has nothing to learn from it. Instead, the prince who is addressee of the work becomes identical to the prince who is the work's subject, forming a single iconic figure of 'prince' from which the general public can receive instruction. Vasque de Lucène combines this understanding of the purpose of the *Miroir aux princes* with an interpretation of the phrase, which is characteristic of much fifteenth-century French didactic writing. Acknowledging the logical outcome of his argument – that his work will be of no practical use to his master who shares so many of the qualities of his subject – he says that it will nevertheless be pleasing to him:

Moult vault doncques ce livre qui moustre joindre et unir les seigneuries par amour et obeissance, par quoy il doit estre moult agreable tant aux seigneurs comme aux subgietz, souverainement a vous, mon tres redoubté seigneur.

¹ Danielle Gallet-Guerne, *Vasque de Lucène et la Cyropédie à la cour de Bourgogne (1470)*, p. 183.

Car tout ainsi que s'il n'y avoit que ung seul miroyr en tout le monde et aucun le presentast a la plus belle fille, plus honneste et plus gorgiasse du pays, elle le priseroit cent foys plus que autant de riche pierrerye, tout ainsi quant vous vous mirerez en ce livre et vous y verrez face a face, certe il vous doit estre en pris et en joye inextimable, combien ce livre ne sera gaires plaisant, ne se utile a vous, qui savez ces choses, comme il seroit a ung autre prince inexpert en faiz d'armes.¹

The *Cyropédie* is still a mirror, but it is one which reflects the face of the person who looks into it, the prince to whom it is addressed, so that the outside world may form a more perfect picture of him. This reflects a strand in French didactic thought in which the *Miroir aux princes* is not an implement intended for the prince, but a reflection of its owner who is either held to be an exemplary figure for the outside world or is castigated for falling short of an obligation to be so.

This doctrine is made explicit by Laurent de Premierfait in his dedication to his *Des Cas des nobles hommes et femmes*, in which he recalls the era of Cesar and bemoans the fact that subsequent emperors have fallen short of this ideal, saying,

O las, bon dieu, com poure miroer de noblesse, quel exemple de chevalerie pour les roys et aultrez princes du monde quant il[z] voient fetardie, peresse, oysiute et entonnrisseur en celui qui deust a l'exemple de soy en hourter, esmouuoir, semondre et esueiller les autres .princes a maintenir et deffendre les conquestz de leurs noblez ancestrez et a Iceulx amplier et accroistre.²

Similarly, in Chastelain's *Avertissement au Duc Charles soubs fiction de son propre entendement parlant à luy-mesme*, the duke is portrayed surrounded by a number of figures who serve as allegories for the virtues of good government, including one, *Congnoissance de toy-mesme*, who takes the form of a woman who lies before him, holding up a mirror for him to look at.³ In the work of Premierfait and Chastelain, as in that of Vasque de Lucène, it seems that the mirror is more than a generic marker, signalling that a work has a didactic purpose; it is also the symbol of the prince himself,

¹ Danielle Gallet-Guerne, *Vasque de Lucène et la Cyropédie à la cour de Bourgogne (1470)*, p. 186.

² John Lydgate, *Fall of Princes*, ed. by Henry Bergen, 4 vols (London: Early English Text Society, 1924-27), I, p. lx. Volumes 1 and 4 reproduce significant passages from the Premierfait translation, which does not exist in a modern edition. The fifteenth-century edition of Laurent de Premierfait's work was not available for consultation in the Bibliothèque nationale de France when I visited the library.

³ George Chastelain, *Avertissement au Duc Charles soubs fiction de son propre entendement parlant à luy-mesme*, in Georges Chastelain, *Œuvres* ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Brussels: Heussner, 1863-66; repr. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1971), VII, 285-333 (pp. 287-88).

who serves as an example to his subjects, and it is a metaphor for the self-knowledge that the prince should have in order to govern well. As a genre, therefore, the *Miroir aux princes* of the Burgundian court served as an example in a number of complex and interrelated ways. Firstly, and most simply, it was intended to reflect the ideal world, towards which the prince should strive. Secondly, it was intended to reflect the prince, regarded as the ideal prince, to the outside world, so that it might learn from his example. Finally it was intended to provide reflection for the prince of his true self, against which the ideal could be measured.

A *Miroir aux princes* in the Burgundian court was, therefore, a document addressing both individual and public and representing the prince at the same time as it spoke to him. In the light of this reading of the *Miroir aux princes*, we would be justified in inquiring as to the meaning of ‘exemplaire’ in La Marche’s stated intention that his work should be ‘à la hauteur de vostre seignourie exemplaire, miroir et doctrine, utiles et proffitables pour le temps advenir’. Does La Marche intend the work to be ‘exemplaire’, which is synonymous, or nearly so, with ‘miroir’ and ‘doctrine’, or is it Philippe’s ‘seignourie’ itself which is ‘exemplaire’? Certainly both readings are possible within the context of the Burgundian court which regarded princes as mirrors and examples in their own right, and yet La Marche never goes as far as Chastelain and Vasque de Lucène in using the image of the mirror to refer to the prince himself. If it is Philippe’s ‘seignourie’ which is ‘exemplaire’, this is a collective quality, proper to Philippe’s ancestors who provide La Marche with the examples he uses for Philippe’s instruction. It is not a quality which attaches to the person of the prince himself, in the way that Chastelain regards as the ideal.

Of twenty-eight instances of ‘exemple’ and its cognates in the *Mémoires*, twenty occur in the 1488 Book One. Of the remaining eight instances, three occur in poems on the Labours of Hercules performed during the banquets linked to the wedding of

Charles le Hardi and Margaret of York, and one occurs in the text of the Treaty of Souleuvre. Within those texts written specifically for inclusion in the *Mémoires*, therefore, the idea of people or events being exemplary is overwhelmingly linked to those portions of the work with the author's pupil as addressee. In most instances, the 'exemple' in question is provided by one of Philippe le Beau's ancestors, and is addressed to Philippe himself. Thus, the young prince is encouraged to learn from the adventure of his namesake, Philippe le Hardi who, whilst a prisoner of war in the Tower of London, came to blows with the heir to the English throne over a game of chess:

celluy qui joue à quelque jeu que ce soit doit bien avoir regart que la voullenté ou affection ne soit pas maistresse de la raison, car souvent il advient que grans maulx en sont advenus et peuvent advenir. Exemple de ces ii nobles filz de Roys qui pour sy peu de choses que pour la prinse d'une piece de bois ou d'yvoire, figurée en forme de chevalier, vinrent à tele fureur que d'occire l'un l'autre et mettre et adventurer leur vie pour sy peu, de tel hazart et esclandre. (La Marche, I, 62-63)

Similarly, when talking about Jean Sans Peur, La Marche attributes his part in the murder of the duke of Orléans to his misguided belief in the malicious reports of others and the author advises his pupil to 'prenez exemple de fuyr teles euvres et de non croire sans seure apparence malvais rappors'. (La Marche, I, 86) Other relatives of Philippe are marshalled to lend support to La Marche's strictures, from João, king of Portugal 1385-1433 (La Marche, I, 108) to Philippe's grandfather, the emperor Frederick III (La Marche, I, 176). On no occasion, however, does La Marche suggest that Philippe le Beau may himself serve as an example to other readers and we may conclude that, however much Chastelain may have envisaged the prince as being himself a mirror, Olivier de La Marche's *Miroir aux princes* remained, in accordance with more conventional interpretations of the genre, an image for Philippe to aspire to rather than an image of Philippe for the instruction of others.

Conseil

It is something of a paradox that, if anything, the didactic tendencies of the Burgundian court appear to become more prevalent at the moment when Philippe le Bon – seemingly ideally suited for the role of exemplary mirror – was replaced by the far more equivocal figure of Charles le Hardi. Philippe may not have been given his epithetical ‘Bon’ by his contemporaries, but the collocation of the name and the attribute was common enough in the writings of Chastelain and Molinet to suggest that his qualities had gained the respect of those who knew him.¹ Charles le Hardi, by contrast, did not appear such a paragon to the men of letters who surrounded him and it is argued that this is the very reason why so many of them turned to the production of didactic literature after he became duke. In fact, although this may be true, there is a substantial amount of evidence to suggest that the authors of the Burgundian court were not simply trying to correct their master’s rule, but were also responding to his literary tastes. Charles le Hardi may not have been the ideal prince. Nevertheless, the literature he read was of the kind which sought to instruct such a ruler: La Marche writes of his particular fondness for tales of antiquity – seen in the Burgundian court as particularly good sources of didactic material – and many of the manuscripts of didactic works in the ducal library can be shown to have been commissioned by him.² In a further paradox some commentators have seen this fondness for didactic literature as the cause of Charles’s *failings* as a prince. Rather than amend his behaviour and check his

¹ The history of the use of the epithet ‘Bon’ and its Latin and Dutch equivalents to describe Philippe is described in H. Nelis ‘Origine de l’appellation: Philippe le “Bon”’, in *Revue Belge de Philologie et d’Histoire*, 12 (1933), pp. 145-54. Nelis argues that Bon was not used as a title until the beginning of the fifteenth century, but that contemporary writers often referred to Philippe as ‘le bon duc Philippe’. Indeed, La Marche speaks of ‘le bon duc Philippe, qui fut surnommé Philippe l’Assuré’ (La Marche, III, 315).

² Particularly works of classical mythology, La Marche comments on Charles’s fondness for these, ‘Jamais ne se couchoit qu’il ne fist lire deux heures devant luy, et lisoit souvent devant luy le seigneur de Humbercourt, qui moult bien lisoit et retenoit; et faisoit lors lire les haultes histoires de Romme et prenoit moult grant plaisir ès faictz des Rommains.’, La Marche, II, 334. This is confirmed by the findings of Doutrepoint and Vanderjagt in surveying the acquisitions of the ducal library, Georges Doutrepoint, *La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne*; Arjo Vanderjagt, ‘Practicing Nobility in Fifteenth-Century Burgundian Courtly Culture: Ideology and Politics’.

overweening ambition, it is argued, the didactic works of the Burgundian court actually encouraged Charles in his governmental style by presenting him with the image of an all-powerful ruler. This was in keeping with the way in which he saw himself and did nothing to curb his recklessness. Such a reading of Charles's relationship to the literature of his court is given metaphorical support by the apocryphal tale that Vasque de Lucène's translation of Xenophon's *Cyropedia* was in Charles's baggage when he was killed at Nancy.¹

By and large, Olivier de La Marche's contribution to didactic writing in the Burgundian court has not been exempt from this criticism. Robert Bossuat's analysis of the situation, based on an ethnic division between Flemish and Burgundian courtiers, contends that the former group were much more ready to use their work to correct Charles while the latter saw the primary purpose of their work as being to praise their prince.² Bossuat's chosen representative of the 'Burgundian' polemical position is Olivier de La Marche, who, he argues, painted an entirely flattering portrait of Charles le Hardi for his readers. Setting aside the complexities of identifying ethnic divisions in a court in which Chastelain could claim to be 'léal François avec mon prince' and Vasque de Lucène, the great flatterer of Charles, was neither Flemish nor Burgundian but Portuguese, it should be acknowledged that this has been the conventional view of Olivier de La Marche's relationship with his master, but it is a reading which has been overstated.³ La Marche is ready to criticize Charles for some of his actions, particularly relating to the kidnap of the Duchess of Savoie and, whatever Bossuat may argue, the *Mémoires* do demonstrate an awareness that a prince may be in need of correction. This awareness operates in the vocabulary not of 'avertissement', which Bossuat identifies as

¹ Danielle Gallet-Guerne, *Vasque de Lucène et la Cyropédie à la cour de Bourgogne (1470)*, p. 40. Whether or not this story is true, the fact that it circulated at all suggests that this interpretation of didactic literature's effect on Charles was shared by earlier generations of historians.

² Robert Bossuat, 'Jean Miélot: Traducteur de Cicéron', p. 101.

³ Chastelain's claim is made in a plea to his readers for his work to be considered impartially and is to be found in Georges Chastelain, *Œuvres* ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Brussels: Heussner, 1863-66; repr. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1971), I, 11.

being central to Chastelain's corrective project (indeed the word 'avertissement' does not appear at all in La Marche's *Mémoires*) but in the shades of meaning of the word 'conseil' and its cognates.

This word appears more or less constantly throughout the *Mémoires*, demonstrating an enduring preoccupation on the part of the author with the concept of counsel. However, the meaning of the word is not unchanged from one occurrence to the next; instead it takes in many of the multiple definitions presented by the *Larousse dictionnaire du moyen français* and, indeed, presents a number of definitions which do not appear in *Larousse*. Whilst occurrences do not follow a linear pattern – 'conseil' does not cease completely to be used with one meaning when a new meaning of the word appears – the general trend in usage is such as to suggest that Olivier de La Marche was aware of the increasing importance which advice to the prince was having in Burgundian political thought. Moreover, the way in which he deals with the theme suggests that he, like Chastelain with his use of 'avertissement', had a role to play in the promotion of the ideal of the prince who listened to the advice of those surrounding him.

In the earliest sections of the *Mémoires* written specifically for inclusion in the work, La Marche tends to use 'conseil' to refer to the body of men surrounding a prince, providing him with advice. This body may be of constitutional standing, as is the case with the 'conseil' before which Jean sans Peur confessed to his murder of the duke of Orléans (La Marche, I, 201) or it may be a temporary body with no political power, as is the case with the 'conseil' constituted by the guardians of the *Pas de l'Arbre Charlemagne* to debate questions of propriety in combat (La Marche, I, 296, 324). As the work progresses, La Marche increasingly draws an analogy between such bodies and the product of their deliberations – the advice that they provide. This is not a new meaning of the word, the text of the Treaty of Arras that La Marche includes at the

beginning of his *Mémoires*, which dates from 1435, has as one of its terms that the French king will recognize that those who killed Jean sans Peur did so ‘par mauvais conseil’ (La Marche, I, 210). However, La Marche appears to become interested in the dual meaning of the word ‘conseil’ to mean both the body and its product in the course of the 1470s, during the author’s initial period of work on the *Mémoires*, and this interest is most clearly displayed in a number of passages in which the word is used more than once, with more than one meaning. Thus we find passages such as

et pendant ce temps que le bon duc prenoit ses plaisances et honnestes passetemps, messire Nycolas Raoulin, son chancelier, messire Anthoine, seigneur de Cry, son premier chambellan, ne ceulx de son *conseil*, n’estoient pas oyseulx; mais practiquoient par *conseil* et par grant advis les expedicions des affaires du duc, et principalement des deux matieres dont dessus est faite mencion, c’est assavoir la response de l’embassadeur de l’Empereur de Constantinoble qui estoit venu pour si haulte matiere que pour le confort et secours de la foy et de l’estat d’ung Empereur si noble et si anticque en generacion que celluy de Constantinoble, et aussi practiquoit le *conseil* ce [que l’on pourroit faire] avec la duchesse de Lucembourg (La Marche, II, 1-2, additions are those of Beaune and d’Arbaumont, italics are my own).

Here, La Marche describes the machinations of Burgundian high politics, and the word ‘conseil’ is very prominent, appearing three times. On the first and the last occasion it clearly refers to the body discussing these matters, but in the second instance it appears to form a binomial pair with ‘grant advis’, suggesting that ‘conseil’ is synonymous not with mere ‘advis’ but with a higher form of this, ‘grant advis’. This term itself is ambiguous, meaning both opinion and advice, and there appears to be elements of both meanings in La Marche’s usage: normally a council would be expected to advise its prince but here the prince is shown to be absent and the council rules by its own ‘conseil’ and ‘grant advis’, suggesting that a personal viewpoint is meant, rather than a suggestion offered to a higher authority. ‘Conseil’ is thus clearly an attribute of the political body, the council, but there is also a suggestion that it is an attribute of the ideal prince himself, something which makes good government possible. A later reference in which ‘conseil’ is also repeated appears to clarify the ambiguity: Philippe le

Bon appears at a diplomatic encounter of 1443 ‘avironné de sa noblesse, accompaigné et adextré de son conseil, qui estoit derriere la perche du banc [...] prestz pour conseiller le duc, se besoing en avoit’ (La Marche, II, 24). Here, the function of the ‘conseil’ is to ‘conseiller le duc’, and it thus seems logical that the ‘conseil’ of the body should be its advice, rather than the instincts which allow it to govern. However, another appearance of a prince elsewhere in the *Mémoires* raises the question as to how far this form of words is stereotypical: a stock phrase used by La Marche to signify the ideal of a prince in a position of power. The description is of Edward IV of England who appears to judge the combat between Antoine, Bâtard de Bourgogne and Anthony Woodville, Lord Scales where, ‘ung peu sur costiere, et autour de son siege estoient vingt ou vingt cinq anciens conseilliers, tous blancz de chevelures, et ressembloient senateurs qui fussent là commis pour conseiller leur maistre’ (La Marche, III, 50). In each case, the prince is surrounded by his ‘conseil’, the function of which is ‘pour conseiller’ him. The similarity between the two pictures painted, and between the vocabulary used in each case, suggests that La Marche regards the depiction of the ‘conseil’ as necessary in the portrayal of the prince in certain public occasions, where two different courts come together. In this sense, the ‘conseil’, and the advice which it provides, is not separate from the prince but an attribute of the ruler himself.

La Marche thus seems to be moving towards a point of view in which ‘conseil’ is a necessary attribute of government, and which can be compared to the way in which Bossuat argues that Chastelain uses ‘avertissement’. As in the works of Chastelain, this viewpoint is linked in La Marche’s *Mémoires* particularly to a didactic purpose and to an analysis of the specific failings of Charles le Hardi. Thus we find that ‘conseil’ and its derivatives are frequently used when La Marche is speaking of warfare, a theme which this chapter has already demonstrated is a focus of La Marche’s didactic writing outside the scope of the 1488 Book One. In one such passage dealing with warfare, the

concept of 'conseil' is very closely linked to a didactic message which La Marche addresses directly to an audience, supported by a reference to the *Arbre des batailles*, a standard didactic work on the art of warfare:

Bien fut vray que le mareschal de Bourgoingne manda au seigneur de Beauchamp et au seigneur d'Espiry qu'ilz reculassent leurs enseignes et leurs compagnies pour plus avant attraire les Gantois; mais le seigneur de Beauchamp respondit que l'on l'avoit trop avancé pour reculer; et combien que la response meust de hault et vaillant couraige, et que tout bien prinst de celle chose, si fut il conseillé de prier mercy au duc de la desobeissance qu'il avoit faicte à son mareschal; et ce veuil je bien escrire pour monstrar aux jeunes gens, qui mes Memoires liront, que, selon l'arbre de bataille, nulle chose n'est extimée bien faicte contre le commandemant du chief ne de ses lieutenans. (La Marche, II, 320)

The role played by 'conseil' in this episode is that of a necessary part of the process of making decisions in times of war and, with his direct appeal to the 'jeunes gens, qui mes Memoires liront', La Marche underlines the desirability of this 'conseil', which is in accordance with his authority. Elsewhere in the *Mémoires* 'conseil' is shown to play a central role in the prince's conduct of battles, the conte d'Estampes, tempted to attack Moerbeke, is persuaded not to because he was 'conseillé' (La Marche, II, 277). Charles le Hardi, then count of Charrolais, receives the same advice but proves much less easily swayed:

Le conte vint devant Morbecque, et trouva le lieu fort et gardé, comme il est dit dessus. Si fut prins conseil par les princes et seigneurs et furent tous d'opinion que l'on s'en retournast, sans aultre emprinse faire pour celle fois; et pensoient et pesoient la personne du conte et sa premiere course. Mais le jeune prince tenoit opinion contraire, et disoit que les villains, de leur fort lieu, ne faisoient point à craindre; et se mist en tous les devoirs que vaillant prince se peut mectre. Mais les seigneurs d'Auxi et de Formelles luy remonstroient qu'il se contentast de l'opinion des saiges cappitaines experimentez que le duc, son pere, avoit envoyez avecques luy, comme les seigneurs de Ternant, de Crequi et de Humieres, et qu'il ne fist pas chose pourquoy l'on dist, s'il en mesadvenoit, que par sa jeunesse et verdeur il eust mis le cas de son pere en dangier. Le conte ne se vouloit contenter, et bien luy sembloit bonne l'execution à cela; et au moins requeroit qu'il couchast celle nuict devant les ennemis, et que l'on renvoyast querre de l'artillerie et gens, si mestier faisoit, pour assaillir le villaige le lendemain au matin. Mais le conseil ne fut pas de celle opinion, et s'en retourna le conte sans autre execution; dont il larmoyoit de despit et de couraige; et s'il n'eust doubté la desobeissance du duc, son pere, il ne s'en fust pas ainsi revenu. (La Marche, II, 277-78)

Charles's obduracy in the face of 'conseil' from illustrious named parties is a contrast with the conte d'Estampes's immediate compliance and is a suggestion that La Marche, far from being the Burgundian courtier who had nothing but praise for his master, was acutely aware of Charles le Hardi's failings, even while writing passages such as this, produced while Charles le Hardi was still alive. In passages written after Charles's death, however, the concept of 'conseil' takes on an almost spiritual tenor, characterizing the good government of exemplary princes who have died and embodying the values which La Marche wishes the living prince, Philippe le Beau, to espouse. So it is that, amongst all the benefits which Philippe passes to his son during a period of absence in which Charles is to be his regent, 'conseil' is emphasized:

Il laissa ses pays en paix et unyon, en richesses, en justice et en toutes les bonnes prosperitez que prince peult laisser pays. Il laissa son filz pourveu de conseil, comme du chancelier Raulin, du seigneur de Cry, du seigneur de Goux et aultres grans personnaiges, et certes ses pays demourerent en telle prosperité, que l'on pourroit dire d'eulx ce que dit le poete, quant il dit que les ciecles estoient dorez. Et en ce gouvernement se gouverna le conte Charles si bien et si vertueusement, que nulle chose n'empira en sa main; et quant le bon pere revint de son voiage, il trouva ses païs entiers, comme devant. (La Marche, II, 398)

The way in which this passage is constructed, with the repetition of 'Il laissa', gives 'conseil' equal weight to all the other benefits which La Marche marks out as being necessary to good government. This suggests that 'conseil' is of *greater* importance than any one of these – more necessary to good government than peace, prosperity or justice alone. It is thus not surprising that, in the 1488 Book One, La Marche should select attending to 'conseil' as being one of the cardinal virtues of Philippe le Bon that he deems worthy of praise: 'Il croit conseil et sçavoit choisir serviteurs saiges et loyaulx' (La Marche, I, 100) or that, in the final chapter of the work, he should select the title 'Croy [or 'croit'] Conseil' as an epithet for Philippe le Beau (La Marche, III, 314). Finally, this theme of the prince who 'croit conseil' and who is well advised

appears in the closing line of the work, when La Marche describes Maximilian's relations with Ghent: 'ainsi fut monseigneur l'archiduc bien conseillé et creut conseil'.

Thus, in the later portions of the *Mémoires*, the theme of the prince who believes the counsel of those surrounding him is given increased prominence and I would argue that this is partly because La Marche shared the prevalent Burgundian analysis which held that Charles le Hardi's failing was to have ignored advice proffered to him. However, it should not be forgotten that the change in political circumstances after Charles's defeat saw a rededication of the *Mémoires* and a reshaping of their purpose in a didactic mould. In this context, advocating paying heed to counsel might be considered an effective strategy whereby the author could ensure that his book was read, particularly when the addressee was given the title of 'croy conseil' to aspire to. The didactic purpose of La Marche's work is thus not only to illustrate the necessity that a prince should follow the good advice proffered to him, but to proffer that advice. In doing so, La Marche wishes to present himself as the ideal councillor and so, in the later chapters of the book, we find him stressing his link with the innermost workings of Maximilian's 'privé' or 'secret' conseil' (terms which only become part of his political vocabulary towards the end of the work, when he speaks of the structures of the Habsburg court). Most notably, La Marche recounts an instance in which Maximilian, who has entered Ghent without any opposition but then has heard rumours of disquiet amongst the people, 'se vint loger en ma [that is, La Marche's] chambre, qui estoit sur la porte devant, et ce fit il pour estre entre ses gens; là tint conseil qu'il estoit de faire' (La Marche, III, 282). The man who, in his prologue of 1473 defined himself as 'chevalier, conseiller, maistre d'hostel, et capitaine de la garde de très hault', placing his role as councillor only second to his standing as a knight, is stressing his continued intimacy and influence with the Burgundian dukes when he says that Maximilian could hold council in his rooms. Within the context of a work which increasingly portrays

wise 'conseil' as a necessary attribute for good government, is not the implication that La Marche is himself a wise 'conseiller', whose message on this, as well as on other issues of government, should be trusted?

The Body Politic

La Marche's advocacy of 'conseil' to princes, and the accompanying suggestion that those who do not follow the advice of 'conseillers' are bound to fail, finds its counterpart in his attitude to false princes and tyrants, who provide the counter-examples to his pupil in the 1488 Book One. It is an attitude which can once more be situated within a long didactic tradition, and one that was continued by the writers of the Burgundian court. We have seen how the organic model of society with the prince at its head was developed in John of Salisbury's *Policraticus* and underpinned an attitude to didactic literature which saw it as relevant and available to all. Despite the fact that it was a work of the twelfth century, it seems that the *Policraticus* had readers in the Burgundian court; Molinet quotes it in his alternative prologue to his *Chroniques*:

Car, comme dit Policratus, le prince du peuple est comme l'image de la divine majesté. Puis donc qu'il est un seul Dieu, soleil illuminant les estoilles, une seule raison dominant sur les potences de l'ame, un seul coeur incitant les membres du corps et un seul Dieu imperant au ciel, il doit estre un seul prince regnant en la terre.¹

The Burgundian court was thus familiar not merely with the organic model of society postulated by the *Policraticus* but with the contents of the work itself – at least to the extent that Burgundian writers could correctly attribute the arguments of the *Policraticus* to that work. They would, therefore, presumably have been aware of the conclusion which John of Salisbury drew in relation to tyrants, a conclusion which might seem surprising to modern readers. If the body politic was to work as a unified body in which a blow to the head had damaging consequences for the rest of the

¹ Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, ed. by Georges Doutrepoint and Omer Jodogne, 3 vols (Brussels: Palais des académies, 1935-37), II, 590. This reference seems to have puzzled Molinet's editors, who appear to have mistaken it for a reference to an author rather than to a work. Their index reference reads '*Policratus*, [the italics indicate that the word is spelled as it appears in Molinet and not with reference to modern orthography] II, 590, est-ce Plutarque?', Molinet, *Chronique*, III, 400.

organism, John of Salisbury argued, then the existence of a tyrant at the head of the state constituted a grave attack on the body as a whole and it was therefore not only legitimate to kill the tyrant, but it was equitable to do so.¹ Basing his argument on examples from antiquity and from scripture, John of Salisbury had elaborated a theory of tyrannicide which was to find support in later writers including Boccaccio and Jean Gerson, both of whom produced versions of the maxim that no sacrifice was more pleasing to God than the blood of a tyrant.² However, this view remained that of a minority, and many writers developed less extreme perspectives which recognized the evils of tyranny without advocating the death penalty for the crime. Again, this may be the consequence of the delicate balance which medieval authors writing for a princely patron had to strike: advocating the killing of princes – even princes whose behaviour fell short of recognized minimum standards – was not necessarily the best way to ingratiate oneself with one's princely master. Olivier de La Marche is amongst those who attempt to walk this tightrope. His *Mémoires* demonstrate a belief that the death of tyrants is justified, but stop short of justifying the killing of tyrants, which is portrayed as carried out by others or is not portrayed at all.

Indeed, despite John of Salisbury's advocacy of tyrannicide, a certain amount of reserve can be detected in some of his arguments. As was mentioned above, he devoted a chapter of the *Policraticus* to the condemnation of the crime of *lèse-majesté*. In this he stresses the severity of the punishment for the crime and rebuts the idea that this severity arises from the tyranny of those who introduced the penalties by citing the strictures of 'ipsius modestissimi iuris uerba' of Justinian's Codex.³ Tyrannicide is thus

¹ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, ed. by C. C. I. Webb, Book III, chapter 15 (I, 232) a translation of this passage is to be found in Joseph B. Pike, *Frivolities of Courtiers and Footprints of Philosophers: Being a Translation of the First, Second and Third Books and Selections from the Seventh and Eighth Books of the 'Policraticus' of John of Salisbury* (New York: Octagon, 1972), pp. 211-12 ; Book VIII, chapters 17-24 (II, 345-418).

² Bernard Guenée, *L'Occident aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles*, p. 156.

³ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, ed. by C. C. I. Webb, Book VI, chapter 26, (II, 76) 'Et, ne a tyrannorum seuitia penae serueritas processisse credatur, ipsius modestissimi iuris uerba pro parte possuimus', 'And lest the severity of the penalty be thought to have had its origin in the cruelty of tyrants, I will set forth in

justified, but *lèse-majesté* remains one of the most harshly punished crimes, and John of Salisbury suggests that this is with reason. It is thus not surprising that those concerned with the practicalities of political morality should be very cautious in advocating tyrannicide, as one person's tyrant could be another's legitimate ruler. In this context, John of Salisbury devoted a considerable part of Book Four of the *Policraticus* outlining what he believed to be the essential differences between legitimate princes and tyrants: the essential difference being that the legitimate prince rules in accordance with the law, whereas the tyrant rules for his own ends.¹ It was a distinction recognized by the writers of the Burgundian court, with Chastelain arguing that 'Porter nom de prince tant seulement, c'est povre titre. Sots et povres personnages le portent; bochus et contrefais et aucuns de parverse vie s'en parent [...] mais porter nom de prince princiant est un haut titre'.² The fact that Chastelain did not see any need for further elaboration of the concept of 'prince princiant' demonstrates the extent to which the idea of legitimate and illegitimate rulers had been internalized in Burgundian political thought, and so it is interesting that one of the places where La Marche's discourse of tyranny is most apparent is in a discussion of two princes whose right to rule revolved around the question of their legitimacy.

The two rulers in question are João, king of Portugal, and his brother, Fernando. Fernando had been king of Portugal before his brother but, when he died, João, his illegitimate half-brother was chosen to succeed him, despite the existence of a legitimate heir, Fernando's daughter, Beatriz. La Marche's describes these events in the course of his account of Philippe le Beau's ancestors; João's daughter married Philippe le Bon of Burgundy and was Philippe le Beau's great-grandmother. However, the *Mémoires* give an account which differs from verifiable facts and serves to highlight

part the language of the dispassionate law itself.' John Dickinson, *The Statesman's Book of John of Salisbury*, p. 262.

¹ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, ed. by C. C. I. Webb, Book IV, chapters 1-4 (I, 234-47).

² George Chastelain, *Avertissement au Duc Charles sous fiction de son propre entendement parlant à luy-mesme*, p. 312.

questions of legitimate rule and tyranny which reflect, without mirroring exactly, John of Salisbury's discourse of tyrannicide.

In giving the complete text of La Marche's account of events in Portugal in 1385, I choose to quote from my 'edition' of the *Mémoires*, because that displays some of the manuscript variations which have been expunged from Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition, which, as a consequence, obscures some of the author's thoughts on tyrannicide by choosing more neutral terms than La Marche's. The account runs thus:

<tt Lvar> Ce <tt main> <L out> Le <L in> Roy Jehan, vostre bisayeul, dont je reprens presentement la ramentevance, fut filz naturel et bastart du Roy dom Pietre de Portugal, et l'engendra icelluy Roy en une noble femme du royaume de Cecille, nommée Marie, fille d'un chevalier baneret qui se nomma de son propre nom messire Gonsalve Pardo. Et l'eut le Roy dom Pietre du temps qu'il fut à marier, et en vesvaige. Celluy Roy dom Pietre olt ung filz legitime qui se nomma Ferant, et succeda au royaulme. Celluy Roy Ferant fut marié à une fille du Roy d'Arraghon, et d'elle olt une fille, laquelle fut mariée au Roy d'Espagne. Celle Royne de Portugal, fille du <p 108> Roy d'Arraghon, morut, dont il advint que ce Roy Ferand persevera en pluseurs vices dont il estoit entechié, comme de gaster les tresors que ses predecesseurs avoient amassez, tirannisier le peuple par faire despences sans necessitez et <tt ISHLAvar> voluptuairement, <tt BParvar> volontairement <tt var> estant <tt main> luxurieux publicque, sans honneste regart, homme tenu et reputé sans verité, sans foy, sans honte et menant vie dont il estoit hays par tout son royaume; et fut prince de si malvaie vie qu'il fut dechassé des prelates, des nobles et communautez de son royaume. Et esleverent Jehan, son frere bastart, et le firent Roy par ses vertus, et dechasserent le legitime par ses vices.

<nopara IParSHLA> Ferand fut legitime pour avoir l'heritaige, et bastart quant aux vertus de ses ancestres. Et Jehan naquist bastart quant à l'heritaige, <tt var> et <tt main> fut legitime par vertueuses euvres. Et par sa vertu Dieu l'appella à dignité, et retira sa main de celluy qui ne le crenioit, ne doutoit. Et le souffryt demettre de couronne et de siege royal; qui est exemple à vous, monseigneur, que vertus soustiennent la couronne de Roy et les vices trebuchent avoir, honneur, gloire, puissance et seignourie.¹

¹ This text appears in Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition, I, 107-108. The mark-up used in this extract is fairly self-explanatory. <tt var> indicates that this is a departure from Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition which appears in the manuscript whose siglum is indicated between tt and var. Where no sigla appear, the text is given as a variant reading by Beaune and d'Arbaumont, but is in fact a correction or addition to the text as it appears in surviving manuscript sources. <tt main> indicates the end of the variant reading. <nopara>, followed by manuscript numbers, indicates that in these particular manuscripts, no paragraph break occurs at a point where it does in Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition.

In La Marche's version of events, therefore, it is not Fernando's death which clears the way for his half-brother to succeed him but instead his deposition from the throne caused by outrage at his 'mauvaise vie'. Indeed, it is this departure from the historical facts which enables La Marche to draw the conclusion which he proposes as a moral for his pupil: vice undermines the ruler and makes him more likely to be brought down. In the course of this argument, the vices which La Marche cites as making Fernando unworthy of the Portuguese throne are reminiscent of those which John of Salisbury cites as being characteristic of the tyrant. Principal amongst these is the vice of profligacy, which is also paramount in John of Salisbury's definition of tyranny in Book 4 of the *Policraticus*, where he cites Cicero to argue that the possession of anything to excess is unworthy of a ruler and that the love of excess leads to the unjust taxation of the people. He then goes on to argue that 'magna siquidem diligentia praecauendum est omni qui in sullimitate constuitur, ne inferiores corrumpat exemplis et abusione rerum et per superbiae aut luxuriae uiam ad confusionis tenebras reducat populum'.¹ In this context it is perhaps significant that the behaviour of Fernando characterized by La Marche as tyrannical is 'faire despences sans necessitez', and that this accusation is followed immediately by one of immoderate living, borrowing on the vocabulary of 'luxuria' also present in John of Salisbury's criticism. In fact, in all the surviving manuscripts of the *Mémoires* the accusation of tyrannical immoderation is even greater than it is in Beaune d'Arbaumont's edition, characterized as it is as voluptuous or (in what is probably a less authentic reading) as wilful and La Marche adds to this further accusations of moral turpitude. It thus seems clear, within the distinctions established by John of Salisbury, that Fernando is an immoderate and profligate tyrant who deserves death. However, this is not the fate which La Marche reserves for him. Having given a

¹ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, ed. by C. C. I. Webb, Book IV, chapter 4 (I, 246): 'Truly every precaution must be taken, and great diligence used, by all who are set in high place not to corrupt their inferiors by their example, nor by their abuse of things, nor by following the way of pride and luxury to lead back the people into the darkness of confusion.' John Dickinson, *The Statesman's Book of John of Salisbury*, p. 17.

modified version of events in which Fernando does not predecease his brother, La Marche stops short of arguing that he was a tyrant whose death was therefore deserved and presenting his reader with a portrait of a tyrannicide. Instead, Fernando is deposed by a collectivity of ‘des prelats, des nobles et communautez de son royaume’, representing the three orders of society and is replaced by his bastard brother in what appears to be a bloodless coup.

In fact, in his account of the mechanism whereby João came to power, La Marche suggests that the three orders of society may have had little role in the decision to the extent that they were acting as they did in their capacity as divine agents. In summing up the story, La Marche does not reiterate his argument that one brother was selected over the other by a group of representative citizens, but instead portrays this as the act of God who called one ‘à dignité’, whilst he ‘souffryt demettre’ the other. Whereas John of Salisbury had argued that tyrannicide was pleasing to God, Olivier de La Marche seems to wish to remove the human agent altogether and make God entirely responsible for the act, which is thus no longer open to accusations of *lèse-majesté*. The same mechanism is at work in his description of the defeat of the ancient king of Burgundy, Gondebalt. This time La Marche does use the word ‘tyrant’ to describe the defeated king, and this time the implication is that Gondebalt is killed, although La Marche is not specific. However, both the judgement that the king of Burgundy is a tyrant and his consequent defeat at the hands of the infidel Clovis are attributed to God, with neither the author nor the French king taking responsibility for the act or its justification. In other respects, too, the narrative resembles that of the tale of João and Fernando, with La Marche concluding that:

fut Dieu en l’ayde du sarrazin tenant mauvaise loy, pource qu’il estoit en ses fais droiturier et homme de justice, et confondit le crestien qu’il trouva faulx, tyran, torturier et homme vicieux; qui doit estre exemple à tous princes qui desirent et veulent regner en honneur et en gloire. (La Marche, I, 54)

In each case God is the ultimate agent of the tyrant's downfall, rather than human agency so, while La Marche's definition of tyranny may seem to fit that of the *Policraticus*, he avoids the moral dilemma of defining the difference for the individual between unjustified regicide and licit tyrannicide. In each case, too, the moral is that the man who might initially appear to be in the weaker position with regard to God's favour – the bastard or the unbeliever – can, through his inherent qualities, be preferred to someone whose position might initially be thought to be stronger.

The Prince

Olivier de La Marche may have thought this an attractive lesson for someone such as Philippe le Beau, whom La Marche considered to be suffering from a handicap of birth in that his ancestral lands had been lost to the French crown. However it also illustrates the moralizing stance which has led some to see the *Mémoires* as a backward-looking work of medieval political idealism, removed from the *Realpolitik* of the Renaissance, embodied by figures such as Machiavelli. A central theme of Alistair Millar's unpublished doctoral thesis on La Marche's *Mémoires* is the problem of whether the work can be considered as a piece of medieval writing or as a product of a Renaissance political world view, and Machiavelli, whose work *The Prince* began to circulate in 1516, fourteen years after La Marche's death, is the obvious figure of comparison.¹ Like La Marche or Comynnes, Machiavelli derives his authority from his proximity to the prince whom he advises and yet, it is argued, Machiavelli's view of good government is diametrically opposed to that of his medieval predecessors in that it emphasizes the need for the prince to dissimulate and to abandon the conventional principles of moral rectitude espoused in traditional advice to princes.² Machiavelli's statements have

¹ Alistair Millar, 'Olivier de la Marche and the Court of Burgundy, 1425-1502', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1996; Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. by George Bull with an introduction by Anthony Grafton, 2nd edn (London: Penguin, 1999).

² The comparison between Machiavelli and Comynnes has been made by a number of commentators, including Eduard Fueter, *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1911; repr. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1968), p. 151; Joël Blanchard in 'L'histoire commynnienne.

earned him an enduring reputation for duplicitous dealing, one that is justified by passages such as:

A prudent ruler cannot, and must not, honour his word when it places him at a disadvantage and when the reasons for which he made his promise no longer exist. If all men were good, this precept would not be good; but because men are wretched creatures who would not keep their word to you, you need not keep your word to them.¹

Such an argument can only be contrasted with La Marche's uncompromising stance with regard to the morality of princes, summed up in his citation of an anonymous authority

Car le saige dist qu'il vaudroit et seroit plus licite à l'homme et seroit mieux son prouffit d'ame et [d'] honneur d'estre filz d'un porchier gardant les pourceaulx regnant en vertu, que d'estre yssu de royale origine, vivant en souillure de vice.²

However, as Alistair Millar points out, La Marche, although no 'child of the Renaissance', puts forward arguments which are not as far from those of Machiavelli as might at first be thought. Millar identifies the theme of fortune as a common point between the two men.³ Machiavelli compares fortune to a violent river which, although difficult to resist, can be channelled, and therefore mastered, by a prescient ruler.⁴ Similarly, La Marche describes fortune as 'chose conduisible' (La Marche, I, 168). There is, therefore, a parallel between La Marche and the political thinkers who followed him, but this should not be interpreted, as Alistair Millar seems inclined to do, as the first step on a journey towards the political sophistication of the Renaissance to which a medieval author such as Olivier de La Marche did not have access. La Marche was well aware of the cynical arguments for princely 'mauvaise foi' which were to

Pragmatique et mémoire dans l'ordre politique', p. 1073 and Arjo Vanderjagt in 'Practicing Nobility in Fifteenth-Century Burgundian Courtly Culture: Ideology and Politics'.

¹ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 56.

² La Marche, I, 11, additions are those of Beaune and d'Arbaumont but reflect variant readings present in three other manuscripts, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français, 23232 and 2869 (ostensibly Beaune and d'Arbaumont's source manuscript at this point) and Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 10999.

³ Alistair Millar, 'Olivier de la Marche and the Court of Burgundy, 1425-1502', p. 155.

⁴ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, pp. 79-82.

make Machiavelli famous: they appear in the *Cyropedia* whose translator La Marche named as someone he admired.

The *Cyropedia* is a work to which Machiavelli refers directly, and it seems highly probable that it was influential in shaping Machiavelli's argument that the prince was not subject to the same rules of good faith in conduct as were ordinary citizens.¹ Nor was this message attenuated in Vasque de Lucène's Burgundian translation of the work: La Marche, who had praised Vasque de Lucène saying that he had created 'tant d'euvres, translations et aultres biens dignes de memoire (La Marche, I, 14-15), would have been able to read in the ducal library passages such as that in which Cambesius advises Cyrus his son that, in order to secure swift victory over his enemies, he must be prepared to be duplicitous. Cyrus's reaction, and his father's reply to it, anticipates Machiavelli's doctrine on the necessity of dissimulation in a ruler. At first Cyrus asks 'O pere, quel homme me conseilles tu que je deviengne!' and receives the reply 'Quel honme ? Tel que le meilleur et le plus juste'.

Mais Cirus dit que en son enfance et en son adolescence instruit avoit esté de doctrine toute contrayre. Cambises lui confessa estre voir, et aussi que entre ses amys et citoyens, garder lui falloit ceste doctrine; mais que certes, pour victoyre obtenir, assaillir lui falloit ses adversaires par dol ou deception et par fraude. Car a quelle fin avoit il aprins a ferir du dart et de la flesche? A quelle fin avoit il aprins a tendre fillé contre les senglers, caver pieges, prandre les cerfz aux las? Oultre plus lui demanda s'il assailloit de prez les ours, les lyons, les liepars et ne s'efforçoit plus tost de les decevoir par art et par cautelle.²

The analogy with hunting is also to be found in Machiavelli's arguments that the prince should not be bound by his word, although in this case the prince is likened not to a

¹ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 49, 'Anyone who reads the life of Cyrus, written by Xenophon, will then see how much the glory won by Scipio can be attributed to his emulation of Cyrus, and how much, in his chastity, courtesy, humanity, and generosity, Scipio conformed to the picture which Xenophon drew of Cyrus'. The comparison is not with the rules of conduct presented in the *Cyropedia*, but these are so like Machiavelli's precepts that it seems unlikely that he did not gain more from the work than the lessons to which he makes direct reference.

² Danielle Gallet-Guerne, *Vasque de Lucène et la Cyropédie à la cour de Bourgogne (1470)*, p. 217.

human hunter, but to animal predators, the lion and the fox.¹ Machiavelli's argument has been seen as characteristic of the new political cynicism of the Renaissance, but it was already circulating in Italy (where the Latin translation of Xenophon's text had been produced) and in the Burgundian court at the end of the fifteenth century. The fact that Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires* do not advise the prince to whom the work is addressed to disregard the promises that he has made is, therefore, not a simple consequence of the era in which the author lived, which meant that he did not have access to political analysis of such sophistication. Such analysis was available, and if La Marche did not use it in his arguments to Philippe le Beau it is most probably because he did not share the view of the *Cyropedia* on the conduct of the ideal prince.

Instead, La Marche writes, as he says in his conclusion to the 1488 Book One, with the aim of instilling specific moral virtues into his addressee, namely the fear and love of God, which two virtues, he argues 'ne sont pas loings de la condicion l'un de l'autre' (La Marche, I, 177). The message is thus the conventional one of the good ruler being the man whose morality is beyond reproach, but the way in which La Marche attempts to instil this morality is far from conventional and suggests reference to yet another didactic tradition. The final chapter of the 1488 Book One presents a series of examples of

princes plus grans [de vous], pareil de vous et mendre de vous, à qui la fortune n'a pas laissé, pour noblesse de sang, pour grandeur de linage, ne pour puissance terrienne, que, soubz la permission divine, ilz n'ayent esté flagellez et battus de diverses maladies et bien souvent plus grandes, plus horribles et plus abominables que n'ont les laboureurs et povres gens champestres qui vivent miserablement.²

The technique of using the examples of princes who had been brought down by some sort of adversity was not new; La Marche cites the examples of a series of Christian

¹ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 56 'So, as a prince is forced to know how to act like a beast, he must learn from the fox and the lion; because the lion is defenceless against traps and a fox is defenceless against wolves. Therefore one must be a fox in order to recognize traps, and a lion to frighten off wolves.'

² La Marche, I, 178. The addition is that of Beaune and d'Arbaumont, but is in fact present in all of the surviving manuscripts of the *Mémoires*, with the exception of *A*, which has 'que vous' (fol. 40^r); *I* fol. 69^r *B*, fol. 57^v; *Par*, fol. 65^v; *S*, fol. 81^r; *H*, fols 68^v-69^r; *L*, 69^r.

Fathers who had finished their works by doing this: Augustin, Paul, Jerome, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure and others. More recently Boccaccio had produced a work, *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*, which drew entirely on this subject matter, presenting a series of portraits of princes and their downfalls, through sickness or other adversity. This work circulated in both French and English political circles: a copy of Laurent de Premierfait's translation was in the Burgundian ducal library and in turn formed the subject matter for John Lydgate's translation of the 1430s.¹ What is novel about La Marche's deployment of the technique is that he concentrates entirely on princes brought low by sickness, although in some cases the ailments seem to stretch the point somewhat:

Dirons de Saul, premier Roy d'Israël, lequel fut en ses plus beaulx jours et jusques à sa mort traveillé et passionné du mal caducque. Hercules le Grant [fut] pareillement passionné dudit mal caducq, comme l'appreuve Aristote en ses probleumes. Philotes, grant prince, et fut paige dudit Hercules, en manyant une des flesches de son maistre, laquele estoit envenimée du venin d'un serpent merueilleux que ledit Hercules avoit tué, laquele flesche tumba sur le pied dudit Philotes, [en] demoura boisteux et affollé, sans trouver garison; et combien qu'il fut prince valereux et de grant couraige, il vescu le demourant de ses jours en douleur intollerable. Sertonius, le grant capitaine le grant capitaine des Espaignes, qui longuement mena la guerre contre Pompée le Grant, Philippe de Macedoine, pere du grant Alexandre, Hanibal de Cartaige prince si renommé, ces trois capitaines les plus grans dont il soit memoire ont tous perdu chascun ung oeil de bleceure ou autrement. Anthiocus, Roy de Sirye, puissant, courageux et renommé, toutesfois il fut mengié de vers en sa plaine vie, sans ce que medecins ne art de medecine y peulst jamais remedier pour tresor, ne pour avoir. Lucius Silla, ung grant dictateur entre les Rommains, fut mengié de poulz, à grant honte et destresse, et sans ce que sens d'homme y peust jamais pourveoir, comme tesmoingne Pline. Jullius Cesar, sy renommé, fut traveillé du mal caducque, comme tesmoingnent plusieurs anchiens medecins. Octovien Auguste, à qui Dieu donna si grant prosperité que la monarchie du monde fut tout en paix et sans guerre de son temps, et soubz son regne d'Empereur nasquit Nostre Seigneur Jhesucrist, et toutesfois il fut traveillé de gravelle et d'autres dangereuses maladies toute sa vie. L'Empereur Caligula, moult renommé prince, fut, par poison que sa femme luy donna, cuidant estre de luy mieulx amée, foursené, dont il morut et hors de son sens. Constantin, filz de sainte Helaine, Empereur et sy devot qu'il n'est pas trouvé que jamais homme fist tant de bien à l'Eglise comme il fist, et toutesfois il fut lepreux jusques à sa mort, et en c'elle piteuse maladie le garda et nourrist la bonne sainte dame [sa mere] tant qu'elle vescu. Sigismond, duc d'Austrice, morut paraliticque.

¹ John Lydgate, *Fall of Princes*, ed. by Henry Bergen, 4 vols (London: Early English Text Society, 1924-27).

Le duc Loys de Bourbon fut impotent de gouttes. Charles, Roy de France, VI^e de ce nom, fut furieux et foursené. Le Roy Loys [filz de son filz] si saige, si subtil et tant puissant et qui achetoit la grace de Dieu et de la Vierge Marie à plus grans deniers que oncques ne fist Roy, toutesfoix il fut tourmenté jusque à sa mort de plusieurs diverses et piteuses maladies. Edouard, prince de Gaule, morut ydropicque, Henry Derby, Roy d'Angleterre, ladre de terrible et infecte ladrerie. Henry le Quint fut malade de alopsie, qui est ladrerie ou cueur et à la teste. Frederic, ce noble Empereur, vostre grant pere, qui fut si grant, qui regna toute sa vie sans estre decliné de son imperiale puissance, toutesfoix par ung feu qui lay prist en la jambe, il luy convint la jambe copper, et dont il morut en la fin de l'an. Le Roy Charles, VIII^e, de ce nom, en ses plus beaux jours ayant fait grans conquestes, et toutesfoix en brief termin morut soudainement et en peu d'heure, comme eut fait le mendre bergier ou porchier de son royaume. (La Marche, I, 178-80)

It is an unusual list not simply because it includes alopecia as a form of leprosy but also because there appears to be no retributive element in La Marche's analysis.

Conventionally such lists are produced so that, in Laurent de Premierfait's words

quant les hommes verront par escript les princes du monde estre febles & vains, & les roys ferus & quotis Iusques a [la] terre par le Iugement de dieu, Ilz ayent congnoissance de la puissance diuine & de la feblesse et muablete de lestat de fortune, & que Ilz puissent pourueoir a leur mesme prouffit.¹

In La Marche's account, by contrast, the element of divine punishment is absent so that, for example, Saul's condition is interpreted as dropsy and not, as previous commentators had seen it, as possession by evil spirit as divine punishment for Saul's jealousy of David. This seems to be the way in which Lydgate viewed Saul's affliction, for he writes

To Godis biddyng for he was contraire,
As abiect to regne in Israel,
That al good hope in hym gan disespaire;
His grace, his myght gan pallen & appaire,
His prophecie afftir hath hym failed,
And with a feend he was also trauailed²

Saul endured in his frenesie,
A wikked sperit so sore hym ded assaile;
Onto Dauid euer he hadde envie³

¹ John Lydgate, *Fall of Princes*, I, p. lii.

² John Lydgate, *Fall of Princes*, I, 207-208 (Book II, ll. 290-94).

³ John Lydgate, *Fall of Princes*, I, 208 (Book II, ll. 302-304).

It is possible that Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, as well as Laurent de Premierfait's translation of Boccaccio's work, was known to Olivier de La Marche.¹ The terms in which he establishes his 1473 contract with the reader, saying that he writes in order to avoid 'oyseuse mere de tous maux', is expressed in terms which are reminiscent of Lydgate's criticism of Sardanapalus, king of Syria, who elected to follow the leadership of the 'Moodir off vices, callid idilnesse'.² However, it is a construction which is also used by the author of the *Livre des faits du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalaing*, who says that he writes 'pour eschever huysseuse, mère de tous vices', so La Marche's familiarity with Lydgate's discourse need not be seen as an indication that he was familiar with Lydgate's work.³ Nevertheless, it is likely that La Marche was at least aware of the way in which events like Saul's downfall were conventionally portrayed by moralizing writers such as Lydgate. The fact that he chooses to treat Saul's case as a purely medical affair, rather than the result of Saul's moral turpitude, suggests that his intentions were not solely moralizing.

This conclusion seems all the more inescapable when we consider the way in which La Marche treats the case of Constantine, whose infirmity, leprosy, was conventionally regarded as indicative of moral (and specifically sexual) shortcomings

¹ Gordon Kipling, *The Triumph of Honour: Burgundian Origins of the Elizabethan Renaissance* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1977), p. 21 regards Lydgate as playing a major role in the cultural contact between the Burgundian and English courts, arguing that his aureate style is that popularized in continental Europe by Chastelain and Molinet.

² La Marche, I, 183; John Lydgate, *Fall of Princes*, I, 263 (Book II, l. 2249). This phraseology is not present in Laurent de Premierfait's account of Sardanapalus's career (*Fall of Princes*, IV, 176; London, British Library, additional manuscript 35321, fols 46^r-50^r). However, it is latent in Premierfait's criticism of Sardanapalus's *oisiveté* and his advocacy of 'sobresse de viande', self-control which is at once 'marrastre des vices et mere des vertus' (fol. 50^r) and it may be this phraseology which inspired Lydgate in his translation.

³ *Livre des faits du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalaing*, in George Chastelain, *Œuvres*, ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Brussels: Heussner, 1863-66; repr. Geneva: Slatkine, 1971), VIII, 1-259, II, 221-364, (VIII, 2). The material contained in Chastelain II, 221-364 reproduces the second half of the *Livre des faits*, with the addition of some supporting documents and incorporates them into Chastelain's *Chronique*. A complete edition of the *Livre des faits*, without this supplementary material, is to be found in *Chronique de J. de Lalain par Georges Chastelain in Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur l'histoire de France avec notices biographiques* ed. by J.A.C Buchon, vol. 10 (Paris: Desrez, 1839), pp. 601-726.

on the part of the sufferer.¹ La Marche has nothing but praise for the emperor, whom he calls ‘Empereur et sy devot qu’il n’est pas trouvé que jamais homme fist tant de bien à l’Eglise comme il fist’. However, this does not prevent the author from stressing the point that he suffered throughout his life from the disease which popular imagination believed to be God’s punishment for lasciviousness. This is all the more striking since the story of Constantine’s life which had gained currency in the Middle Ages did not show the emperor living out his days afflicted by leprosy but had him being cured by miraculous intervention – something which had prompted him to grant temporal power over the Vatican lands in gratitude. La Marche’s insistence that Constantine did not recover from his leprosy therefore goes against not only the didactic convention whereby illness – and leprosy in particular – was portrayed as a divine punishment for sin, but also the folklore of the Middle Ages which knew that Constantine had been healed of his affliction.

By the end of the fifteenth century, however, the ‘Donation of Constantine’, the document whereby the Roman emperor had granted the Church its privileges, had been shown to be a later forgery and was no longer considered the legal document which it had been thought to be in previous centuries. What is interesting in the context of La Marche’s reading of Constantine’s life is that the proof of the document’s inauthenticity did not directly challenge the story of Constantine’s recovery from leprosy. The two principal challengers to the document’s legitimacy, Nicolas of Cusa and Lorenzo Valla, had taken slightly different approaches, with Cusa seeking to prove that the form of the donation did not correspond with the administrative structures of the Church or Roman Empire at the time that the grant was supposed to have been made, while Valla based

¹ This is the implication of the episode in the Bérout *Tristan* in which Iseut is saved from death by burning because Yvain the leper argues that a far greater punishment for her would be to become the ‘commune’ of himself and his hundred companions: ‘en nos a si grant ardor/ Soz ciel n’a dame qui un jor/ Peüst souffrir nostre convers’, *Tristan et Iseut: Les Poèmes français, la saga norroise* ed. and trans. by Daniel Lacroix and Philippe Walter, *Lettres Gothiques*, (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1989), Bérout, *Le Roman de Tristan* ll. 1195-97 (p. 76).

his argument on a linguistic analysis which suggested that the text could not date from the era of Constantine. Even the more historical of these approaches, that of Nicolas of Cusa, did not engage with the subject of Constantine's leprosy, or his recovery.¹ La Marche, however, seems to have concluded that, if the donation of Constantine had been proven to be a forgery, then the emperor must have continued to suffer throughout his life. The inclusion of Constantine in the sequence of princes laid low by sickness and physical frailty, like the inclusion of Octavian Augustus, demonstrates that the author does not want his readers to regard infirmity as divine punishment. Princes get sick, La Marche argues, not because they are evil, but because they are human. He does suggest that some of the illnesses to which they are prone are a result of their taste for fine living but his moral is not to avoid the consumption which can bring on such attacks but to love and fear God, praying that you will be spared the onset of infirmity.²

This fascination with infirmity is characteristic of La Marche's work, particularly his later work as exemplified by his allegorical poem *Le Chevalier délibéré*.³ This work is a meditation on death in which La Marche adopts the terminology of Amé de Montgesoie's *Pas de la mort* in comparing death to court combat in which people fight against one of two champions: Accident or Débile.⁴ Part of La Marche's poem takes the form of a review of the graves of those who have been killed in previous combats, before the narrator attends the spectacle of three members of the house of Burgundy, Philippe le Bon, Charles le Hardi and Marie d'Autriche, take part in their own combats. After this, there is a short section in which Fresche Memoire

¹ Nicolas of Cusa, *The Catholic Concordance*, ed. and trans. by Paul E. Sigmund (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 216-22 (Book III, 2, paragraphs 300-308). Cusa's argument takes a twofold approach – that some of the details in the Donation of Constantine do not fit with our knowledge of the classical world, and that the Church Fathers do not mention such an important document. He does not, however, raise the question of whether or not Constantine's illness and recovery are documented.

² 'bien souvent il advient que les corps, par trop de repletion, tumbent en inconvenient ou de langueur ou d'abregement de vie', La Marche, I, 178.

³ Olivier de La Marche, *Le Chevalier delibéré (The Resolute Knight)*, ed. by Carleton W. Carroll, trans. by Lois Hawley Wilson and Carleton W. Carroll, *Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies*, 199 (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999).

⁴ Thomas Walton, 'Les Poèmes d'Amé de Montgesoie', *Medium Ævum*, 2 (1933), 1-33.

commemorates the recently deceased. Given the martial metaphor employed, and La Marche's abiding interest in acts of war, it is perhaps surprising that the majority (33 as against 25) of the graves he surveys are of victims of *Débile* rather than of *Accident*, who is responsible for untimely deaths, particularly those in battle. In Amé de Montgesoie's poem, by contrast, *Accident* is the more successful of death's soldiers, being responsible for seventeen of the deaths attributed to one or other combatant while *Antique le Debile* claims only six victims, all of whom are the exceptionally aged figures of the Old Testament. The tally of victims eventually evens out in *Le Chevalier délibéré*, for all of the recently deceased commemorated by *Fresche Memoire* are victims of *Accident*. However, in this section La Marche begins to specify not only the sort of death suffered – whether timely or premature – but also the cause of death. Thus we find that three of these new victims of *Accident* died not in battle but of illness which struck them down before they grew old. Natural death, therefore, remains the norm in *Le Chevalier délibéré*, reversing the focus of La Marche's poetic model.

This emphasis on the natural process of decay can be interpreted as symptomatic of La Marche's increasing melancholia in old age; certainly the prologue to the 1488 Book One presents him as an old man, aware of his own mortality and anxious to pass on his knowledge to his young charge before his demise.¹ However, it is perhaps significant that it should emerge as a theme in his work at the very time that his writing ceases to be defined as a private enterprise and is placed at the service of the Burgundian ducal family. *Le Chevalier délibéré* is a work which celebrates the Burgundian ducal family: at its heart are the deaths of Philippe le Bon, Charles le Hardi and Marie d'Autriche. Indeed, given the fact that the work appeared in 1482, the year after Marie's death, it seems likely that it was this death which prompted La Marche to

¹ 'Je [...] plain de jours, chargé et furny de diverses enfermetez et persecuté de debile viellesse, neantmoins par la grace celeste plain de plusieurs et diverses souvenirs, veant et cognoissant mon cas, et [...] que longuement noz jours ne peuvent voyager ensemble [...] je me suis resolu de labourer et mettre par escript certaines memoires abregées' (La Marche, I, 9-10).

produce the poem. This could be interpreted as a reaction to the death of someone younger than himself but it seems likely that there were political considerations which prompted La Marche to produce and publish his poem.¹ One of these would have been to stress the continuity of the family line from Philippe le Bon to Marie d'Autriche, and therefore to imply that Marie's son, Philippe le Beau, was the legitimate inheritor of the lands ruled by his great-grandfather. This was not an uncontroversial point for a number of reasons; ever since the death of Charles le Hardi Marie's right to inherit had been in dispute, and these disputes intensified after she died and her husband Maximilian became regent on behalf of their four-year-old son, Philippe. The stress which La Marche places on biological processes of decay, sickness and death in *Le Chevalier délibéré* and in the revised conception of the *Mémoires* which emerged after 1482 can be seen as the author's attempt to support the claims of Maximilian and Philippe by stressing the organic cycle in which the inevitability of death finds its counterpart in the equally inevitable process of renewal by the subsequent generation.

The Bastards

Jane H. M. Taylor has posited two related modes of historical narrative, which she calls reciprocal and linear cyclicity.² The first is that described above, in which history is viewed as a series of discrete cycles of birth, maturity and death, which return to the same point rather than remaining in the same position at all times. The second, by contrast, stresses continuity rather than discontinuity and 'posits a central surviving core which runs intact, and above all purposeful, across mutabilities.'³ Taylor views these two conceptions of history as 'rival paradigms' but goes on to demonstrate that both can be used in a genealogical narrative. Indeed, far from being contradictory, in the case of

¹ The earliest printed edition cited by Carleton W. Carroll appeared in Paris in 1488, which suggests that the poem was widely circulated in the years immediately following its completion, Olivier de La Marche, *Le Chevalier délibéré*, p. 26.

² Jane H. M. Taylor, 'The Sense of a Beginning: Genealogy and Plenitude in Late Medieval Narrative Cycles' in *Transtextualities: Of Cycles and Cyclicity in Medieval French Literature*, ed. by Sara Sturm-Maddox and Donald Maddox, *Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies*, 149 (Binghamton: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1996), pp. 93-123.

³ Jane H. M. Taylor, 'The Sense of a Beginning', p. 100.

the genealogical narrative they are interdependent for, in order for the essential continuity of unbroken family inheritance to exist, the process of discontinuity, of death and renewal, must be shown to function unproblematically. It is thus not surprising that both *Le Chevalier délibéré* and the final chapter of the 1488 Book One of the *Mémoires* should dwell so much on the natural processes of decay at a time when the Habsburg court, in which Olivier de La Marche played a leading role, was so concerned to demonstrate the legitimacy of its inheritance.

It has been remarked that genealogy, and particularly genealogy which traces a family back to a mythical ancestor, as does the 1488 Book One of Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires*, is particularly popular in the Middle Ages at times when the family's inheritance is in question.¹ In the case of a work such as Olivier de La Marche's 1488 Book One, which draws on the tradition of the *mirroir des princes*, this has the dual effect of reassuring the ostensible addressee, whilst at the same time propagandizing to the wider readership of the work. The Habsburgs were no exception to this rule, and Maximilian actively encouraged his historians during the early years of the sixteenth century to produce a Trojan founding myth which could rival that of France.² Maximilian's query to his historians was twofold: could similar Trojan origins be found for the Habsburg household as those which had long justified the antiquity of France and could it be demonstrated that a Habsburg had ever ruled over Burgundy. This demonstrates that, for Maximilian at least, genealogy was a political tool which could be placed at the service of the Habsburg state to justify its rule in Burgundy.

The 1488 Book One of Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires* appears to be the first historiographical work of the Burgundian court to use the Trojan myth in the service of

¹ Jane H. M. Taylor, 'The Sense of a Beginning', p. 113; Georges Duby, 'Structures de parenté et noblesse dans la France du Moyen Age' in Georges Duby, *Hommes et structures du moyen âge* (Paris: Mouton, 1973), pp. 267-85.

² This myth is discussed in Bernard Guenée, 'État et nation au Moyen Âge', *Revue historique*, 237 (1967), 17-70 while Wilma Keesman, 'De Borgondische invloed op de genealogische constructies van Maximiliaan van Oostenrijk', *Millenium: Tijdschrift voor middeleeuwse studies*, 8/2 (1994), 162-72 describes the work of Maximilian's historians in this search.

Maximilian's dual concerns of justifying rule over Burgundian lands and claiming precedence over France.¹ La Marche's version does not discount the French Trojan myth whereby France was founded by Francio, who named Paris after the hero of Troy. However, La Marche subjugates this myth to an Austrian Trojan myth for, in his tale, France has to call on the son of the Austrian king to teach martial skills and it is his son in turn who becomes the first king of France. The fact that this line is depicted as having died out similarly challenges French political orthodoxy, which held the French royal line to be unbroken.² French claims to precedence over other nations are thus undermined, particularly in favour of those of the Austrians who taught them their military prowess. At the same time La Marche develops a picture of an independent Burgundy whose true nature is revealed under the symbol of the cross of St Andrew, rather than any specifically French emblem:

L'ensaigne de Bourguignons est la croix saint Andrieu, et se aucune fois ilz ont porté aultre ensaigne, ce a esté quant la seignourie par quelquefois a esté ès mains des Roys de France. Mais tousjours sont ilz revenuz et retournez à leur premiere nature.³

Here, the French are seen as an imposition disrupting a truly Burgundian identity and elsewhere the mythos of the French royal line is implicitly called into question.

Thus La Marche deals with the fact that Burgundy has passed from Valois to Habsburg rule: by implying that there is a Burgundian identity separate from France and that Austria, as the senior royal house, is a worthy country to rule it, but there were other factors that called the legitimacy of Habsburg rule in the Burgundian Netherlands

¹ Keesman, 'De Borgondische invloed op de genealogische constructies van Maximiliaan van Oostenrijk', p. 168.

² Michael Zingel has also pointed out that La Marche regards the founding moment of the French royal myth – the divine gift of chrism and the fleur de lys to Clovis – as symbols of God's favour to that one individual rather than demonstrating God's special regard for the French royal house as a whole. (Michael Zingel, *Frankreich, das Reich und Burgund im Urteil der burgundischen Historiographie des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Vorträge und Forschungen, Sonderband 40 (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1995), p. 206; La Marche, I, 56-57).

³ La Marche, I, 50. J. Huizinga, 'L'État bourguignon, ses rapports avec la France, et les origines d'une nationalité néerlandaise', *Le Moyen Age*, 3rd series, 1 (1930), 171-93; 2 (1931), 11-35 and 83-96 (repr. in *Verzamelde Werken*, 9 vols (Haarlem, Willink: 1948-53), II, 161-215), responds to such statements by La Marche by placing him amongst a new generation of Burgundian historians who did not view Burgundy as inherently part of France.

into doubt. As a consequence, the 1488 Book One of the *Mémoires* plays on legitimacy and inheritance on several levels, all revolving around the genealogical principal. Thus, the transmission of heraldic devices becomes an important motif, not merely in explaining biological relationships but also as proof of what La Marche proposes as historical facts regarding Philippe le Beau's ancestry. Thus, for example, La Marche argues that the Austrian royal family may claim descent from Troy because its original arms were those carried by Priam, grandson of the famous King Priam and first King of Austria (La Marche, I, 17-18). Similarly another form of descent, etymological descent, where words are used as proof of historical facts, is marshalled in support of La Marche's account of the history of Philippe's family. R. Howard Bloch has suggested that there is a link in troubadour poetry between poetic language, which disrupts meaning, and illegitimate descent.¹ La Marche draws a converse analogy between legitimate descent and undisrupted etymological transmission, a notable instance of which occurs when La Marche explains how Bourbon got its name:

Comme toutes choses ont commencement, pour ce que en tous les deux lieux que l'on nomme Bourbon a bains chaulx que l'on dit medicinables, et s'y vont plusieurs gens baigner pour [se] mediciner et pour recouvrir santé d'aucunes maladies, et à ceste cause et pour ce que plusieurs gens y hantoient et conversoient, hosteliers, taverniers, marchans et ouvriers mecaniques se logerent celle part pour gaignier et avoir proffit, et tellement que assez tost après se firent en iceux lieux gros et puissans bours, et augmenterent telement que, entre les autres bours, on disoit d'un chacun d'iceux voisins: c'est ung bon bourg; [et] à le prendre au rebourre, peut on dire c'est ung bourg bon. Et de ce nom bourg bon, en continuacion de langaige, sont encore appelez ces deux lieux Bourbon. (La Marche, I, 148)

Similar 'proof' is offered for the Trojan foundation of France, when La Marche points to resemblance between the names of Paris, the hero of Troy, and the French capital (La Marche, I, 18-20).

Legitimacy of descent, the correct interpretation of words, historical facts and legitimate rulership are thus all linked in La Marche's defence of Philippe's rule. This

¹ R. Howard Bloch, *Etymologies and Genealogies: A Literary Anthropology of the French Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

was, however, a potentially problematic strategy for, as we have seen Philippe was descended (on both his mother's and his father's side) from João, the bastard king of Portugal. In an argument such as that embarked upon by La Marche, where legitimate rulership seems to be linked very closely to notions of legitimate descent, one might expect that the existence of an ancestor who was illegitimate would cast serious doubt on the integrity of a ruler's position. In the light of this we might expect La Marche to conceal the existence of bastards amongst Philippe's forebears, for fear that to acknowledge them would weaken his pupil's claims. Instead La Marche presents a strong defence of descent from bastards, indeed, M. E. van den Heuvel has called it the only theoretical defence of bastards of the Middle Ages.¹ It begins with a summary of those Old Testament bastards who were the direct antecedents of Jesus and, although La Marche stops short of claiming that Christ himself was illegitimate, this may be the implication in the way in which he draws attention to the question before rapidly changing the subject.

Si le Createur et Seigneur ne depris pas, ne n'eut en desdaing d'estre yssu de generacion où il olt corruption en aucun, [...] pourquoy aultres, qui ne sont que ses creatures, prenent ilz en desdaing ce cas semblable en leur nativité, s'il leur advient?²

One might expect this argument to carry sufficient weight to convince the fifteenth-century reader, but La Marche immediately backs this up saying 'Et s'il ne souffist assez ce que j'ay cy dessus, nous revenrons à monstrier, du temps des payens et de mille ans passez, des grans princes bastars que regnerent en ce temps' (La Marche, I, 112).³

¹ M.E. van den Heuvel, 'De verdediging van bastaarden door Olivier de la Marche, een vijftiende-eeuwse Bourgondische hoveling', *Handelingen der Maatschappij voor Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde te Gent*, 45 (1991), 33-68.

² La Marche, I, 111-12. Jane Scharberg in *The Illegitimacy of Jesus: A Feminist Theological Interpretation of the Infancy Narratives*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987) claims that some New Testament authors, notably Matthew and Luke, wrote their accounts of Jesus's birth within a tradition of illegitimacy rather than one of divinity. This does not mean that La Marche was drawing on a tradition which saw Jesus as a bastard, but it does indicate that such a reading is possible.

³ Mikhaël Harsgor 'L'Essor des bâtards nobles au XV^e siècle' in *Revue Historique* 253 (1975), 319-54, comments on this abrupt change of tack in La Marche's argument saying 'Dieu lui-même a voulu s'incarner dans un homme descendant d'une lignée marquée par la bâtardise celle de David, roi d'Israël. Et brusquement Olivier de la Marche passe à Jupiter, qui lui aussi avait engendré de nombreux bâtards'.

There then follows a long list of men who, despite their bastardy, went on to great things. He suggests that Alexander the Great may have been a bastard, he affirms that Jupiter was a bastard and was nevertheless revered as a god, and that many of Jupiter's sons, Perseus, King Minos and Hercules, were illegitimate as were other figures of antiquity. Moving on, La Marche quotes the examples of both King Arthur and Roland to show that bastards could earn regard in the Christian world. Arthur, he points out, is one of the 'neuf preux et le premier des trois preux crestiens' (La Marche, I, 114). The nine worthies were a body of military heroes; three antique, three Biblical and three Christians, who were particularly admired by the late medieval aristocracy. They included other men, such as Alexander and Hercules, already mentioned by La Marche as bastards. Finally La Marche draws attention to those kingdoms whose rulers are descended from bastards: England, Spain, Portugal and France. 'Lisez le commencement de la lignie Charles Martel qui fut Roy de France', he writes, 'vous trouverez que tout n'est pas legitime'.¹

This accentuation of the universality of bastards, may have been a reflection of the political culture in which La Marche lived, however, this was a political culture which was under threat in the Habsburg court. In the medieval period, and particularly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, noble bastards had been very much part of French political life.² Noblemen tended to recognize their illegitimate children (Jean II de Clèves had 63 of them) and often had them raised with their legitimate sons and

(p. 351) In a footnote Harsgor comments on La Marche's reference to Jesus: 'On sent l'émotion de l'auteur qui se rend compte de la gravité de cette déclaration, mais qui semble aussi croire qu'il doit énoncer sa thèse pour le salut et la plus grande gloire de la maison de Bourgogne.' (n. 2) I would argue that La Marche's realization of the gravity of the issue and his abrupt change of subject are intimately linked in that the very rapidity with which La Marche moves on to deal with other bastards draws attention to the scandalous possibility which he has raised that Jesus might have been a bastard.

¹ La Marche, I, 114-15. This fascination with the uncertainty of Charles Martel's descent is reflected in other Burgundian writings including the *Histoire de Charles Martel*, in which the anonymous author makes the statement 'chascun ne scet pas quy engendra celluy Charles Martel, de quelle lignie il fut ne coment il parvint a estre couronné roy de France.' Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale 23511 bis, quoted in Jane H. M. Taylor, 'The Sense of a Beginning', p. 114.

² Hasgor, 'L'essor des bâtards nobles au XV^e siècle' and Claude Grimmer, *La Femme et le bâtard* (Paris: Presses de la Renaissance, 1983).

daughters.¹ The many legal sanctions against illegitimacy, which limited the amount which an illegitimate child could inherit and barred bastards from holding positions within the Church unless they were made legitimate did not dissuade the nobility from having bastards.² Indeed, there seems to have been a view that bastards strengthened the cohesion of noble families, acting as their agents in family disputes and allowing a wider scope for dynastic marriages (which could be made between bastards). A study of wills made in Lyon reveals the extent to which bastardy was a noble institution: at least one will in seven mentioned an illegitimate child in noble families, whereas ordinary citizens of the city mention a bastard once in every 22 wills.³ Within the Burgundian court bastards had an acknowledged role to play. Philippe le Bon, third Valois duke of Burgundy, had 26 bastards from his 33 mistresses; and the eldest son, Cornille and, after his death, Anthoine, received the title 'bastard de Bourgoingne'. A parallel esteem, however, was not accorded to bastards in German aristocratic circles where, according to La Marche, 'sur toutes les nations du monde les Germaniens et Allemans font petite extime de bastards et bastardes' (La Marche, I, 110). The fact that La Marche draws attention to this suggests that he was motivated to produce a strong defence of bastardy not merely as a propagandistic justification of the legitimacy of Habsburg rule for readers outside the court (or those within the court who might have their doubts) but as a counterbalance to the change of *mentalités* ushered in by the advent of Habsburg rule. Once again, La Marche's didactic message has a dual audience, challenging the Germanic culture of Maximilian with the suggestion that the French were better able to come to terms with illegitimacy in their family, whilst at the same time counteracting possible French objections to their new German rulers.

¹ Grimmer, p. 151 cites the example of Henri IV who used Mme de Montglas as wet nurse to both his legitimate and his illegitimate offspring.

² Statistics on how much bastards were allowed to inherit can be found Grimmer, p. 174.

³ Figures quoted in Niethard Bulst 'Illegitime Kinder – viele oder wenige? Qualitative Aspekte der Illegitimität im spätmittelalterlichen Europa' in *Illegitimität im Spätmittelalter* ed. by Ludwig Schmugge, Schriften des Historischen Kollegs Kolloquien, 29 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1994), pp. 21-39.

It should not be thought strange that La Marche should select the figure of the bastard as the battleground on which the question of Habsburg legitimacy should be fought. Even before the death of Charles le Hardi and the advent of Habsburg rule, bastards had had a significant role in the *Mémoires*, particularly in those scenes of combat which bore the stamp of didacticism most prominently. We shall see in the final chapter of this thesis the way in which, in the early sections of the *Mémoires*, court combat is used to signal the transition between a time of warfare and a period of peace, and this technique continues in those sections of the work possibly written after 1494, dealing with the period after the Ghent wars of 1453/4. This presented La Marche with a problem, as the main protagonist in the court combats of the *Mémoires* up until this point had been Jacques de Lalaing, who had been killed in the Ghent wars. La Marche's solution – one that is prefigured in both his account of the Ghent wars and in the anonymous *Livre des Faits du bon chevalier Jacques de Lalaing* – is to substitute Anthoine bâtard de Bourgogne in a role very similar to that previously played by Jacques. There was a tradition which saw bastards as possessed of what Jessica Lewis Watson has termed a 'gifted status', and there is certainly an argument for regarding a bastard, upon whom the inheritance of the duchy could not rest, as the ideal figure to undertake the inherently risky occupation of single combat.¹ Whatever may be the reason, we find Anthoine performing this function on a number of occasions after Jacques de Lalaing's death.

La Marche's account of the beginning of the Ghent wars had been interspersed with descriptions of court combat, the last of which is the confrontation between Jacques de Lalaing and Charles le Hardi, then count of Charrolais. When peace returns, after the Ghent wars, the alternation between accounts of war and accounts of court combat returns. The first such combat is one involving Lalaing's erstwhile opponent,

¹ Jessica Lewis Watson, *Bastardy as a Gifted Status in Chaucer and Malory*, *Studies in Mediaeval Literature*, 14 (Lewiston: Mellen, 1996).

Charles, together with his half-brother, Anthoine (La Marche, II, 333-34). However, this joust is not described in its full detail, and thereafter it is Anthoine alone who assumes Jacques de Lalaing's mantle. Like Lalaing, who had previously appeared in the *Mémoires* engaged in combat, three against three in Scotland the bastard too crosses the channel, engaging in single combat in London with Anthony Woodville, Lord Scales. Although La Marche does not say so explicitly, it is believed that this journey formed part of the preparatory negotiations leading to the marriage of Margaret of York to Charles le Hardi.¹ At their wedding Anthoine is the principal protagonist in the *pas d'armes de l'arbre d'or*: continuing to play the role of the single combatant welcoming all comers previously occupied by Jacques de Lalaing in his *pas de la fontaine des pleurs*. In between the two accounts, we find descriptions of the peace of Péronne and the siege of Neuss, events which took place in 1471 and 1475. La Marche has been criticized for the inexactitude of his chronology in this section of the *Mémoires* because the York wedding took place in 1468, a full seven years before the events described in the chapter which it follows. However, as was suggested in the first chapter of this thesis, this chronological inexactitude has aesthetic advantages for Olivier de La Marche, for it enables him to continue to alternate periods of war and peace, marking the transition between the two with periods of court combat in which Anthoine, bâtard de Bourgogne has now taken on Jacques de Lalaing's role.

% of text	Jacques de Lalaing	Anthoine, bâtard de Bourgogne
0-10%	0	1
10-20%	0	0
20-30%	1	0
30-40%	11	0
40-50%	48	0
50-60%	33	17
60-70%	8	16
70-80%	0	16
80-90%	0	9
90-100%	0	2
Total	101	61

¹ Aly Comines in 'Nul ne s'y frote. Een biografische schets van Anton, Bastaard van Bourgondië' in *Excursiones Medievales: Opstellen aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. A. G. Jongkees door zijn leerlingen* (Groningen: Vakgroep Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis van de Rijksuniversiteit te Groningen, 1979), pp. 59-76 (p. 68) points out that the use of tournaments in this way, to mask the serious purpose of a diplomatic mission, was common in diplomacy, particularly English diplomacy, of the sixteenth century but innovative in the context of the fifteenth century.

The comprehensiveness with which Anthoine replaces Jacques de Lalaing can be demonstrated by this table, showing the occurrence of the two men in the *Mémoires*. Anthoine does not appear at all until after those portions of the text in which Jacques de Lalaing is in greatest prominence. These are the descriptions of the great court combats of Lalaing's career: his confrontation in Scotland and the *pas d'armes de la fontaine des pleurs*. Anthoine only appears in La Marche's account of the Ghent wars and, for a time, his presence alternates with that of Lalaing. The transition between the two men in their role as chivalric role-models is facilitated by explicitly linking the bastard with Lalaing on a number of occasions. The first mention of Lalaing's participation in the war occurs in the paragraph after that in which the bastard first appears and is made a knight and what spurs Lalaing to action is the sight of the creation of new knights on the field of battle (La Marche, II, 238). For a period following this the actions of one man mirror the other, with Anthoine launching an attack on Ghent from his base in Tenremonde; an action which is then repeated by the maréchal de Bourgogne in conjunction with Jacques de Lalaing. When the two men finally meet, it is whilst inspecting a cannon within range of the enemy, and Jacques de Lalaing is shot in the process. Immediately following this, Anthoine becomes much less prominent in the account of the war, appearing only twice in lists of protagonists but taking no action until he appears in combat with his half brother at the end of the war. It is almost as if Lalaing and Antoine have become a single figure: the chivalric role-model, both doing the same things and both disappearing from the narrative when one dies.

A similar evolution can be traced in the *Livre des Faits*, whose account of the Ghent wars is also traditionally read as part of Chastelain's *Chronique*. Here too Jacques de Lalaing, and his relatives Simon, Sanche and Philippe are linked to the bastard. Thus, one passage in the *Livre des Faits* begins 'A Audenarde estoit messire

Jacques de Lalaing moult bien accompagné; pareillement estoit messire Antoine bastard de Bourgogne en la ville de Tenremonde moult bien accompagné de chevaliers et escuyers.¹ The two men are in different places and have apparently nothing to do with each other and yet here, and on numerous other occasions, they are linked. The fact that the *Livre des Faits*, as a biography of Lalaing, ends with the protagonist's death, coupled with the fragmentary nature of Chastelain's *Chronique* means that we cannot tell whether, as in La Marche's *Mémoires*, this linking is the first step in a process which will replace Lalaing as chivalric hero with Anthoine, bâtard de Bourgogne. However, it does suggest that the perception that Anthoine was a figure similar to Lalaing was not peculiar to Olivier de La Marche. In La Marche's *Mémoires*, however, there is a further linguistic parallel between the two characters which suggests a further conscious effort to model his portrait of Anthoine on the model supplied by the biography of Jacques de Lalaing. Elisabeth Gaucher has pointed out a peculiarity of the *Livre des Faits* that, alone among chivalric biographies of the period, it signals the immaturity of its protagonist not by using a word which means boy, but by using a diminutive of the character's first name, Jacquet, until a point in his career when he has earned himself the title of an adult.² In fact, this feature of Jacques de Lalaing's biography is shared by Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires* and Anthoine too goes through a similar renaming process shortly before he takes over Jacques de Lalaing's role. The renaming is occasioned when Anthoine's elder brother, Cornille, is himself killed in the war and La Marche says that 'de là en avant ne fut plus appelé ledit messire Anthoine par son nom, mais bastard de Bourgoingne seulement' (La Marche, II, 270). This change in Anthoine's title parallels the change in Jacques de Lalaing's name and serves to associate the men more closely with each other.

¹ *Livre des faits du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalaing*, in George Chastelain, *Œuvres*, ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Brussels: Heussner, 1863-66; repr. Geneva: Slatkine, 1971), VIII, 1-259, II, 221-364, (II, 341).

² Elisabeth Gaucher, *La Biographie Chevaleresque*, p. 349.

In both the Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy's *Epître* and the anonymous *Livre des faits du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalaing*, Lalaing is cast explicitly as a didactic hero: Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy writes for the instruction of members of Lalaing's family so that 'ceulz qui sont yssus et ystront de la noble maison dont il estoit yssu prennent exemple à ses haulz et nobles faiz' while the anonymous author of the *Livre des Faits* casts the net wider than the immediate family and writes 'pour donner exemple aux nobles et vertueux hommes du temps présent'.¹ The point is confirmed a scene in which Lalaing is given advice on chivalric life and morality by his father which is very similar to that given to the eponymous hero of Anthoine de la Sale's *Jehan de Saintré* by Saintré's mistress, the Dame des Belles Cousines.² Indeed, in many instances the advice given to the two men – and the authorities used to support this advice – is absolutely identical.³ Anthoine de La Sale was tutor to Jean d'Anjou, to whom the *Petit Jehan de Saintré* was addressed, and so it can be expected that he had access to and interest in texts which effectively propose a reading list of instructive works for young men. The fact that the same reading list turns up in the biography of Jacques de Lalaing demonstrates that this work too draws on the didactic tradition in which *miroirs* are used to supply heroes whom readers – particularly young readers – can emulate. The parallels which La Marche establishes between Jacques de Lalaing and Anthoine, bâtard de Bourgogne demonstrate that he regarded the bastard as a figure of similar instructive value in those sections of the *Mémoires* which bore the didactic message most prominently – the sections dealing with combat. It is thus perhaps not surprising that

¹ Jean Le Fèvre de Saint Rémy, *Epître*, ed. by François Morand, *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*, 221 (1884), 178-239 (p. 81); *Livre des Faits*, VIII, 2.

² *Livre des Faits*, VIII, 14-24; Anthoine de la Sale, *Jehan de Saintré*, ed. by Joël Blanchard, trans. by Michel Quereuil (Paris: Lettres Gothiques, 1995), pp. 60-114.

³ This has led some to speculate on the means whereby the text of Saintré passed into the biography of Jacques de Lalaing. Gaston Raynaud 'Un nouveau manuscrit du *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, *Romania*, 31, (1902), 527-56, argues that the similarity proves that La Sale must be the author of the anonymous *Livre des Faits*. However, Camille Liégeois (cited in Gaucher's *Biographie chevaleresque*, pp. 174-75) refuted this theory and it is now more usual to argue, as does Alison Black, that the two texts draw on a common didactic source; Alison Black, 'Jehan de Saintré and *Le Livre des faits de Jacques de Lalaing*: A Common Source?', *Notes and Queries* (September 1987), 353-54.

bastards should re-emerge as figures from whom lessons can be learned in the 1488 Book One, where the message is more universally didactic. The didacticism of the 1488 Book One revolves around organic models of created hierarchy, family, patrilineal and matrilineal inheritance, coats of arms and etymology and is used both to instruct the prince to whom it is addressed and a non-princely audience. It is much more theoretical in its didactic message, and draws a lot more on established didactic thought than do other sections of the *Mémoires*. However, this is not to say that the didacticism of Book One is without precedent in the work as a whole. Some themes, amongst them the importance of 'conseil', the role of the chivalric hero and the special status of bastards, can be shown to develop in the course of the work's composition and we may safely conclude that La Marche's didactic tone is not simply a product of his position as tutor to Philippe le Beau but, rather, his appointment to this post followed from the increasing tendency in his work towards a teaching role. Whether or not that role is, as La Marche's portrait in ms 2868 suggests, accompanied by a preaching function, will be examined in the following chapter.

La 'corde nouée': La Marche and Religion

En celluy temps vint audit lieu de Pontarli le Roy Jaques de Bourbon, qui avoit esté Roy de Naples, et avoit renoncé au royaume, à la couronne et au monde, pour prandre l'abit de saint François et devenir Cordelier de l'observance; et tiroit à Besançon, ouquel lieu il vesquit puis longuement Cordelier, et de son cas et de son estat je deviseray cy après (La Marche, I, 190)

La Marche's primal scene presents us with his first religious experience, something of which he is glad, 'pour ce que Dieu et ses glorieux faitz doibvent estre commencement de toutes bonnes œuvres'.¹ This gladness suggests that the author wishes to emphasize matters of religion and spirituality in his work, and it is maybe significant that the religion promoted in this opening section of his *Mémoires* is that of the Franciscan order, and more especially of the controversial strict interpretation of that devotion, the Friars Minor of the Observance. Franciscans appear throughout those sections of the *Mémoires* which were the first to be written and surface in some of the later passages as well. They appear more frequently in the *Mémoires* than do other monks and nuns and more frequently in La Marche's work than in the writings of his contemporaries. Even if this were not the case, the emphasis given to the Observant Franciscans by their appearance in the opening scene of La Marche's *Mémoires* would be sufficient to raise the question of the significance that he ascribes to the Order. As it is, the friars seem to be a distinct and recurring theme in the *Mémoires*. They may, therefore, point to La Marche's perspective on religion and throw further light on the didactic elements of his work.

The Observant Franciscans occupied a special place in the Franciscan Order, and thus in the fifteenth-century Church. One of many Franciscan movements to seek a return to what was considered the primitive purity of the Order, it had grown up at the end of the fourteenth century, and had lived in a state of uneasy co-existence with the

¹ La Marche, I, 187.

traditional friars – now known as Conventuals – who were the butt of much of their criticism. This state of affairs lasted until 1446 when Eugene IV formalized the separation of the two movements by placing the Observants under separate Vicars General, although both wings were still under the overall control of the Ministers General.¹ By the time that La Marche was writing, therefore, the two wings of the Franciscan movement were established as being distinct and it might be thought significant that La Marche's *Mémoires* open with a scene which foregrounds one branch of this movement in particular. However, there is some ambiguity as to the precise nature of the monks described in this opening passage. La Marche describes Jacques de Bourbon's spiritual journey from his escape from his wife's prison in Naples to his profession of vows as a Franciscan friar in Burgundy. The memorialist says that this transformation took place under the guidance of S Collette, a Franciscan nun who was influential in France in reforming both the Franciscan and Clarisse Orders.² La Marche does not state explicitly that de Bourbon entered her particular branch of the Franciscan movement, the Collettans, but, given the importance which Collette plays in La Marche's narrative, this seems to be what he is suggesting. Confirmation of this suggestion can be found in other documentary evidence. Jacques de Bourbon stipulated in his will that he was to be buried at Collette's feet and, on hearing of his wife's death, it was to Collette that he wrote saying that he intended to become a friar.³ The Collettans were a reformed branch of the Franciscan movement but they were not part

¹ A history of this development can be found in John Moorman's *A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origins to the Year 1517 Part IV, The Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), pp. 441-585. There is also a history of the fifteenth-century reform movement as a whole, setting the Franciscan Observance in the context of similar observant movements in *Reformbemühungen und Observanzbestrebungen im spätmittelalterlichen Ordenswesen*, ed. by Kaspar Elm, *Berliner Historische Studien*, 14, (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1989).

² 'celle seur Collette fut advertie du cas du Roy Jaques, [...] se trouva devers luy et tant luy monstra des variances du monde et des tours et retours de fortune, ensemble de la bresveté de ceste mortelle vie, qu'il print confort en son adversité, advis sur les dangiers advenir, et resolucion d'attendre la mort assurée ou chemin et en la voye de religieuse penitence; et se deslibera de prandre l'habit de saint François et de se rendre en l'observance en la tierce ordre, car encoires vivoit la Royne sa femme.' La Marche, I, 193.

³ Arthur Huart, *Jacques de Bourbon Roi de Sicile frère mineur cordelier à Besançon* (Couvain: St Roche, 1909), pp. 72, 77.

of the Observance. Unlike the Observant friars, they remained under the direct authority of the Ministers General of the Order, and were not placed under separate Vicars General.¹ In 1434 Jacques de Bourbon had received encouragement from Guillaume de Casal, Minister General of the Friars Minor, to join the Order.² It is improbable that Guillaume would have concerned himself with the king, or encouraged him to join the Order, had de Bourbon been drawn to a branch of the devotion in open antagonism to his own.

Indeed, the entry which La Marche describes is not that of an Observant friar, nor even that of a reformed Collettan. I remarked in my second chapter that de Bourbon's retinue might strike the modern reader as a little extravagant for one who had sworn a vow of poverty. For the Observants, who placed primary importance on absolute poverty, it would be scandalous.³ One of the elements of the procession that La Marche stresses is the number of horses:

Après luy venoyent quatre Cordeliers de l'observance, que l'on disoit moult grans clercs et de sainte vie; et après iceulx, ung peu sur le loings, venoit son estat, où il pouvoit avoir deux cens chevaulx, dont il y avoit litiere, chariot couvert, haquenées, mulles et mulletz dorés et enharnaichés honnorablement. Il avoit sommiers couvers de ses armes, nobles hommes et serviteurs très bien vestuz et en bon point; et, en celle pompe humble et devote ordonnance, entra le Roy Jaques en la ville de Pontarli. (La Marche, I, 194)

Horses were a particular bone of contention amongst the Observant friars, for their interpretation of the Rule argued that Franciscans were not allowed to own them, and

¹ Moorman stresses this point several times in his *History of the Franciscan Order*.

² Huart, *Jacques de Bourbon Roi de Sicile frère mineur cordelier à Besançon*, p. 60. The letter is dated 22 November 1434.

³ An exposition of this concept of *altissima paupertas* and its importance to the Observant Franciscans can be found in Clément Schmitt, 'La Réforme de l'Observance discutée au Concile de Bâle', *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, vol. 83 (1990) no. 3-4, pp. 369-404 and vol. 84 (1991), no. 1-2, pp. 3-50. This paper presents the arguments of the Conventual friar, François Futz, and the counter-arguments of the Observant Pierre Reginaldi on the appropriate form of Franciscan observance. The second part of the paper presents the Observant arguments including the utter rejection of all forms of property as incompatible with the Franciscan lifestyle.

should travel on foot wherever possible, preferably without shoes.¹ It is thus unlikely that a new entrant to the Observant branch of the Franciscan Order would wish to associate himself with the sort of opulence which La Marche describes, particularly when this opulence involved horses. And, whether or not the Collettans were Observants in the strict sense of the word, it seems improbable that they would have sanctioned such an ostentatious display.

What then is the function of this opening passage, which purports to be about Observant Franciscans, and yet is not, and which describes a scene of which both Observant Franciscans and Collettans would have disapproved? To the first question we could answer that the Collettans were a reformed Franciscan order, sometimes referred to as ‘observantes sub ministris’ or ‘observantes de communitate’ and that La Marche’s failure to recognize the subtleties of Franciscan administration does not detract from the image of austerity and submission which the phrase suggests and to which both Observants and Collettans aspired.² However, this austerity is utterly belied by the ostentation of the display which La Marche describes. Why, then, does he open his *Mémoires* with this scene, and why does he suggest that it is one which is to the greater glory of God?

One possible answer is that, despite Collette’s disapproval, Jacques de Bourbon really did enter Pontarlier in the splendour which La Marche describes and that the spectacle left a deep impression on the author. It should be noted that La Marche says that the offending retinue, complete with horses, followed ‘ung peu sur le loings’, and this may be evidence of de Bourbon’s desire not to mix the display of his secular power with that of his spiritual devotion. Again, it may be a detail introduced by La Marche to

¹ Max Courecuisse, *Tables Capitulaires des Frères Mineurs de l’Observance et des Récollets de Bretagne 1476-1780* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique, 1930), p. lxxviii. This is confirmed by Moorman (*History of the Franciscan Order*, p. 506), who cites the example of Christopher of Varese who, on encountering a convent in Poland which had too many possessions, disposed of most of them including the horse and cart, leaving the friars with only a donkey.

² John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, p. 496.

stress the separateness of the two elements and to suggest that the ostentation of the parade did not compromise the seriousness of the religious devotion. Such a message would be not less valid were this entire retinue to be, as Jacques de Bourbon's biographer Arthur Huart suggests, Olivier de La Marche's own fabrication. The phrase 'celle pompe humble et devote ordonnance', which La Marche uses to describe the display, finds its echo in the 'pompes seigneurieuses', which he condemns at the end of the account, yet the former sentence seems to be written in praise of Jacques de Bourbon, suggesting that 'pompes' are not inherently opposed to the devotion which La Marche says that he intends his opening scene to illustrate.¹ Indeed, La Marche's *Mémoires* are noted for the stress which they place on scenes of such 'pompe' and so it seems fitting that the author should set the stage for his *Mémoires* with a scene showing ostentation co-existing (though not intermingling) with the most austere articulation of spirituality in the mainstream Church.

The friars in La Marche's primal scene are Franciscans – specifically Observant Franciscans – but *cordeliers* appear elsewhere in the *Mémoires* without the author specifying which branch of the Order is meant.² More often than not, it will be a building belonging to the friars (rather a member of the community themselves) which appears, so that, for example, at Philippe le Bon's meeting with Frederick King of the Romans in Besançon, the duke lodges in the Franciscan friary.³ This is a fleeting reference, as are most of the other allusions to Franciscans in the *Mémoires*, but many of them share features which suggest that the mention of the order to which the house in

¹ La Marche, I, 197.

² Generally it was the Observant Friars who were referred to as *cordeliers* but the term was not consistently applied: Alain Boureau, 'Franciscan Piety and Voracity: Uses and Stratagems in the Hagiographic Pamphlet', in *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Roger Chartier, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 15-58 (p. 45).

³ La Marche, I, 271. Beaune and d'Arbaumont add (n. 3) that this was one of the oldest Franciscan foundations, dating back to St Francis's lifetime.

question belonged is not an incidental detail but one which serves to reinforce the thematic unity of the passages.

Et ung jour monseigneur le bastard de Dampierre, un beau, saichant et plaisant chevalier, venoit de l'abbaye sur sa mule, comme celuy à qui ne souvenoit de fortune, s'elle veilloit ou s'elle dormoit, et retournoit dedans la ville pardessous le chastel, où se saulva ledit conte [de Click]; et ainsi advint que les Allemans avoient afusté une coulevrine à chevalet celle part, droit à ung petit pont près du moulin; et, au passer ce pont, le cop de la pierre ferit le chevalier en la teste, et cheut tout mort devant les piedz de ladicte mule, et fut très grant dommaige de luy. Le corps fut emporté et enterré ès Cordeliers moult honnorablement, et l'enterrent et l'accompagnerent tous les princes et toute la noblesse de la court, et fit faire le duc son enterrement moult honnorablement. (La Marche, II, 44, editorial additions are my own).

This scene takes place in the midst of the siege of Luxemburg in 1443. The town had fallen to Philippe le Bon's army, but a garrison of German soldiers remained in the castle. The passage describes events which took place between the escape of the count of Gleichen (here, 'Click') from the besieged castle and its eventual surrender. Jean, Bastard of Dampierre, who appears only once before in the *Mémoires*, is the focal point of this somewhat unusual interlude. If horses are controversial creatures for Observant Friars, mules are equally incongruous mounts for 'beaux, saichants et plaisants' knights and indeed, as we have seen, are a more fitting form of transport for the Franciscans, in whose church the Bâtard is to be buried. In fact, mules appear in only three scenes in the *Mémoires*: this one, the primal scene where they accompany Jacques de Bourbon, and the description of the entry of the Seigneur de Ravenstein into the lists of the *pas de l'Arbre d'or*. This last scene, which will be examined at greater length in the following chapter, is one which picks up many of the motifs of the primal scene. Here too, the central figure enters on a litter and here too he is accompanied by a mule.¹ Mules, then,

¹ If, as La Marche suggests in this account, III, 129, the knight mounted on the mule was also the man who read Ravenstein's letter to the assembled company, then we must assume that Olivier de La Marche himself was riding the mule, as the account of the scene in the Turin manuscript names him as the person who gave the address (La Marche, IV, 117). However, it should be noted that one of the differences between these two accounts is that the mule is absent from the Turin manuscript. It should not, however, be thought that the mule has been introduced into the account in the *Mémoires* in order to echo the primal

are the companions of knights retiring from the world and, both in the *Mémoires* and in the wider context of society, they are associated with piety, particularly Franciscan piety. The Bâtard de Dampierre, on his way between the abbey and his death, cuts a figure with religious significance. But he is also, to some extent, a holy fool. Like Jacques de Lalaing, with whom he has been associated in his earlier mention in the *Mémoires*, and whose death had already occurred when La Marche wrote this passage, Jean de Dampierre dies because he does not take account of the threat posed by the ballistic weapons of his adversaries.¹ He does not do so because he is ‘comme celuy à qui ne souvenoit de fortune, s’elle veilloit ou s’elle dormoit’. He is in a world of his own, and the vocabulary used suggests the romantic state of contemplation, somewhere between sleep and waking, attributed to lovers in medieval literature and, by extension, to all those deep in thought.² The idea of the holy fool, the spiritual whose devotion results in a simplicity which is otherworldly, is not original to Franciscan thought but it plays an important role in Franciscan spirituality. St Francis is reputed to have performed a number of acts which fit into this stereotype of holy folly, such as breaking into French song spontaneously and appearing naked before a bishop in Assisi’s town

scene all the more closely, as it is also to be found in the separate account of ms Valenciennes, 776, fol. 12^v.

¹ The first, and only other mention of Jean de Dampierre is La Marche, II, 41, where he is amongst the young men who greet Philippe on his entry into Luxemburg: ‘dont estoit Jaques de Lalain, qui brusloit au feu de chaleureux desir, Philippot Copin, Meriadet, le bastard de Dampierre et moult d’autres’.

² This topos of the mounted knight so wrapped in his own contemplation that he is unaware of his surroundings appears in the *Chevalier de la Charette* (quoted in Marie-Luce Chênerie, *Le Chevalier errant dans les romans arthuriens en vers des XII^e et XIII^e siècles* (Geneva: Droz, 1986), p. 226) and in *Aucassin et Nicolette*, (2nd edn by Mario Roques (Paris, Champion, 1982), pp. 9-10). The latter instance is often regarded as a parody of the tradition. Still more satirical is the earlier instance of the topos in the work of the Occitan poet, Guillaume IX, suggesting that it was already regarded as a commonplace of romance in the twelfth century: ‘Farai un vers de dreyt nien:/ Non er de mi ni d’altra gen,/ Non er d’amor ni de joven./ Ni de ren au/ Qu’enans fo trobatz en durmen/ Sobre chevau’ *Les Chansons de Guillaume IX duc d’Aquitaine (1071-1127)*, ed. by Alfred Jenroy, 2nd edn (Paris: Champion, 1927), p. 6. Chênerie suggests that the topos itself may result from the tension between two opposing ideals of chivalry – the androcentric world of the warrior and the idealization of the woman who inspires his acts. The trance produced by love is akin to folly and so demonstrates the diminution of the hero’s powers by falling in love, but it also leads him to situations where his martial prowess can be proved, thus confirming his status as a warrior (*Le Chevalier errant*, pp. 451-58). In the context of the Burgundian fifteenth century it also appears in Georges Chastellain, *Œuvres* ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1971), III, 249-57, when Philippe le Bon, troubled after a quarrel with his son, rides off into the forest ‘ne savoit où’ and mistakes a river for a pathway in his distraction.

square.¹ His followers continuing this tradition and the thirteenth-century Franciscan poet and mystic Jacopone da Todi writes extolling holy madness.² It is therefore perhaps fitting that it is in the Franciscan convent that the Bâtard is buried. However, after his burial the action picks up where it left off, with the account of the eventual surrender of Luxemburg. The interlude suggesting religious humility and spiritual otherworldliness serves to punctuate what is essentially one narrative – that of the circumstances which persuaded the Germans inside the castle that they should surrender.

The same can be said of another incident in which the Franciscans feature. It occurs between two accounts of courtly combat, that of Philippe de Ternant and Galiot de Balthasin and the first in the cycle of Lalaing combats, against Jean de Bonniface.³ Following the return of Galiot de Balthasin to Milan, Philippe le Bon goes to Zeeland to exercise his judicial role:

Dont il advint que grans plainctes vindrent d'un escuyer de grant lignaige du pays, nommé Jehan de Dombourc, et le chargeoit on d'efforcemens, de battures, d'affolures de sergens et d'officiers, de rançonemens, de murdres et de composicions, et ordonna le duc qu'il fust prins. Mais quant il fist adverti que justice le cherchoit pour le prandre, il gaigna le clochier de l'eglise des Cordeliers en la ville de Middelbourg en Zeelande, et se fortiffia et avictailla avec cinq ou six de ses serviteurs, tellement qu'il le

¹ Saint Bonaventure's *Legenda maior S Francisci Assisiensis* (X, ii) attributes the characteristic of distraction displayed here by Jean de Dampierre to St Francis: 'Mens quidem ipsius in caelestibus fixa splendoribus, varientales non senseret locorum nec temporum nec occurrentium personarum. Quod ipsi accidisse sociorum eius experientis multiplex comprobavit.' (this quotation taken from the 1941 Florence edition published by the Collegii S. Bonaventurae). Bonaventure goes on to recount an incident in which Francis passed through a town where everybody greeted him and yet he remained in a trance.

² 'Senno me pare e cortesia – empazier per la bel Messia./ Ello me sa si grande sapere – a chi par Dio vol empazire./ en Parige non se vidde – ancor si gran filosofia./ Chi per Gesù va empazato, – par afflitto e tribulato./ ma è maestro conventato – en natura e teologica./ Chi per Cristo ne va pazo, – a la gente si par matto./ chi non ha provato el fatto – pare che sia fuor de la via/ Chi vol entrare en questa scuola – troverà dottrina nova./ la pazia, chi non la prova, – già non sa que ben se sia./ Chi vol entrar en questa danza, – trova amor d'esmesuranza./ cento di de perdonanza – a chi li duce villania.' 'It seems to me good sense and courtesy to go mad for the lovely Savior. It seems to me great wisdom to go mad for God. Paris has never seen such a great philosophy. He who is mad for Jesus seems afflicted and disturbed, but he is a master with a doctorate in science and theology. He who is mad for Christ seems so crazy to people; whoever has never had the experience thinks him disorientated. He who wants to go to this school will find a new doctrine; madness, those who have not experienced it don't know how good it is. He who wants to join in this dance will find limitless love, a hundred days of pardon for him who speaks evil.' *Lauda*, lxxxiv, ll. 1-11, quoted in George Terhune Peck, *The Fool of God, Jacopone da Todi* (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1980), the translation is Peck's.

³ La Marche, II, 79-80.

convint assieger, et se tint trois jours, combien que, pour l'honneur de l'eglise, il ne fut assailli ne n'y fut tiré ung cop d'arbaleste ne autrement. Et me souviens que je veiz une nonnain venir devers ledit Jehan de Dombourc, qui par plusieurs fois crioit à son frere qu'il se fist tuer plus tost en soi deffendant, que de faire telle honte à son lignaige que de cheoir en main du bourreau. Toutefois ledit de Dombourc se rendit à la voulenté du prince, et fut son procès fait, et finalement il eut la teste tranchée sur le marché dudit Middelbourg; mais, à la requeste et poursuytte de ladicte religieuse, sa seur, le corps luy fut delivré et enterré en terre sainte. Moulte d'autres justices fit faire le bon duc en son pays de Zeelande. [...] [A]u partir de Bergues le Soin, le duc print dix ou douze de ses privez, et en assez petite compaignie, sans soy faire congnoistre, alla faire un pelerinaige de Nostre Dame d'Ais en Allemagne. Et durant ce temps ceulx de son conseil rompirent le tinel de la salle, et la grant mangeaille et extremes despense qui se faisoit journellement en l'hostel du duc de Bourgoingne, et furent mis tous ceulx de celle court à gaiges et à argent, et fut lors que Michaut le retoricien dist que le gigot de la court estoit rompu. (La Marche, II, 79-80)

Immediately after this passage, we find an account of another Milanese knight, Jean de Bonniface, arriving in the Burgundian court in the search of an opponent to face in single combat. Once again, then, the presence of the Franciscans is an interruption in the action before it returns to the same theme. However, this time, the role of the Franciscans – and indeed that of the Burgundian court – is more equivocal. Jean de Dombourc cannot be viewed as the saintly figure that we can see in Jean de Dampierre, and the role of the Franciscans in giving him sanctuary cannot, therefore, be compared to that of the friars in Luxemburg who provided a grave for the bâtard. Philippe le Bon, although the epithet attached to him may be formulaic, seems to be portrayed in a favourable light; his justice is tempered with mercy when he hands the body of the executed man over to his sister, and his righteousness is underlined by his unostentatious departure on pilgrimage following the judgement.¹ The same cannot be said of the rest of Philippe's court, deprived of their usual luxurious standard of living by the absence of their master and apparently discontent with this deprivation, nor is the position of de Dombourc's sister unequivocal. The narrator here, however, does not provide his reader with any sort of moral signposts. The only adjectives used in the

¹ The extent to which the use of 'bon' to designate Philippe was formulaic is explored in H. Nelis, 'Origine de l'appellation: Philippe le "Bon"', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, 12 (1933), 145-54.

account of Jean de Dombourc's flight and subsequent judgement are 'bon', qualifying Philippe and 'grant', describing both the volume of complaints against de Dombourc and the nobility of his ancestry. In the latter case there is nothing to indicate whether this is regarded as something which should count in his favour or whether it is regarded as aggravating the seriousness of his crimes. Similarly, all that La Marche says on the consumption in the Burgundian court was that it was great, without making explicit his attitude to this consumption, or to its cessation.

As with the inclusion of the horses in the description of Jacques de Bourbon the reformed Franciscan, it is not immediately clear what we are to make of the de Dombourc episode. Structurally it fulfils the same role as the death of Jean de Dampierre – it is an interruption in an ongoing account of combat, although the combat in question is war in the case of Jean de Dampierre and court combat in that of Jean de Dombourc. In both cases La Marche seems to be opening his account to the possibility of spiritual significance and the presence of the Franciscans reminds his readers of the opening scene, where the Order was explicitly implicated in the author's aim of writing to the glory of God. In all three cases there appears to be a clash – whether explicitly stated or not – between the spirituality of the Franciscans and the realities of the world, be they the possibility of sudden death or the ostentation of Jacques de Bourbon's court or that of Philippe le Bon. However, as with the case of Jacques de Bourbon, these contrary impulses seem to coexist rather than come into open conflict. The implication therefore appears to be that spirituality is not something which is separate from the world but which intervenes in the midst of events.

Another scene in which the Franciscans play a similar role is in La Marche's account of the *Pas de la fontaine des pleurs*, held by Jacques de Lalaing on the Île de St-Laurent in Chalon-sur-Saône and this is paradoxical as the friars are entirely absent from the events described. At the beginning of his account of the *pas d'armes* La

Marche spends a considerable amount of time setting out the topography of the *pas*, which took place on an island to which the combatants would cross at the beginning of each encounter, Jacques de Lalaing in a boat and his opponent over the bridge.¹ Before telling his readers this, La Marche focuses on the field of combat itself, saying that ‘En celle ysle avoit une moult belle plaine, à maniere d’ung prel, où, à present, est l’eglise des Cordelliers de l’observance, qui deppuis y a esté ediffiée.’ The *pas d’armes*, which will be examined at greater length in the following chapter, was a form of combat defined by the fact that it was inscribed within a narrative framework, often borrowing motifs from romance, which provided the justification for the confrontation. Within this framework objects are invested with symbolic meaning; a meaning peculiar to the *pas d’armes*, which ends with the closure of the *pas*. The *pas d’armes*, therefore, presents a closed system of signifiers, whose relevance only extends as long as the *pas* itself, in this case for a year from November 1449.² One example of this can be seen in the colours of the three shields in the *fontaine des pleurs*. White, black and purple were not ordinarily associated with axe, lance and sword, but within the narrative framework of the *pas d’armes* they come to have this meaning, so that not only do combatants choose their weapon by touching shields in these colours, but Jacques de Lalaing’s clothing at the resultant confrontations reflects this choice. This in turn stems from another element of closure in the *pas*; the removal of Jacques de Lalaing’s identity. Instead of appearing as himself, dressed, as many of his opponents were, in his heraldic coat of arms, he took the name of the ‘knight of the fountain of tears’ and entered the lists wearing clothes the same colour as the shield which his opponent had touched to decide the form of the combat. Frequently participants in *pas d’armes* took on aliases in this way, appearing

¹ La Marche, II, 145-47.

² An analysis of such events, viewed in terms of their ludic aspect can be found in J. Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), especially Chapter 1, ‘Nature and Significance of Play as a Cultural Phenomenon’, pp. 1-27. For comments on similar phenomena considered as ritual, see Victor Turner, ‘Liminality and Communitas’ in *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), pp. 94-130.

disguised (although one wonders how thinly) as heroes of Arthurian romance or with titles such as 'the unknown knight'.¹ Once again, when the *pas* ended, so too did the alias, and a *pas d'armes* often terminated, like a masked ball, with the revelation of the participants' true identities.

However, the world of the *pas d'armes* was not hermetically sealed, and various elements of the iconography which surrounded the *Pas de la fontaine des pleurs* had significance beyond the parameters defined by the *pas*. This was a two-way process, with items already invested with iconographic significance in the outside world appearing in the *pas* (including a statue of the Madonna and Child and one of a unicorn), and those same statues, which had gained further iconographic resonances by their association with the *pas d'armes* being reintegrated into a wider spiritual context when they were taken to Notre-Dame de Boulogne and displayed in the Duke of Burgundy's oratory there.² La Marche's reference to the subsequent foundation of the Franciscan house on the ground on which the *pas d'armes* took place reinforces this message of the possible transfer of spiritual significance between the closed world of the *pas d'armes* and the outside. Of all the accounts of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs*,

¹ An example of this can be seen in the *Pas de l'arbre Charlemagne*, of 1449 when the *entrepreneur*, Jehan de Saint Pol, appeared wearing the colours of Lancelot.

² The figure of the Madonna and Child, of course, draws its meaning from the iconography of Christian belief but its combination with other elements of the iconography of the *pas* gives it special meaning. The unicorn was reputed to be an aggressive beast, which could only be tamed by the presence of a virgin and its appearance, in conjunction with the weeping lady and the Virgin and Child, can be interpreted as symbolising virginity in the *pas*. This legend is discussed by Isidore of Seville, in his *Etymologiarum libri XX*. For an examination of the association of the unicorn specifically with the Virgin Mary, see Masami Okubo, 'Encore la licorne' in Matsubara and others, *Les Animaux dans la littérature*, (Tokyo: Keio University Press, 1997), pp. 255-63. It should also be noted that the unicorn has associations with sacrifice, as its fascination with virgins leads, in the medieval bestiary, to its being captured and killed and this may be linked to the suffering of the weeping woman whose statue also appeared in the iconography of the *pas d'armes*. She, in combination with the Virgin, is reminiscent of the *mater dolorosa*. In this context it is worth noting that Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy's initial description in the *Épître* conflates the figures of the Virgin and the weeping woman and has a statue of Mary weeping, together with that of the unicorn. Jean Le Fèvre de Saint Rémy, *Épître*, ed. by François Morand, *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*, 221 (1884), 178-239. Beyond the immediate context of the *pas d'armes*, the virginal symbolism pointed to the challenger, Jacques de Lalaing's special devotion to the Virgin Mary, a devotion stressed by his biographers. For example in the *Livre des Faits*, (*Livre des faits du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalaing*, George Chastellain, *Œuvres*, ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Brussels: Heussner, 1863-66; repr. Geneva, Slatkine, 1971), VIII pp. 1-259) Jacques de Lalaing's first action on leaving home is to have a mass held before an image of the virgin (p. 26).

La Marche's is the only one to mention this subsequent use of the terrain on which the combat was fought. This is explicable by the fact that in Olivier de La Marche's *Mémoires*, alone of all the accounts of the *pas*, Franciscans have become symbolic of the coexistence of spirituality and everyday life. From their first appearance, they have been used as shorthand for spirituality and in the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* too La Marche makes them stand for a wider religious experience, beyond the iconography of the *pas*.

'Je suis entré dans l'observance du tresrenommé saint François'

Why should Franciscans have acquired this status in La Marche's *Mémoires*? It is not sufficient to say that La Marche is merely the neutral reporter of historical facts in which Franciscans feature large, because he alone among the historians of the Burgundian court singles out Franciscans. His is the only account of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* to mention the subsequent Franciscan connection and he is the only reporter of the Battle of Montlehéry that I have encountered who claims that news of the French retreat was broken by 'ung cordelier du villaige'. (La Marche, III, 13) As we have seen, the specification of Franciscan devotion often seems incidental to the anecdotes which La Marche recounts, and it would be very easy to imagine the same anecdotes without the allusion to the Franciscan Order. However, the allusions have a thematic unity which suggests that there is more to them than mere chance. And indeed La Marche's other works demonstrate a special affection on the part of the author for the Franciscan Order, particularly the Observant branch of it.

In 1454, Olivier de La Marche was one of a Burgundian delegation sent to the court of Charles d'Orléans in Nevers to put on a play as part of Philippe le Bon's attempt to secure a marriage between his son Charles and the daughter of the duke of Bourbon, for which Charles d'Orléans was acting as an intermediary. During this stay,

La Marche contributed a poem to the duke of Orléans's collection, which is reproduced in the poet's collected works:

Pour amours des dames de France,
Je suis entré en l'observance
Du tresrenommé saint François,
Pour cuidier trouver une fois
La douce voye d'alegence.

Saint suis de corde de Souffrance
Soubz haire d'Aigre Desirance,
Plus qu'en mon Dieu ne me congnoiz;
Pour amours [des dames de France,
Je suis entré en l'observance.]

Soubrement vis de ma Plaisance,
Et june ce que Desir pense,
Mandiant par tout ou je vois,
Je veille a conter, par mes dois,
Les maux que m'a fait Esperance,
Pour amours [des dames de France!]¹

Like many of the pieces appearing in Charles d'Orléans's collection this is an allegorical poem which starts from a single conceit: the service of love is like the service of the strictest religious observance, and builds on this with further comparisons between the two states. However, it is interesting to see that La Marche adopts the persona of an Observant Franciscan friar: the very group which plays such a prominent role in his *Mémoires*. In the Champion edition of Charles d'Orléans's poems, this *rondeau* by La Marche is the first in a series of poems by Charles, members of his entourage and the Burgundian party which explore the allegory of Franciscan Observance and the service of love.² It could thus seem that La Marche introduced this subject to Charles's circle on this occasion. However, this is not the way in which the cycle is conventionally read. A number of years earlier, in 1450, Charles had written a *ballade* 'On parle de religion', in which he expresses his own devotion to the Observant

¹ Charles d'Orléans, *Poésies*, ed. by Pierre Champion, 2 vols (Paris: Champion, 1923-24), II, 350. Additions are editorial.

² Charles d'Orléans, *Poésies*, II, 350-56.

Franciscan movement.¹ In another poem, written around the same time as that of La Marche, the duke laments the fact that he has subsequently fallen away from this devotion. This poem, ‘Des amoureux de l’observance/ Dont j’ay esté ou temps passé’, follows La Marche’s in Champion’s edition, which is based on the editor’s reading of the order in which the poems in Charles d’Orléans’s personal manuscript were written. However, this is a contentious issue because Charles d’Orléans’s poem precedes that of La Marche in the duke’s partly autograph manuscript, and later scholars have suggested that the order of composition should be reversed. Nevertheless, I believe that there are arguments for placing La Marche’s poem earlier in the sequence than that of Charles d’Orléans and thus for considering La Marche to be responsible for the introduction of the Franciscan theme to the court at Nevers in 1454.

Pierre Champion bases his reading of Charles d’Orléans’s personal manuscript, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fonds français, 25458, on palaeographical evidence. Champion argued that initially poems had been grouped according to their form, with *ballades* at the beginning of the volume, *chansons* in the middle and *rondeaux*, which made up the vast majority of the poet’s later work, at the end, and that initially spaces were left blank above the poems for the addition of music (although it is doubtful whether music was ever composed for Charles’s poems).² In 1455, new sheets of vellum were added to the duke’s book. In the period before this happened, space had been running short and those parts of leaves which had previously been left blank were now filled with *rondeaux*. Champion concluded that Charles had realized that he would soon have to use the blank top halves of pages and so began by copying a number of poems into the top and bottom of the remaining pages (pp. 428-482) of the manuscript before returning to the blanks at the top of pages on which *rondeaux* appeared (pp. 318-

¹ Charles d’Orléans, *Poésies*, I, 158-9.

² Pierre Champion, *Le Manuscrit autographe des poésies de Charles d’Orléans* (Paris: Champion, 1907; repr. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1975).

428). When these were exhausted, he turned his attention to those pages which had previously been consecrated to other forms of poetry and copied *rondeaux* onto the blank top halves of these too (pp. 247-298). Finally he acquired his new pages and continued, copying poems into the book top and bottom (pp. 483-537). George O. S. Darby, writing in reply to Champion's argument, suggested a slight revision to this schedule, arguing that new pages were used in two batches. In Darby's reading, the manuscript was completed to the end using only the bottom of pages (pp. 318-428) and then new *rondeaux* were copied into spaces above other *rondeaux* (pp. 318-428 then pp. 293-298). When this was done, *rondeaux* were copied into new pages of the manuscript, (pp. 429-452) before pages previously consecrated to *chansons* were used for *rondeaux* (pp. 247-291). After these had been exhausted, copying continued onto both halves of the remaining pages in the manuscript (pp. 453-537).¹ The two poems in question appear on the fault lines of this analysis: La Marche's poem is on the top of page 435 and Charles d'Orléans's on the top of page 424. Thus Champion would argue that La Marche's poem was composed before the duke's, and Darby would reverse the order of composition.

Daniel Poirion, revisiting this already complex scenario, added a further level of complexity when he commented that, while Darby's reading was clearly convincing, it did not explain all the features of the manuscript. Some of the poems occupying the top half of leaves containing an earlier poem had clearly been written with that space in mind and picked up themes in the poem already on the page.² Moreover, Poirion pointed out, the order in which the poems were copied into the manuscript was not necessarily the order in which they were composed. He suggested that poet and

¹ George O. S. Darby 'Observations on the Chronology of Charles d'Orléans' *Rondeaux*', *The Romanic Review*, 34 (1943), 3-17. Darby's argument is obscured slightly by the fact that he uses the terms 'page' and 'folio' interchangeably and, in his conclusions, gives folio references. BnF, f. fr. 25458 is a paginated manuscript and both Darby and Champion make use of this pagination.

² Daniel Poirion, *Le Poète et le prince: L'Évolution du lyrisme courtois de Guillaume de Machaut à Charles d'Orléans* (Grenoble: Allier, 1965).

manuscript may have been separated for periods when the duke was away from his court in Blois. Composition did not necessarily cease at these times, and poems may not have retained their order of composition when they entered the manuscript. The gathering at Nevers in 1454 may well be a case in point. It seems that a number of poems were composed on the theme of the Cordeliers de l'Observance: at least eight found their way into the duke's manuscript. However, as Darby points out, when 'Des amoureux de l'observance/ Dont j'ay esté ou temps passé' was copied onto page 424 of ms f fr 25458 there was not enough space to accommodate the entire sequence.¹ I believe, therefore, that the duke selected what he felt to be the best of the poems from the sequence written in Nevers, a poem which, unlike many of the others in the sequence can stand alone without needing the context of other poems to illuminate the debate. If an intertext were needed, the 1450 *ballade* 'On parle de religion' could serve. That describes the poet's former devotion to the Observance, from which he now claims old age has obliged him to fall away. If one restores 'Des amoureux de l'observance/ Dont j'ay esté ou temps passé' to the context of the poems written in 1454, however, it seems logical to place it after the poems by La Marche, Chastelain and Vaillant, which describe the suffering of lovers submitted to strict conditions but before those of Boucicault, which criticize the poet for falling away from the observance and lead to a debate between d'Orléans and Boucicault in which each borrows the vocabulary of the

¹ George O. S. Darby 'Observations on the Chronology of Charles d'Orléans' *Rondeaux*', p. 9. Because of Darby's uncertainty as to what constitutes a 'folio', it is difficult to determine precisely how much space was left. He claims that there were 'three folios' left blank but, if he is right in saying that the manuscript at the time extended to p. 428 this is either five pages or two folios and a side. As the bottom halves of those pages had already been filled, according to Darby's reconstruction, there was only space for five more poems and not for the entire sequence of eight which make up the 'amoureux de l'observance' cycle.

other to justify his position.¹ In this reading Charles d'Orléans is indeed the author of the first poem of 1450, but it is La Marche who reintroduces the theme in 1454. La Marche had visited the court at Blois previously, and may have been aware of d'Orléans's previous *ballade* on the subject, but this was not necessarily the case for La Marche had sufficient interest in Franciscan spirituality to arrive at the theme independently. This seems all the more likely when we realize that, although the sequence is normally referred to as that of the 'amoureux de l'observance', the first two poems, those of La Marche and Chastelain, do not make use of this terminology. La Marche refers specifically to 'l'observance du tresrenommé saint François' and compares this service to that of love, while Chastelain makes barely any reference to love, except as one of the rewards, together with 'Onneur' and 'Fortune', which will be gained by 'Les serviteurs submis à l'observance'. It is only with the contribution of Vaillant, who often wrote in Charles's book, that the phrase 'amoureux de l'observance' is introduced.

La Marche is, therefore not simply picking up the terminology of his host when he contributes his *rondeau* on the Observance to Charles d'Orléans's book. His devotion to the Observant Friars may be observed in other works by the author. 'S'il y a bien, il vient du sens et art/ Du bon prescheur frère Olivier Maillard' writes La Marche

¹ So my reading of the sequence is as follows:

Title	Author	Champion p.	25458 p.
On parle de religion	Orléans	158/9	226
Pour amours des dames de France	La Marche	350	434
Les serviteurs submis a l'observance	Chastelain	350/1	435
Des amoureux de l'observance/ Je suis le plus subgiet de France	Vaillant	351/2	434
Des amoureux de l'observance/ Dont j'ay esté ou temps passé	Orléans	425	424
Assez ne m'en peuz merveiller	Bouciquault	343/4	437
Ce n'est pas par ypocrisie	Orléans	354	437
Monstrer on doit qu'il en desplaise	Bouciquault	355	438
A quiconque plaise ou desplaise	Orléans	355/6	438

at the end of his *Strophes sur la Noël*.¹ Olivier Maillard was a leading Observant Franciscan: he was Vicar General of the Transalpine provinces 1487-1502 and one of the best-known preachers of his age, both to his contemporaries and to those who followed him.² Many of his sermons survive in Latin, although he certainly preached in French.³ A lesser number of these vernacular sermons survive, together with some devotional works, mainly in French.⁴ Maillard was an active preacher in both France and the Burgundian Netherlands and moved in high political circles in both *milieux*. He was Charles VIII's confessor and in 1500 preached before the Burgundian court in Bruges. The point is important because of the temptation to regard the Observants, with their devotion to absolute poverty, as antithetical to the ruling classes. This was certainly true of their predecessors, the Spiritual Franciscans, but not of the Observants.⁵ It seems that the Observants were perceived as being in confrontation with the abuses of

¹ Olivier de La Marche, *Strophes sur la Noël*, ed. with an introduction by Maria Laura Arcangeli Marenzi ([Rouen]: [n.p.], [n.d., but sometime after 1968 (date of last work referred to in footnotes)]) There is another edition of this work in the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, '*Strophes de Noël* composées par Olivier de la Marche, d'après un sermon d'Olivier Maillard, et publiées sur le manuscrit original inédit, avec introduction et notes par le Marquis de Granges de Surgères', (Nantes: impr. de V. Forest et M. Grimaud, 1882), however, the Bibliothèque was unable to locate this edition when I requested it.

² *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique contenant l'exposé des doctrines de la théologie catholique, leurs preuves et leur histoire*, 15 vols (Paris: Letouzey, 1899-1950) XI, cols 995-97, Alexandre Samouillan, *Olivier Maillard: Sa Prédication et son temps* (Toulouse: Édouard Privat; Paris: Ernest Thorin, 1891).

³ Alexandre Samouillan, *Olivier Maillard: Sa Prédication et son temps*, p. 60 points out that there are passages in the Latin sermons where Maillard cites the Bible in Latin and then says either that he's going to explain or that anyone who has a Bible in French should look up the relevant passages. This suggests that the majority of the sermon was in French, as the explanation was to be in a language that they could understand.

⁴ The French sermons, and some poems, are reproduced in Olivier Maillard, *Œuvres françaises: Sermons et poésies* ed. by Arthur Borderie (Nantes, 1877; repr. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1968). Maillard was also the author of a work – or maybe works, the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* lists several similar titles under separate headings and I have only been able to consult one of them – meditating on the Mass and the Passion of Christ and a Confessional manual for laypeople based around the Ten Commandments. The editions consulted in preparing this chapter were *Sensuit le mystère de la messe. Conforme et correspondant à la douloureuse passion de nostre benoist saulueur et redempteur ihesu crist necessaire a tous ceulx et celles qui deuotement veullent ouyr ladite messe composee par le beau pere reuerant oliuier maillard des freres mineurs De lobseruance* (Paris: Veusve feu Jehan Trepperel et Jehan Jehannot, [n.d. – but the text says that it was written in 1499]) and *La confession de frere Oliuier Maillard de l'ordre des freres mineurs* (Paris: Veusve feu Jehan Trepperel & Jehan Jehannot, [n.d.])

⁵ Duncan B. Nimmo, in 'The Franciscan Regular Observance. The Culmination of Medieval Franciscan Reform', in *Reformbemühungen und Observanzbestrebungen im spätmittelalterlichen Ordenswesen*, pp. 189-205, argues that the tradition of the Spiritual Franciscans was passed down more or less unbroken to the Observants.

the Conventuals rather than with the luxurious lifestyles of society as a whole.¹ This is not to say that Maillard and his colleagues did not have criticisms to make of worldly opulence, but we should beware of seeing this, and their muscular style of preaching, as indicative of a ‘popular piety’ which is incompatible with the court circles in which La Marche moved.² In fact, the Observants seem to have been popular in Burgundy as a whole and in both the Habsburg and Valois ducal houses. La Marche writes of a mass movement within the court of Philippe le Bon, sometime in the mid-1450s, to join the Observants:

En ce temps, plusieurs nobles hommes et femmes de l'hostel du duc se rendirent en l'observance; et nommement Anthoine de Saint Symon, Anthoine de Sailly, Jehannin d'Or et plusieurs aultres, qui menerent moult belle et sainte vie. (La Marche, II, 398)

Later, Margaret of York was a patron of the Observant Franciscans, supporting them in their struggle against the Conventuals in Namur in 1482 and, as this was the year in which the first Observant house was founded in England, it seems that she had come to this devotion after her marriage in 1468.³ Maximilian too was a patron of the Observants. It is, therefore, not out of keeping with La Marche's status in the Burgundian court that he should attribute particular significance to Maillard and his Order.

If the rubrication of La Marche's *Strophes de Noël* is correct, this devotion went so far as to lead the author to set one of Maillard's sermons in verse. Unfortunately, the sermon in question does not appear to have survived, but La Marche's poem shares

¹ Indeed, Bernard Chevalier, in ‘Olivier Maillard et la réforme des cordeliers (1482-1502)’, *Revue d'histoire de l'église de France*, 65 (1979), 25-39 argues that ‘les princes qui aiment tous les Mendians, chérissent particulièrement ces Franciscains qui se veulent totalement pauvres, ces humbles frères qui vont par les chemins à pied pour prêcher hardiment, ces pénitents qui restaurent la vie cloîtrée; sans doute parce que ces religieux leur offrent dans l'ordre des valeurs une image exactement inversée de celle que leur impose leur propre état social.’

² Klaus Schreiner, in ‘Laienfrömmigkeit – Frömmigkeit von Eliten oder Frömmigkeit des Volkes? Zur sozialen Verfaßtheit laikaler Frömmigkeitspraxis im späten Mittelalter’ in *Laienfrömmigkeit im späten Mittelalter: Formen, Funktionen, politisch-soziale Zusammenhänge*, ed. by Klaus Schreiner (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1992), pp. 1-78, argues that the piety of the lay people did not differ as much from that of the elite, whether social or religious, as is commonly thought.

³ John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, pp. 490-91.

some themes with some of Maillard's surviving sermons.¹ The poem was written around 1497, when La Marche was Philippe le Beau's tutor, and, taken with the poem written in Nevers in 1454, it suggests an interest in the reformed Franciscan movement lasting over forty years: nearly the entire period that the author was working on his *Mémoires*. Is it possible that La Marche's interest was more than that of a layman? Certainly he was no friar, his two marriages, openly avowed, demonstrate that he had not made a vow of chastity. However, the Franciscan Order had, from its inception, offered the possibility of lay participation through its Tertiary Order. This was open to married people living in society who engaged to abide by certain rules such as abstaining from sexual intercourse or dancing during Holy Week. Jacques de Bourbon, in La Marche's primal scene, enters the Franciscans as a tertiary 'car encoires vivoit la Royne, sa femme', becoming a friar only after her demise.² Given La Marche's sustained interest in the Franciscans, it is plausible to suggest that he may well have been one himself.

As we saw above, La Marche writes that many members of Philippe le Bon's household joined the Observants in the mid 1450s, the period during which La Marche appears to have become active as a writer and in which he contributed his poem on the Observance to Charles d'Orléans's book. Although La Marche does not say so explicitly, it is likely that many of these men and women joined the Tertiary Order.³ La

¹ The *Strophes sur Noël* concentrate heavily on the image of the infant Jesus suckling at his mother's breast, an image which has significance for Maillard, who argues that women who refuse to suckle their children are selfish and links this to Jesus's humanity: 'Lac ergo significat humanitate christi coctaz in cruce', *Diuini eloquij preconis celeberrimi fratris Oliuerij Maillardi ordinis minorum professoris Sermones de aduentu: declamati Parisius in ecclesia sancti Johannis in grauia* ([n.p.]: Jehan Petit, [n.d.]), fol. 64^r. However, the significance of this coincidence should not be overstressed, for Maillard borrowed many of the themes of his sermons, and sometimes whole sentences, from other preachers and sources: D. H. Carnahan, 'Some Sources of Olivier Maillard's Sermon on the Passion', *The Romanic Review*, 7 (1916), 144-69.

² La Marche, I, 193.

³ Anthoine de Saint-Simon may be an exception to this as La Marche says of him that he 'laissa le monde', La Marche, II, 12. However, I think it is unlikely that the large numbers of men and women whom La Marche describes joining the Observants would all have retreated from their lives in court. La Marche appears to regard Anthoine de Saint-Simon's entry into the Observants as particularly significant,

Marche is, as we have seen, not beyond giving accounts in his *Mémoires* of events in which he had a role without drawing his readers' attention to that fact. It is, therefore, possible that the author was amongst the men and women that he describes in his *Mémoires* as joining the Observants. However, there is little documentary evidence to support this supposition. Those associated with the Franciscan Order aspired to the highest honour that the Order could bestow: to be buried in a Franciscan habit, which was believed to confer special favour on the deceased. Olivier de La Marche's will, dated 8 October 1501, survives and includes complicated directions for the disposal of his mortal remains.¹ La Marche stipulates that his body is to be placed in the church of Saint-Jacques-sur-Coudenberg in Brussels and that

combien qu'il veuille estre enterré audit lieu de St-Jacques; toutes voyes pour ce qu'il a chappelle en Bourgogne où ses prédécesseurs, seigneurs de la Marche en Bresse, sont enterrés, il a ordonné et ordonne pour leur faire complaisance que luy trespasé, son cœur soit mis en un coffret de plomb et porté en Bourgogne en sa dite chapelle qui est située auprès de la Marche en un lieu appellé Villersgaudin, et veut son dit cœur estre mis devant le grant autel de la dite chapelle en façon que il puisse faire marchepied au prestre qui dira la messe.

He specifies the poem which is to be inscribed on the stone placed over his heart and the ritual that is to accompany its burial. The heart is to be carried by 'douze pauvres hommes revestus de noir', and La Marche's heirs should pay for a *Salve Regina* to be sung in his memory in the chapel once a week in perpetuity on the day of the week on which the Annunciation fell that year.² Devotion to the Virgin Mary, expressed through the *Salve Regina* or the celebration of the Annunciation, were not particular features of Franciscan worship, although both were incorporated into it. The church of Saint-

for twice in the course of his *Mémoires* he anticipates this development and promises to give his readers the details of it: La Marche, II, 12; II, 50.

¹ Henri Stein, *Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon* (Paris: Picard, 1888), pp. 198-203.

² This practice of showing devotion to a particular holy day by celebrating the day of the week on which it fell seems to have been fairly common in the fifteenth century. Commynes reports that Louis XI adopted it, celebrating the day on which Holy Innocents fell (in the year in question on a Wednesday). Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*, ed. by Joseph Calmette and G. Durville, 3 vols (Paris: Champion, 1924-25), II, 57.

Jacques-sur-Coudenberg was an Augustinian foundation and was associated with a lay *confrérie* for both sexes, founded by the provost Théodore de Lembeek in 1388 to promote the cult of the relic of the Cross that the church had acquired.¹ This lay *confrérie* was very popular amongst the nobles of the court in Brussels, but the extent of La Marche's involvement remains unclear. On the one hand, both he and his wife, Isabeau de Machefoin, made a number of donations to the church and both were buried in front of the altar of St Cross in the church.² On the other, neither appears in the register of the members of the *confrérie*. This omission has led Henri Stein to question whether the records of membership are accurate.³ However, the list of members which we have dates from October 1462, forty years before La Marche's death and almost twenty years prior to his marriage to Isabeau de Machefoin.⁴ It is thus perfectly possible that the couple, who, as we have seen, joined at least one other such Brussels institution together, discovered this as a common interest in later life. The record of members of the *confrérie* does not appear to have been kept up to date. There are a few additions in a different hand, but none of the pages, which list members by their forenames in alphabetical order, have been filled. The existence of another volume, dating from the first years of the seventeenth century, demonstrates that it would have been possible to

¹ The Latin document founding the *confrérie* is in the Archives Générales du Royaume de Belgique, Archives Ecclésiastiques 6546, fols 1-2^r. A translation in Dutch dated 20th April 1396 is to be found in Archives Ecclésiastiques 6908.

² Details of the bequests made by the couple to the church can be found in La Marche, IV, p. lxxxix, n. 1. Olivier de La Marche appears in the necrology of Saint-Jacques-sur-Coudenberg (Archives Générales du Royaume de Belgique, Archives Ecclésiastiques, 6906 (formerly cart & mss 733^a and listed by Stein as such) fols 1-66^v (fol. 5^v) under 1st February: 'Obijt oliuier de lamarse et est sepultus in choro *beatæ* marie *virginis* sub *tumba* ante altare *sancta* crucis'. It is not clear whether his wife, Isabeau de Machefoin, who died on 11th November 1510 is the woman, Elizabeth [surname illegible] listed in the same necrology under 7th November as 'uxor Oliuieri de lamaertse [...] est sepulta apud eum in choro *beatæ* marie *virgnis* sub *tumba* altus *santa* crucis' (fol. 54^r). Certainly Isabeau de Machefoin was buried with her husband in front of the altar, as their joint epitaph attests.

³ Henri Stein, *Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, p. 95, n. 4.

⁴ Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 21779 (formerly of the Archives Générales du Royaume), *Dit sijn de brueders ende de susters vanden heilechen cruce op couwenberch end dit boec was ghesaeuen Jnt Jaer ons heren m. CCCC. end. lxii. opten . xii^{ste} dach van October End de namen veruolghen de elc na sinen name na den .A.B.C.* Stein dates the marriage of La Marche and Isabeau de Machefoin to shortly before 1488 (*Olivier de la Marche: Historien, poète et diplomate bourguignon*, pp. 84, 184-85).

do so, had records been made in a single book.¹ The absence of La Marche's name from the records of the *confrérie* does not mean that he was not a member, nor does it necessarily mean that he has been omitted from a list which may only ever have been intended to represent the membership at a given point in time. However, even if it could be proved that, as seems likely, the writer was a member of the fellowship, this would throw little light on the extent of his Franciscan devotion. The *confrérie* of Saint-Jacques-sur-Coudenberg was, of course, a religious foundation, but its principal concerns were to provide its members with a decent burial, and to organize the annual parade in honour of the church's relic. There is nothing in the documents detailing the obligations of the members which resembles the traditional religious rule, and it seems most unlikely that membership of the *confrérie* would have been considered as in any way conflicting with adherence to the Franciscan tertiary order.²

The most that can be said, therefore, is that the Franciscan Observant movement plays an important role in La Marche's *Mémoires*, and in others of his writings but it is impossible to measure the extent of its role in his life. Certainly La Marche was not averse to portraying himself as a member of a religious order; manuscript 2868 of the fonds français of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, the presentation copy of the 1488 Book One of the *Mémoires* whose production La Marche may have supervised closely, opens with a half-page illustration showing the author presenting his work to his young charge. La Marche is depicted kneeling before his prince, surrounded by the splendour of the ducal court, and accompanied by a large dog. Alone amongst the company, he is bareheaded and wears the habit of a monk, a large rosary hanging from his belt. The habit which he wears is an unusual one, black, trimmed with what appears to be red fur, and I have not been able to identify the order to which it belongs. The fact

¹ Archives Générales du Royaume de Belgique, Archives Ecclésiastiques, 6907.

² Indeed, Philippe Ariès, in his *L'Homme devant la mort* (Paris: Seuil, 1977), p. 183, stresses the difference between such *confréries* and tertiary and monastic orders, whilst pointing out that the members of a religious order could be members of *confréries* in a personal capacity.

that it is black suggests that it is not a Franciscan habit; the Franciscan Rule forbade its adherents from wearing black or white, on the grounds that such cloth was more expensive than undyed material. However, the rosary hanging from La Marche's belt in this picture may well be the crown chaplet of the Franciscans.¹ If La Marche did have a supervisory role in preparing the manuscript, he was clearly not unhappy to think of himself as a monk. However, this does not automatically mean that the author had religious reasons for wishing to see himself thus depicted. The fact that the *Grandes Chroniques de France* were produced at the abbey of Saint-Denis meant that the profession of historian was considered as going hand in hand with a monastic vocation. La Marche may simply have wished to lay claim to the status of professional writer of history in choosing to be depicted as a monk, or he may have had nothing to do with the preparation of the manuscript and the illustrator, knowing that this was a work of history, decided to portray the author appropriately – as a monk. The fact that the figure in question is not wearing the habit of any identifiable order might suggest that it is the concept 'monk historian' which is here illustrated and not the religious devotion of Olivier de La Marche.

'homme prudent et saige en sa loy'

Nevertheless, as this chapter has demonstrated, religion, and particularly that of Observants such as Olivier Maillard, is important to Olivier de La Marche and this is reflected in the way that Franciscans are invested with meaning in passages in the *Mémoires*. Given the didactic aims of the work, however, one would expect that any interest La Marche had in the Order, would be manifested in the polemical positions adopted by the work. But this does not appear to be the case. Olivier Maillard's views

¹ I would like to thank Terrye Newkirk for her assistance in attempting to identify this costume. The crown chaplet was instituted in 1422, and so it is entirely possible that this is the item depicted in BnF, f. fr. 2868.

on society are not echoed in La Marche's *Mémoires*, and it would be impossible to argue that La Marche's work is intended to convey the same didactic message as the teachings of the man he claimed as his spiritual example. Many of the things that Maillard railed against appear in the *Mémoires* with no hint of criticism attached to them and instances in which La Marche's moral message coincides with Maillard's can be attributed to the fact that a particular moral viewpoint was widely held, rather than to a particular wish on La Marche's part to support the Observant Franciscan message. La Marche does not take issue with the sexual misdemeanours that the Observants were so ready to condemn: he has nothing to say on the subject of homosexuality, which exercised the Observant Saint Bernardino of Siena so greatly that he preached an entire sermon on the topic, and which concerned Maillard sufficiently to condemn both male and female homosexuality.¹ As we have seen, La Marche is ready to defend the position of bastards amongst Philippe le Beau's forebears, whilst making it explicit that he does not wish to condone adultery. Even this position is at variant with canon law, which accorded bastards no legal status, permitting them neither to inherit nor to enter the Church without special dispensation. Moreover, La Marche appears to go further in his tolerance of adultery, showing indulgence not merely for the product of adulterous relationships but also for the relationships themselves. Whereas Maillard declares that it is a sin even to want to commit adultery and abstain for fear of pregnancy or discovery, La Marche appears to tolerate adultery, acknowledging the pain that it causes, but suggesting that it may have positive benefits and that the parties wronged by adulterous

¹ John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, p. 461, Alexandre Samouillan, *Olivier Maillard: Sa Prédication et son temps*, p. 316. Samouillan incorporates his discussion of lesbianism into a wider discussion of the position of women in Maillard's preaching and, although he has no trouble discussing adultery in this context, the topic of homosexual relations between women is something which he is reluctant to discuss except in coded terms. Given that the Latin quotation from Maillard's sermon is itself rather discreet, the effect is to obscure the reference almost completely. Samouillan: 'Mais les femmes se rendaient coupables d'un crime autrement horrible et autrement honteux que notre respect du lecteur nous interdit de nommer. Il fallait toute la hardiesse de Maillard pour oser dénoncer du haut de la chaire chrétienne d'aussi prodigieux désordres.', he expands on this with a footnote (8) which supplies the Latin text: 'Habetis in ista civitate multas mulieres quæ provocant sorores suas ad immunditiam suam'.

relationships may not be exempt from moral censure.¹ Writing of a meeting between two such women, Marie d'Anjou, wife of Charles VII, and Isabelle of Portugal, Philippe le Bon's wife, La Marche says

Toutes deux estoient desjà princesses eaigées et hors de bruyt. Et croy bien qu'elles avoient une mesme douleur et maladie qu'on appelle jalousie, et que mainteffois elles se devoient de leur passions secrettement, qui estoit cause de leurs privaultez. Et, à la verité, apparence de raison avoit en leurs soupeçons; car le Roy avoit nouvellement eslevé une povre damoiselle, gentilfemme, nommée Agnès du Soret, et mis en tel triumphe et tel pouvoir que son estat estoit à comparer aux grandes princesses du royaume. Et certes c'estoit une des plus belles femmes que je veiz oncques; et fait, en sa qualité, beaucoup de biens au royaume de France. Elle avançoit, devers le Roy, josnes gens d'armes et gentilz compaignons, et dont depuis le Roy fut bien servi. Et d'autre part, le duc de Bourgoingne fut de son temps un prince le plus dameraes et le plus connoyseulx que l'on sceut; et avoit de bastards et de bastardes une moult belle compaignie. Et ainsi la Roynes et la duchesse se rassembloient souventeffois, pour eulx douloir et complaindre l'une à l'autre de leur creve cuer. (La Marche, II, 54-55).

The adultery of Philippe le Bon and Charles VII breaks their wives' hearts, but both men get benefits from it. Charles's mistress is in the position to do great service to her country, and through her the king comes into contact with men of quality who are able to serve him. Philippe, on the other hand, gains a great company of bastards (La Marche is not overstating this point; Philippe is known to have had at least 26 bastards and 33 mistresses) and the phrase 'moult belle compaignie', as well as describing the number of Philippe's illegitimate children, suggests positive qualities: attractive physical appearance and even moral rectitude. The wives of these men are hurt, but La Marche seems to be suggesting that this pain is worth it. Moreover, by describing their pain as 'une [...] maladie qu'on appelle jalousie', La Marche suggests that the reaction of the wives to their husbands' infidelity is unnatural, and even culpable. The retreat of the two women to talk about their 'passions' could also be considered to signal their moral ambiguity. 'Passion' signifies suffering but, particularly in the plural, it also refers to

¹ *La confession de frere Oliuier Maillard de l'ordre des freres mineurs*, fol. B ii^r, Alexandre Samouillan, *Olivier Maillard: Sa Prédication et son temps*, pp. 99-100.

the culpable animal impulses which drive people to commit sin.¹ Jealousy can be assimilated to the mortal sin of envy and the statement that the two women retire to share their passion could be interpreted as their sharing their culpable jealousy, as well as supporting each other in their mutual suffering. This is far from the condemnation of adulterous affairs that we find in Maillard.

Other aspects of life that Maillard criticizes are met with even less censure on the part of Olivier de La Marche. The author most famous for his account of the Banquet of the Pheasant does not share the preacher's condemnation of festivities and dancing which could occasion lust.² Nor does La Marche, author of *Le Parement et triumphes des dames*, an allegory in which desirable moral qualities are symbolized by items of women's clothing, join Maillard in his condemnation of female attire as liable to attract lustful attentions. In fact, in this work, he recognizes the capacity of clothing to attract men and celebrates it – on the condition that this attraction is part of marital relations.³ In addition to their criticism of sexual mores and the mechanism of attraction, Observant preachers were particularly critical of corruption in financial transactions and Maillard's criticism was amongst the most vociferous. Such dealings, Maillard argued, were equivalent to robbing the poor, whether they constituted selling goods at higher

¹ The *Petit Robert* gives the earliest instance of this usage as 1572, but in Brunet Latin's *Li Livres dou tresor* (c. 1265) we find 'en l'ame de l'home sont .III. poissances, c'est abit, pooir et passion. Passions sont si come amour, leesce et misericorde; et totes choses de quoi ensieut volenté et moleste sont sous ces choses de passion.', *Li Livres dou tresor de Brunetto Latini* ed. by Francis J. Carmody (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1948), pp. 183-84. Here Brunet Latin is using the term to designate not only suffering but the emotional impulses which ultimately lead to this suffering.

² Nor was Maillard the strictest of the Franciscan Observants on this point; Menot said that attending dances was only permissible if you took the preliminary precautions of blindfolding yourself beforehand to avoid unchaste glances, donning the sort of protective gloves used to remove thorns and taking a three-hour bath in cold water. Alexandre Samouillan, *Olivier Maillard: Sa Prédication et son temps*, p. 293.

³ So, for example, on *le jarretier de ferme propos* La Marche writes 'Le iarretier se fait communement/ Du propre drap courant la iambe nue/ Le iarretier lye estroitement/ La chausse va si bien et proprement/ Quelle ne bouge ne descend ou remue/ Le iarretier cest chose de value/ Et si honneste que homme ny doit main mettre/ Sil na cest eur destre seigneur ou maistre// Qui met la main iusque a la iarretiere/ Il pretendra de plus hault aduenir/ Cest des habitz vne chose plus chiere/ Gardez la bien de fait et de maniere/ Sans grant dangier nul ne la doit tenir', *Le Parement et triumphes des dames* (Paris: Veusve feu Jehan Trepperel et Jehan Jehannot, [1510?]; facsimile edition, Paris: Baillieu, 1870), fols Ci'-Cii'. The author's celebration of chastity is mitigated by the suggestion that such precautions can be dispensed with within marriage and by the extent to which he dwells on the naked flesh of the leg and the act of touching the garter and the flesh above it.

prices to foreigners, selling substandard goods, failing to pay taxes or raising heavy taxes. Of these misdemeanours, arguably only the last appears in the *Mémoires*, in the story of King Alphonse of Portugal who appears in the 1488 Book One, charged to appear before the Papal Council for not raising a tenth ordered by the pope. Alphonse's excuse is that 'pour la deffense de la foi crestienne, il travailloit de tailles son royaulme et son peuple. Et luy sambloit que le Pape ne luy devoit aultre chose demander.' (La Marche, I, 37). This is not the sort of condemnation of heavy taxation that we might expect from Maillard. Alphonse resists further taxation, it is true, but he does so only because he is already taxing his people heavily. It is, therefore, difficult to interpret this episode in terms of Maillard's condemnation of financial misdealings.

Often linked to this condemnation of financial malpractice in Observant sermons was the condemnation of usury and, by extension, arguments for complete separation of Christians and Jews on the grounds that moneylenders often belonged to this latter group. Maillard was particularly critical of usury, which he again described as stealing from the poor, although he was not as antisemitic in his conclusions as were other Observant preachers. Bernardino of Siena argued that a Christian committed a mortal sin in eating or drinking with a Jew and that, if he were in charge, he would oblige all Jews to wear special marks on their clothing.¹ La Marche, on the other hand has little to say about Jews and, whereas he regards Muslims and specifically Turks as a threat to Christianity, his treatment of the one character he identifies as a Jew is reasonably sympathetic. Once again, the scene is the besieged castle of Luxemburg, where the German soldiers inside have just received orders from the Count of Gleichen that they are to give themselves up on the best terms possible:

Et parla pour ceulx du chastel un juif qui demouroit dedans la ville et s'estoit rendu avecques eulx, lequel estoit homme prudent et saige en sa loy. Et firent appointement avec le duc de Bourgoingne ou ses commis, que les Allemans, Behaignons et Zassons s'en yroient, ung baton en leur main, et

¹ John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, p. 461.

que les Lucembourgeois demoureroient à la voulenté du duc. Et ainsi se rendit le chastel de Lucembourg, environ trois sepmaines après la prinse de la ville; et descendirent les Allemans en l'abbaye, où les attendoient le conte d'Estempes et le bastard de Bourgoingne, fort accompaignez, et furent mis en l'église; et, après leur avoir donné à boire et à manger, leur fut baillé conduite de gens de bien pour les conduyre seurement jusques à Tyonville, comme on leur avoit promis. (La Marche, II, 45)

The man, a native of Luxemburg, is trusted sufficiently by both parties to negotiate the surrender of the castle, a surrender which La Marche portrays as taking place in good order. In addition, La Marche describes him as 'prudent et saige en sa loy', a description which takes note of his difference whilst at the same time admitting the possibility that such people may possess admirable qualities, albeit in terms restricted by their cultural specificity.¹

The opinions adopted by La Marche, therefore, do not always echo those espoused by Maillard, and even when they do, there are often sufficient points of difference between the two to indicate that La Marche was not writing in support of an Observant Franciscan polemical viewpoint. Thus, for example, Maillard's condemnation of pride as the root of all other sins, and his advocacy of the dictum *serva mandata* finds its echo in La Marche's almost exclusive reservation of 'orgueil' and its derivatives to designate the rebellious subjects of Ghent.² However, another of Maillard's arguments was that princes failed to win the complete obedience of their subjects because they behaved in a way that was almost tyrannical.³ This suggests that Maillard considered the cause of political rebellion to be the pride of both parties

¹ The term 'sa loy' itself is culturally neutral in the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche. Elsewhere it qualifies Christian and Muslim belief (of Frederick of Austria La Marche writes, 'marcha pour servir son Dieu et sa loy, garder son honneur, aydier son frere et son chief, et deffendre sa part de la seigneurie d'Austrice' La Marche, I, 23, while one vow sworn at the Banquet of the Pheasant speaks of 'aucungs grans princes ou grans seigneurs de la compaignie dudit Grand Turc et tenans sa loy,' La Marche, II, 383). It is normally used in the context of conflict between religions, but to underline the separateness of the religions rather than as any sort of pejorative term. Chastelain too uses the term in the same way: 'la faculté humaine est réduite en trois loix, payenne, judaïque et chrestienne', George Chastelain, *Le Temple de Bocace, remonstrances, par manière de consolation à une désolée reyne d'Angleterre*, in Georges Chastelain, *Œuvres* ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Brussels: Heussner, 1863-66; repr. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1971), VII, 75-143 (pp. 78-79).

² Bernard Chevalier, 'Olivier Maillard et la réforme des cordeliers (1482-1502)', p. 33.

³ Alexandre Samouillan, *Olivier Maillard: Sa Prédication et son temps*, p. 115.

whereas La Marche is a partisan for the ducal house and sees fault on one side only. Similarly, La Marche condemns games and gambling much in the same way as Maillard does, not because they can lose their participants money (although this is one of Maillard's criticisms), but because they place them in dangerous company. Thus, La Marche addresses Philippe le Beau in his moral on an incident in which Philippe le Hardi, in captivity in England, has almost come to blows with the Prince of Wales over a game of chess:

Celluy qui joue à quelque jeu que ce soit doit bien avoir regart que la voulenté ou affection ne soit pas maistresse de la raison, car souvent il advient que grans maux en sont advenus et peuvent advenir. Exemple de ces ii nobles filz de Roys qui pour sy peu de choses que pour la prinse d'une piece de bois ou d'yvoire, figurée en forme de chevalier, vinrent à tele fureur que d'occire l'un l'autre et mettre et adventurer leur vie pour sy peu, de tel hazart et esclandre. Et dit bien le philozophe qui met que le passe temps faict à deffendre, dont il peut advenir plus de maux que de biens, et en ce passe temps il entendoit tous les jeux du monde. (La Marche, I, 62-63)

The moral corresponds to Maillard's absolute condemnation of games, but elsewhere in the *Mémoires*, and in a section written around the same time as this Book One, La Marche displays another attitude. Writing in praise of the Siege of Neuss, La Marche says

estoit si bien ost estoffé de toutes choses. Il y avoit hosteleries, jeux de paulmes et de billes, cabaretz, tavernes et toutes choses que l'on scut demander. Le siege dura par tous les mois de l'an, et fut le plus beau siege et le mieulx estoffé de toutes choses que l'on veit pieça. (La Marche, III, 92)

Here, the presence of facilities for gambling is a sign that the siege has taken on the aspect of a town, with all the facilities of city life. There is no implication in this that these facilities are to be disapproved of. It is almost as if, when La Marche is not addressing his *Mémoires* explicitly to his patron, he does not feel the need to heap opprobrium on 'tous les jeux du monde'.

Despite La Marche's admiration for the teachings of Olivier Maillard which he stated elsewhere, these appear to have no discernible effect on the moral content of the

Mémoires. This is all the more remarkable since the order to which Maillard belonged the Franciscans – and more particularly the Observant Franciscans – do have a prominent role in the *Mémoires*. However, given the source of the initial documents which became the *Mémoires* – accounts of banquets written to publicize the pageantry of the Burgundian court – it is difficult to imagine how, for example, Maillard's condemnation of such display could be illustrated by the work without substantial changes to this material. Even those parts of the work which were written specifically for inclusion in the *Mémoires* do not present the uncompromising morality of Olivier Maillard as their underpinning. This is not to say that religion or morality were unimportant to Olivier de La Marche; the *Mémoires* deal at length with religious issues (such as the desirability of the military defeat of Islam), religious motifs (statues and *banerolles* appearing at *pas d'armes* very frequently display religious iconography) and religious characters, particularly the Franciscans. However, these religious characters are presented alongside the world and seem to represent a coexistence of religious and worldly concerns. This reflects La Marche's approach to the moral lessons of religion. Where they are appropriate to his theme, he adopts them, but he does not shape his *Mémoires* to illustrate these moral teachings.

Ordre and ordonnance: The presentation of combat in the Mémoires

‘Deppuis en croissement de jours et d’eage, à ramemorier ceste matiere, j’en faiz et extime et merveille, dont, quant à la merveille, ne fait il pas à esmerveiller de veoir ung Roy, né et yssu de royal sang, fuytif de son royaulme, yssant freschement de la prison de sa femme et de la servitude de celle qui, par raison du sacrement de mariaige luy devoit estre subjecte? Et pour l’extime, quant depuis j’ay pensé et mis devant mes yeulx l’auctorité royale, les pompes seignorieuses, les delisses et aises corporelles et mondaines, lesquelles en si peu de temps furent par cestuy Roy mises en oubly et en nonchaloir, certes, selon mon petit sens, j’en faiz une extime plaine de merveille’ (La Marche, I, 195)

Let us return to La Marche’s primal scene and examine the paradox of why it presents a view of the world which seems at odds with the rest of the *Mémoires*, which follow. If one accepts that La Marche is not merely recording his first memory at this point but is selecting ‘ramentevance digne d’escrire’, and more specifically matter which is ‘devoste et de sainte memoire’, the logical conclusion is that La Marche is inviting his reader to draw a moral lesson from it. His contrast at the end of the passage, between such holy behaviour and ‘l’auctorité royale, les pompes seignorieuses, les delisses et aises corporelles et mondaines’ suggests what that lesson is to be, implying that Jacques de Bourbon is to be emulated, while La Marche dismisses court life as frivolous. And therein lies the paradox: if this is the case, why does La Marche devote so much of his *Mémoires* to descriptions of such ‘pompes seignorieuses’? So much so that La Marche is often considered the poet of the excessive splendour of the Burgundian court, with his *Mémoires* concentrating extensively on its rituals, its banquets and its *pas d’armes*.¹

Indeed one particular scene in an account of a *pas d’armes* raises the question of the apparently contradictory relationship between such accounts and La Marche’s initial statement – all the more insistently because of the extent to which it reminds readers of the *Mémoires* of the Bourbon primal scene. The scene is part of the description of the

¹ For example Paul Archambault, *Seven French Chroniclers: Witnesses to History* (Syracuse University Press, 1974), p. 75 comments on the amount of space La Marche consecrates to Charles le Hardi’s and Margaret of York’s wedding celebrations.

wedding festivities of 1468. In it La Marche describes the entry of the seigneur de Ravenstein to the lists of the *pas de l'arbre d'or*. Like Bourbon, Ravenstein enters on a litter, although in his case one made specially for him and painted with his coat of arms, while Bourbon was content with 'une civiere telle sans aultre differance que les civieres en quoy l'on porte les fiens et les ordures communement'. (La Marche, I, 194)

Similarly, where Bourbon is carried by men, Ravenstein's litter is supported by two horses, covered in rich decoration and with a page mounted on each. (La Marche, III, 128) The description of the entry of Ravenstein covers the same elements as that of Bourbon's entry, and in the same order, inviting comparison which invariably shows Ravenstein's circumstances to be more luxurious than those of Bourbon. So we read that Bourbon was 'demy couché, demy levé, et appoyé à l'encontre d'un povre meschant desrompu oreillier de plume' while Ravenstein is 'à demy assis sur grans coussins de riche velours cramoisy'. Where Bourbon wears 'une longue robe d'ung gris de très petit pris', tied with the belt marking his Franciscan observance, Ravenstein wears 'une longue robe de velours tanné, fourée d'ermine, à ung grant collet renversé', decorated with slashes. Both men are accompanied by four of their peers: knights carrying *bastons* in the case of Ravenstein, friars in that of Bourbon. The parallels between the two scenes, situated at opposite ends of La Marche's *Mémoires*, are clear enough. Of course, as was argued in chapter one of the present thesis, the passages in question are situated at opposite ends of the work as we now read it, but they were probably written fairly close to each other. If the account of the York wedding was indeed written in 1468, or shortly thereafter, and the *Mémoires* were begun no later than 1472, then La Marche may already have had the intention to write an account of his life, beginning with Jacques de Bourbon's entry into Pontarlier, at the time that he wrote the description of Ravenstein. Conversely, the account that he had given of Ravenstein's entry into the lists may have provided the template for his next piece of prose writing,

the opening section of his *Mémoires*. Whichever is the case, it seems clear that the scenes have been structured in such a way that they echo each other. This may imply that some factual details have been changed in order to make the parallel more apparent and indeed there are indications to suggest that the Ravenstein scene at least has been altered. The *Mémoires* of Jean de Haynin contains another description of the same events, incorporating many of the elements found in La Marche's account.¹ However, those elements identified above as presenting particular parallels with the Bourbon primal scene are absent from Haynin's account, or are presented differently. Thus Ravenstein's attire, according to Haynin was 'une longue robe de drap dor bleu fourée de martres toute ouverte devant' and not, as La Marche would have it, the 'longue robe de velours tannée fourée d'ermine, à un grand collet renversé, et la robe fendue de côté, et les manches fendues' whose colour is reminiscent of the monk's habit, but whose opulence is at odds with the monastic ideal of poverty. Similarly all mention of cushions which, as we have seen, in La Marche's account further parallel his primal scene, is absent from Haynin's description. Moreover, whereas both authors describe a total of six adult men accompanying Ravenstein, La Marche describes these men in three groups, with one preceding the elderly knight, and one following him, allowing him to have Ravenstein, like Bourbon, followed immediately by four men. Haynin, on the other hand, describes all six men together, giving their names.

The account of the York wedding is a substantially unmodified version of a passage written in or after 1468 but, unlike that of the Banquet of the Pheasant, it is preceded by narratorial comment integrating it into the text of the *Mémoires*:

[N]e me puis tenir et passer de mettre par escript et incorporer en ces presentes Memoires les pompes, l'ordre et la maniere de faire desdictes nopces; et commenceray à la lettre que je escripviz à Gilles du Mas, maistre d'hostel de monseigneur le duc de Bretagne. (La Marche, III, 101)

¹ Jean de Haynin, *Mémoires*, ed. by D.D. Brouwers, 2 vols (Liège: Cormaux, 1905-6), II, 39-40.

This is not the work of an inept compiler, copying the a manuscript from the ducal library into the text of the *Mémoires*; the presence of the account is the result of a conscious decision to include it and therefore we must address the question of the function fulfilled by the similarity between the Ravenstein and Bourbon episodes within the context of La Marche's *Mémoires* as a whole. It would be tempting to argue that the Ravenstein scene, together with La Marche's comment on courtly pomp cited above, can be read as an implicit criticism of court ceremonial. Ravenstein may be mocking the trappings of humility which Bourbon adopted willingly.¹ However, there is nothing in La Marche's explicit statements to justify such a reading and other accounts of the *pas de l'arbre d'or* make it clear that Olivier de La Marche was actually amongst Ravenstein's retinue.² This makes it very unlikely that the account in his *Mémoires* was intended to reflect negative criticism of the *pas d'armes*; on other occasions he comments approvingly on them. So, for example, when La Marche wrote *Le Chevalier délibéré*, his allegorical poem about a knight's journey through life and encounter with death, he chose to use the setting of the *pas d'armes*.³ What is more, the *Mémoires* concentrate on *pas d'armes* and other similar court combats to a much greater extent than do the works of other contemporary writers, including those such as Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy, whose position as heralds might suggest that they should have a special interest in these combats.⁴ Leaving aside other descriptions of court pomp, such as those of banquets and of chapter meetings of the *toison d'or*, this chapter will examine what

¹ In support of this argument one could cite the divergent attitudes of the two men. Bourbon is shown to accept his situation with happiness: 'portoit une chiere joyeuse en sa recueilotte vers ung chascun' (La Marche, I, 194) while Ravenstein dissembles 'tenoit toute maniere de chevalier ancien, foulé et debilité des armes porter.' (La Marche, III, 128)

² La Marche, IV, 117 (this reference is to Beaune and d'Arbaumont's edition of the Turin manuscript containing a variant account of the wedding, also by La Marche), Jean de Haynin, *Mémoires*, ed. by Brouwers, II, 39.

³ Olivier de La Marche, *Le Chevalier délibéré (The Resolute Knight)*, ed. by Carleton W. Carroll, trans. by Lois Hawley Wilson and Carleton W. Carroll, (Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 199) (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999).

⁴ In this chapter the term 'court combat' is used to designate any combat held by nobles without the intention of killing one's adversary. I have preferred this term to 'courtly combat' as some of these confrontations lacked the courtesy which one might associate with this term.

purpose such accounts of court combat serve in the *Mémoires*, placing them particularly in the context of the other sorts of combat described.

In describing the combats of the Burgundian court La Marche, and authors like him, relied upon the records of heralds.¹ It is true that the accounts supplied by the Burgundian chronicles are very detailed and it is difficult to imagine such details being recalled after a period of years had elapsed. La Marche himself refers to this practice of using heraldic documents when he introduces the *pas de l'arbre Charlemagne* saying 'à mon rapport je demande à tesmoignaige tous les escriptz et registres faitz par les roys d'armes et heraulx presens à ceste chose'. (La Marche, I, 291) This raises a problem when considering the rhetoric of La Marche's presentation of combat; how far can the rhetoric be considered La Marche's and how far that of the anonymous herald upon whose account he drew? One way in which this problem may be overcome is by comparing accounts of the same combat in the works of different authors. This enables readers to determine the extent to which La Marche adheres to, or departs from, pre-existing representational frameworks for *pas d'armes*. By examining how La Marche's account differs from other accounts the rhetoric of La Marche's presentation of combat, as distinct from the rhetoric of the formulaic account, is revealed. Another advantage of this approach is that it allows us to disregard what can be termed the rhetoric of the combats themselves: the often complex systems of signifiers which they presented to

¹ These descriptions of court combat often prove resistant to interpretation by the modern reader. This is partly because, as Gert Melville points out, the accounts appear to spend more time on the rituals surrounding the combat than on the confrontation itself, 'Der Held – in Szene gesetzt. Einige Bilder und Gedanken zu Jacques de Lalaing und seinem Pas d'armes de la Fontaine des Pleurs' in *'Aufführung' und 'Schrift' in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. by Jan-Dirk Müller (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1996), 253-86 (264). However, Richard Barker and Juliet Barker attribute this difficulty not to the lack of detail about the combat, but to the modern reader's lack of familiarity with the rules of jousting. They compare the heraldic account of court combat to today's football reports in which only significant moments are reported, and journalists do not feel themselves obliged to give a full account of the match, or a resumé of the rules of the game, Richard Barber and Juliet Barker, *Tournaments: Jousts, Chivalry and Pageants in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1989), p. 110.

the spectator and which is transmitted through written accounts.¹ This rhetoric, which can provide an interesting and rich field of research into the *mentalités* of fifteenth-century courts, is not the concern of this present chapter.² There is no doubt that La Marche understood this rhetoric – his duties as *maître d'hôtel* meant that he had to – and that he used his *Mémoires* as a vehicle for diffusing it to a public which had not been present at the original event. However in an examination of the rhetoric of La Marche's *Mémoires* this is only significant insofar as La Marche presents his readers with signifiers which differ from those found in other accounts. White may be the colour symbolizing purity, chastity, eternity and death.³ Within the closed world of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* it may take on further significance as the colour of the shield a knight touches to signal his intention of entering into a combat with axes, and as the colour that the champion, Jacques de Lalaing, wears at the ensuing combat. However, given that La Marche's *Mémoires*, the *Livre des faits du bon chevalier Jacques de Lalain*, Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy's *Epître* and the rules (or *chapitres*) of the combat as reproduced in Mathieu d'Escouchy's *Chronique* all contain the same

¹ I am not alone in regarding the rules of court combat as presenting a discourse open to analysis on structural terms. Alice Planche, in 'Du tournoi au théâtre en Bourgogne: Le Pas de la Fontaine des pleurs à Chalon-sur-Saône 1449-1450', *Le Moyen Âge*, 4, series 30 (1975), 97-128 (p. 102) argues that the chapters of the *pas d'armes* constitute a grammar of combat.

² Jean-Pierre Jourdan has undertaken a study of this rhetoric which draws heavily on La Marche's *Mémoires* and has published a number of articles on the subject. Amongst his articles on the subject are 'Le thème du pas dans le royaume de France (Bourgogne, Anjou) à la fin du Moyen-Âge: L'Émergence d'un symbole', *Annales de Bourgogne*, 62 (1990), 117-33; 'Le Symbolisme politique du pas dans le royaume de France (Bourgogne et Anjou) à la fin du Moyen-Âge', *Journal of Medieval History*, 18 (1992), 161-81 and 'Le Langage amoureux dans le combat de chevalerie à la fin du Moyen Âge (France, Bourgogne, Anjou)', *Le Moyen Âge*, 99, series 5, vol 7, (1993), 83-106.

³ Michel Pastoureau 'Les Couleurs médiévales: systèmes de valeurs et modes de sensibilité' in *Figures et couleurs: Etude sur la symbolique et la sensibilité médiévales*, (Paris: Le Léopard d'or, 1986), pp. 35-49. A contemporary exploration of the symbolism of this colour, focussing on its associations with purity, can be found in Honoré Bonet, *L'Arbre des batailles*, ed. by Ernest Nys (Brussels and Leipzig: Muquardt; London and New York: Trübner; Paris: Durand & Pedone-Laruiel, 1883), p. 242. Bonet provides a discussion of the five principal colours of heraldry (gold, red, blue, white and black). Christine de Pisan's *Livre des faites et de chevalerie*, which reproduces and comments upon Bonet's work in its final two books, adds a sixth colour, green. No modern edition in French of Pisan's work is available, but there is an edition of Caxton's English translation: *The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyvalrye: Translated and Printed by William Caxton from the French Original by Christine de Pisan*, ed. by A. T. P. Byles (London: Early English Texts Series, 1932, reissued with corrections, 1937; repr. Millwood, NY: Kraus Reprint, 1988), p. 290.

information, it is difficult to argue that this is a particular feature of La Marche's rhetoric alone.¹

Another difficulty arises when we realize that La Marche's accounts of *pas d'armes*, even those which seem to have been integrated fully into the *Mémoires*, bear clear signs of having started life as independent accounts taking a form which corresponds more closely to that of the formulaic account. Such an account frequently reproduced the *chapitres* of the combat and sometimes chroniclers who, it may be presumed, did not attend *pas d'armes* themselves limited their treatment of the event to the reproduction of the *chapitres*.² La Marche does not include this documentation in his *Mémoires*, but on several occasions he refers readers to the chapters which he claims precede an account but which are not present.³ In one instance, that of the *pas de l'arbre d'or*, La Marche refers to a letter presented to the judge, Charles le Hardi, and to the *chapitres* of the confrontation. There then follows the rubric 'S'ensuit la teneur de la lettre présentée par Arbre d'or, serviteur de la dame celée, et aussi les chappitres faictz pour la conduite de cestuy noble pas.'⁴ Unusually for the *Mémoires*, this rubric is to be found in all the manuscripts which reproduce the account. However in only one: the Valenciennes manuscript, does the account precede to present this letter and the *chapitres*.⁵ This is significant because, as will be remembered, this manuscript is not of the *Mémoires* at all but is a miscellany including another account of a *pas d'armes*, the

¹ *Livre des faits du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalaing*, George Chastellain, *Œuvres*, ed. by Kervyn de Lettenhove, 8 vols (Brussels: Heussner, 1863-66; repr. Geneva, Slatkine, 1971), VIII, 1-259, Jean Le Fèvre de Saint Rémy, *Épître*, ed. by François Morand, *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*, 221 (1884), pp. 178-239, Mathieu d'Escouchy, *Chronique*, ed. by G. du Fresne de Beaucourt, 3 vols (Paris: Société de l'Histoire de France, 1863-64), I, 264-73.

² This is the case with d'Escouchy's treatment of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* and Monstrelet's mention of the *pas de l'arbre Charlemagne*: Enguerrand de Monstrelet, *Chronique* ed. by L. Douët D'Arcq, 6 vols (Paris: Société de l'histoire de France, 1857-62), VI, 68-73.

³ He does so twice in his account of the combat between the Seigneur de Ternant and Galiot de Baltasin; La Marche, II, 71 and 78.

⁴ La Marche, III, 123.

⁵ Valenciennes, Bibliothèque Municipale, ms, 776, fols 8^r -11^r

pas de la dame sauvage.¹ This further suggests that it and any other account incorporated into the *Mémoires* may have circulated in at least one independent form before being adapted to its new setting. It follows that different accounts, having different rhetorical contexts at the outset, may not be able to be easily integrated into a single rhetorical scheme. Nevertheless, if one is careful to bear this fact in mind, I believe it is possible to draw conclusions which hold true for the presentation of combat throughout the *Mémoires* as a whole.

The First Combat: La Marche's justification for presenting the *pas d'armes*.

Broadly speaking, there are three types of combat in La Marche's *Mémoires*. Court combat, usually the single combat within a narrative framework of the *pas d'armes*, either on foot or on horseback, is the most common of these but there is also the combat of war and, in one case, the single combat of the judicial duel. These different forms of combat have various things in common one with another: war and judicial duels are fought with deadly intent, duels and *pas d'armes* are one-to-one confrontations and war and *pas d'armes*, at least at some points in the *Mémoires*, exclude the participation of commoners. They also have common modes of representation and, as will be demonstrated, one form of combat is often represented in the terms of another.²

It should not be forgotten in considering these different forms of combat that La Marche came into contact with both court combat and warfare in his professional life. Alongside the ceremonial roles of page and later *maître d'hôtel*, which gave him experience of the world of the *pas d'armes*, La Marche was, in the words of Claude

¹ Valenciennes, Bibliothèque Municipale, ms, 776, fols 44^r-76^v. A printed edition of this account, 'Traicté d'un tournoy tenu à Gand par Claude de Vauldrey, Seigneur de l'Aigle l'an 1469 (vieux style)' can be found in *Relations de pas d'armes et tournois*, ed. by B. Prost (Paris: Léon Willem, 1872), pp. 55-95. Prost cites the nineteenth-century shelfmark 581 for this manuscript.

² Philippe Contamine, in 'Les Tournois en France à la fin du moyen âge' in *Das ritterliche Turnier im Mittelalter*, ed. by Josef Fleckenstein (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), pp. 425-49 describes a 'gamme' stretching from the bloody battle at one end to the 'joute de plaisance' in which protagonists have no prior antagonism. My argument is that this continuum in practice is mirrored by a continuum in the ways in which combat is represented.

Gaier, 'homme de guerre par excellence'.¹ A man who was at one stage in charge of one of the three largest companies in Charles le Hardi's army might be expected to have some interest in all sorts of combat, particularly if he believed them to be interlinked.² At a time when there was no formal military training, court combat might be viewed as the best way for young men to prepare for the serious business of war and, with religious injunctions against court confrontation becoming less frequent in the fifteenth century, this opinion seems to have gained currency.³ The church no longer refused to bury those killed in court combat in consecrated ground and in La Marche's *Mémoires* we even find decorative elements from the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* integrated into the decor of religious life. The statues which had stood beside the field of combat are brought into the church of Notre-Dame de Boulogne – where, La Marche tells us, they remain. (La Marche, II, 202) Philippe Contamine has pointed out that, in this growing climate of acceptance by the church, chroniclers became ready to offer their readers descriptions of court combat, and it is in this tradition that we should read La Marche's accounts.⁴ However, as Contamine also suggests, church approval of court combat was partly a response to the trend away from the more dangerous *tournoy* (which reproduced the conditions of battle more exactly by having large groups of knights confronting one

¹ C. Gaier, 'Technique des combats singuliers d'après les auteurs "bourguignons" du XV^e siècle', part 1, *Le Moyen Âge*, 91(1985), 415-57 (p. 421).

² Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold: The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy* (London: Longman, 1973), p. 212 gives details of the size, in spring 1472, of La Marche's company, together with those of Jacques de Harchies and Jehan de la Vieville. Of the three, La Marche's was the closest to being up to the prescribed strength.

³ This argument was advanced in earlier centuries, for example in Geoffroi de Charny's *Livre de chevalerie* (Charny died in 1356). However, Charny seems anxious to stress this aspect of the joust, and regards even this as potentially dangerous, as some men who have jousting may neglect proper warfare, believing themselves to be 'paiez de ce qu'ilz en font sans autres faiz d'armes faire.' Geoffroi de Charny, *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny: Text, Context, and Translation* ed. by Richard W. Kaeuper and Elspeth Kennedy, trans. by Elspeth Kennedy (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), p. 88 (paragraph 7). Charny's attitude seems to be that a case can be made for the utility of jousting but that even he himself is unsure of its merits.

⁴ Philippe Contamine, 'Les Tournois en France à la fin du moyen âge', (p. 427). Contamine points out that authors such as La Marche, d'Escouchy and Froissart, who concentrate heavily on descriptions of court combat, do not have antecedents in preceding centuries.

another) in favour of the one-to-one confrontation of the joust.¹ Thus it became more acceptable to discuss court combat in terms of the training it provided for war precisely because this training was less appropriate. In addition it should be noted that war had long had recourse to techniques such as archery, which had no place in court confrontation, and now was moving even further away from the world of the *pas d'armes* with the growing use of gunpowder. The *pas d'armes*, heavily literized and inscribed within a narrative which was often fantastic and included elements such as knights imprisoned within stones and 'dames sauvages', covered from head to toe in golden hair, appears therefore increasingly removed from the world of warfare. This can be interpreted as reflecting what Elizabeth Gaucher has referred to as the 'tendances passéistes' of the Burgundian nobility, a reflection of their desire to reappropriate the art of warfare in the face of increasing professionalism.² Certainly there was an increasing tendency to professionalism in warfare, but it can be dated back to the introduction of more advanced ballistic weapons and plate armour in the thirteenth century.³ Moreover, it should not be forgotten that there were similar and parallel developments in the art of jousting (for example in the production of lances) which removed the danger that had previously accompanied jousts and facilitated the play element of the festivities.⁴

La Marche certainly presents his accounts of *pas d'armes* from the first within a didactic context, but this is not necessarily the context of training for war. When introducing his account of the *pas de l'arbre Charlemagne* he writes:

Or est bien le temps [...] que je recite l'execution de cestuy noble pas crié et publié par tous les royaumes et seigneuries chrestiens, affin de ramentevoir

¹ Contamine, 'Les Tournois en France à la fin du moyen âge', pp. 433-34.

² Elizabeth Gaucher 'La Confrontation de l'idéal chevaleresque et de l'idéologie politique en Bourgogne au XV^e siècle: L'Exemple de Jacques de Lalaing' in *Rencontres médiévales en Bourgogne (XIV^e-XV^e siècles)* 2 (1992), 3-24 (p. 12).

³ For details of the context for professionalism within medieval and renaissance armies, see Michael Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters: Warfare in Renaissance Italy* (London: Bodley Head, 1974), especially pp. 19-21.

⁴ Malcolm Vale, 'Le Tournoi dans la France du nord, l'Angleterre et les Pays-Bas (1280-1400)', in *Théâtre et spectacles hier et aujourd'hui*, 3 vols (Paris: Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques, 1991), I, 263-71, especially pp. 268-69.

la chevalerie monstrée de tous les partiz, et aussi par la maniere d'escolle et de doctrine aux nobles hommes qui viendront cy après, qui, peult estre, desireront de eulx monstrer et faire congnoistre en leur advenir comme leurs devanchiers, et de monstrer et faire reblandir leurs blasons en leur cotte d'armes [...] à la chasse et poursuite de noblesse et de renommée (La Marche, I, 190)

The implication of this is that readers will learn from La Marche's account; but does he intend this to mean that they will learn the techniques of warfare, or that they will learn the more specific skills required for the *pas d'armes*? The phrase 'escolle et doctrine aux nobles hommes' is not explicit on this point. Later in the account La Marche restates his purpose, saying that he has deliberately dwelt on the ceremonies before the *pas d'armes* at length 'tant pour ce que ce furent les premieres armes que je veis oncques, comme aussi pour aprendre et advertir les lisans, se besoiing en ont, des nobles serimonies appartenans aux nobles et recommandez mestiers d'armes.' (La Marche, I, 298) Once again La Marche is presenting his readers with a primal scene; this time his first military memory. But what does he mean when he speaks of 'armes'? Does this refer to any weapon and any form of warfare, or does this really only mean the exercise of combat in a court setting? The repetition of 'noble' qualifying these *armes* in the passages cited above suggests that the latter interpretation is more plausible. Only noblemen who could prove noble descent from four quarters, that is to say from all their grandparents, were, in theory, permitted to participate in court combat and 'nobles armes' were, therefore, specifically those of the court.¹ On the other hand, the plural 'mestiers' suggests that there is more than one type of 'armes' and we may speculate that La Marche includes warfare in his consideration of such 'mestiers'.

Throughout the *Mémoires* accounts of *pas d'armes* are linked to, or intercalated in, accounts of warfare. Indeed it must be recognized that this was part of the rhetoric of

¹ In an unpublished article, 'Les Fêtes de la chevalerie dans les états bourguignons à la fin du moyen-âge (aspects sociaux et économiques)', Jean-Pierre Jourdan points out that the requirement that participants in jousts prove noble descent from four quarters was an innovation of the fifteenth century, replacing an earlier distinction between jousts reserved for knights and those open to both knights and squires.

the *pas d'armes* themselves, which, like the tournaments which they superseded, were often organized to celebrate some civic event, such as the marriage of a prince, or the signing of a peace treaty.¹ The *Mémoires*' treatment of the combat between the Seigneur de Ternant and Galiot de Baltasin fulfils the same role, by providing a commentary on the scenes of war which precede it. It will be remembered that this is one of the scenes which shows evidence of having circulated in an independent form, as it contains reference to *chapitres* no longer included. Unlike other such accounts, however, it appears to have undergone a certain amount of reworking to adapt it to the *Mémoires*. Thus, for example, it is situated at the beginning of what La Marche at the time called his second volume, and so follows a completed section, rounded off with La Marche's *devise*, 'Tant a souffert La Marche'.² The opening words of the account of the combat make allowances for this fact and the chapter begins:

Continuant ma matiere commencée, je reprens et rentre en mon second volume par l'an de Nostre Seigneur mil quatre cens quarante six [...] et commencerons à reciter au commencement de ce second volume les nobles armes faictes et accomplies par messire Philippe de Ternant [...] à l'encontre de noble escuyer Galiot de Baltasin. (La Marche, II, 64)

La Marche's reference to the continuation of his matter might lead the reader to suppose that Book One had ended with a similar account of combat. However, the preceding chapter deals with the aftermath of the Luxemburg campaign, with Philippe le Bon returning to Brussels and his wife visiting the queen of France, both amidst festivities which La Marche alludes to but does not describe. The author also stresses that the main purpose of the visit to France was 'en esperance de reprendre aultre journée avec les

¹ For a discussion of the political import of the *pas d'armes*, see Jean-Pierre Jourdan 'Le Symbolisme politique du pas dans le royaume de France (Bourgogne et Anjou) à la fin du Moyen-Âge'. In another article, 'Les Fêtes de la chevalerie dans les états bourguignons à la fin du moyen-âge (aspects sociaux et économiques)', Jourdan describes this as motivated by a desire that 'l'effusion de sang purge l'alliance de tout antagonisme passé, en sorte que le sang versé réalise une consanguinité véritable'. However, it should also be recognized that such combats were not only part of the peace-making process; they were also held during war itself, for example Chastelain (I, 245) reports that during the siege of Saint-Riquier six knights of the Burgundian army challenged six men from the besieged town to jousts. It may, therefore, be more appropriate to analyse combat in terms of the social significance of the events that they mark, whether this be in peace or in war.

² La Marche, II, 63. This rubrication appears in manuscripts *S*, *L* and *A* but not in *B*, *Par* and *H*.

Angloix pour cuyder faire quelque bien entre les deux royaumes de France et d'Angleterre'(La Marche, II, 58-59). Peace has returned, therefore, but there are still thoughts of war in the air, and the festivities of court combat are not yet fully described. In the chapter in which the Ternant/Galiot combat takes place, court combat is more to the fore, as the chapter contains not only this confrontation but also the issue of a challenge from Jean de Boniface to Jacques de Lalaing. The following chapter describes the festivities of the Chapter of the Toison d'or in Ghent, which in turn is followed by an account of the Boniface/Lalaing combat, which forms part of the cycle of Lalaing combats. The Ternant/Galiot combat, therefore, falls between times of war and peace and heralds the return to peace of the Burgundian lands and the establishment of a period in which court combats can take place. Throughout the account of the combat, there are references to the practices of war: in the horse combat Ternant wears his sword 'ceint [...] comme on les porte à la guerre communement' while Galiot 'avoit mis la sienne en sa main senestre, toute nue, et la tenoit avec la bride.'(La Marche, II, 77) Ternant's sword thus associated with warfare is the subject of some controversy in the confrontation which follows, when it falls from its scabbard and out of Ternant's reach, allowing Baltasin to take advantage of his defenceless state and attack him. In associating the way Ternant wears his sword with the practices of warfare, La Marche implies criticism of these practices in the context of the court combat, demonstrating that they hinder participants in the accomplishment of their battle. Similarly Baltasin, a Portuguese squire whose knowledge of the form taken by Burgundian *pas d'armes* is portrayed as being imperfect, has to be told that he cannot ride into the confrontation on a horse whose harness is covered in steel spikes. The words of the admonition,

que l'on n'avoit point accoutumé de porter en lice ou noble champ cloz, dagues ou pointures en habillemens de chevaux, et que c'estoit chose deffendue contre estatutz d'armes nommées et contre les chappitres et emprinses du seigneur de Ternant (La Marche, II, 77)

suggest that the practice is thought to be acceptable in warfare, as the circumstances under which it is *not* acceptable are repeated twice in the passage with emphasis being placed on the closure of the lists and the nobility of the combat, both exclusively features of court combat. Here again, La Marche appears to be drawing a distinction between acceptable practices in war and those fitting for court combat in a scene which marks the transition between war and peace. If court combat signals a return to peace, then protagonists must learn to use the conventions of peaceful confrontation and the account of the Ternant/Galiot combat provides a set of examples to show readers what to avoid, examples which are always met with censure. In this account court combat is measured against the paradigms of warfare and shown to be preferable to war.

La Marche considered court combat not only in the same framework as that of war but also as that of the third sort of combat of which he writes; the judicial duel. In his *Livre de l'advis de gaige de bataille*, a work which he addressed to Philippe le Beau, he writes

[...] me suis délibéré de mectre par escript quelle chose c'est que d'ung gaige de bataille, comment le prince et le juge s'y doit conduire selon raison et bonne équité; car peu de gens vivans ont veu l'exécution de gaige de bataille, et a plus de soixante et dix ans que, soubz ceste maison de Bourgogne, ne fut telle oeuvre exécutée entre deux nobles hommes. Et moy qui ay demouré en ceste noble maison près de soixane ans, je ne veis de ma vie gaige de bataille, et si ay veu trente fois faire armes de plaisance et combatre en lices et champ cloz, en divers pays et royaumes, et le plus devant le bon duc Phelippe [...].¹

If 'armes' here is reserved for court combat, it seems that La Marche does not regard this point as self-evident, as he sees fit to further qualify the 'armes' as being 'de plaisance' in order to ensure that his readers know exactly what sort of combat he is referring to. Moreover it must be noted that the author draws an immediate parallel between the confrontation of the judicial duel and that of court combat. This is significant not only because it demonstrates that La Marche did perceive some sort of

¹ Olivier de La Marche, *Le Livre de l'advis de gaige de bataille* in *Traité du duel judiciaire: Relations de pas d'armes et tournois*, ed. by B. Prost (Paris: Léon Willem, 1872), pp. 1-54 (p. 2).

equivalence between different forms of combat, but also because the contrast is made not with war, the other form of mortal conflict he writes about, but with the court confrontations he has seen.¹ Of course there are reasons for doing this: war may be fatal, but it does not contain the element of single combat to be found in both court confrontation and in the judicial duel. It seems significant, however, that La Marche chooses to compare this aspect of the confrontation rather than its deadly intent. In essence by so doing he privileges the form of combat over content; and this points to a concern with the formal aspects of events which is apparent in other instances in his writing, such as his treatment of court ritual. The instance of the *Livre de l'advis de gaige de bataille* demonstrates also that La Marche's didactic purpose was not confined to the world of the court confrontation, since he writes:

espérant que par le récit de la fin de ceste escripre, les jeunes hommes ésquelx cuidier, verdeur et sang bouillant domine, et dont ilz entreprendroient légièrement plus que besoing ne leur seroit, par quoy ils mectent bien souvent la vie, l'honneur, l'avoir, et que pis est, l'âme et le tout au dangier et péril de fortune; et par mon recit bien entendu, j'ay espoir qu'ilz mectront bride et frein à telles outrecuydées et peu prisées emprises, dont le fais est légier à entreprendre et pesant à pourter et à soustenir.²

Accounts of judicial duels, therefore, have the same didactic intent as those of court combat, but with two important differences. Whereas La Marche addresses the young in presenting his explanation of judicial duels, no specific age is given for the addressees of the *pas de l'arbre Charlemagne*. This is because, La Marche tells us, young men, because of their biological disposition to aggression, are more likely to put themselves in danger in a judicial duel. Accounts of judicial duels and court combats may both be intended to instruct their readers, but whereas readers of the former are to be dissuaded

¹ In this La Marche's approach is to be distinguished from that of Christine de Pisan who (in the words of Caxton's translation), analyses the judicial duel in terms of warfare saying that it is 'weere þ' is onely made betwene two champions or otherwhyle many of one quarelle in a closed felde / the which werre is called champ of bataille whiche one gentylman vndretaketh for to doo ayenst another for to proue by myght of his own body som cryme or trayson that is occulted or hydd.' Christine de Pisan, *The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyvalrye*, p. 258.

² *Livre de l'advis de gaige de bataille*, p. 3.

from participation, readers of the latter are to be encouraged to put on their *cotte d'armes* and to participate.

And yet the didactic tone of La Marche's accounts of single combat is also addressed to another audience: the judge who presided over the combats. We have seen that this was the case in La Marche's work on judicial duels, in keeping with its dedication to Philippe le Beau, who might have been called upon to preside over such confrontations. The *Livre de l'avis de gaigne de bataille* contains a number of pieces of advice aimed specifically at a prince judging a duel: men over sixty should not be allowed to fight; and preliminary checks should be made before the battle to ensure that the accuser is not in the habit of making frequent or malicious allegations or that the defendant is not handicapped in some way.¹ In this latter case La Marche reports the arguments of some theoreticians of combat, that the accuser should be disabled in some manner to make the two combatants evenly matched. This is an opinion which La Marche rejects, saying that in these circumstances the prince judge should refuse to let the confrontation go ahead at all. Such an argument is in keeping with the author's starting position on judicial duels: namely that they should be avoided at all costs, but it places prime importance on the role of the judge in avoiding and mediating conflict.² In the case of court combat, as we have seen, the impulse was not to avoid confrontation; but the didactic value of La Marche's accounts for a prospective judge of the combat is no less apparent. This is particularly the case in the combat between Philippe de Ternant and Galiot de Baltasin, discussed above, where Baltasin's position as a foreigner in the Burgundian court allows La Marche to give his reader explicit examples on the conduct of such an event.

¹ *Livre de l'avis de gaigne de bataille*, p. 6, pp. 42-44.

² This is also the position of both Bonet's *Arbre des Batailles* (p. 223) and Pisan's adaptation of the work (pp. 260-61), which begin their discussions of the judicial duel by quoting canon law prohibitions of the institution before pointing out that written law provisions may sometimes contradict these.

Baltasin rides into the Burgundian court looking for someone who will meet him in single combat. When Ternant hears of this, he offers to challenge the Portuguese squire and takes up an *emprise* to signal his intention. There then follows a passage in which La Marche, under the guise of explaining to de Baltasin the implications of this action, informs his readers as to what is meant by the *emprise*:

et [Baltasin] dit qu'en son pays, quant le requerant arrache l'emprins de son compaignon, c'est pour la vie de l'ung ou de l'aultre, mais quant l'on n'y fait que toucher seulement, c'est pour chevalerie. Sur quoy luy respondit Thoison d'or que le seigneur de Ternant avoit chargé son emprins pour chevalerie et que la coustume estoit de toucher à l'emprins quant on est present. (La Marche, II, 66)

Similarly de Baltasin's mistake in entering the lists on a horse covered in steel spikes is portrayed as resulting from his ignorance of Burgundian conventions of court combat. The explanation of why he should not do this opens with a reference to Burgundian custom: 'l'on n'avoit point accoutumé de porter en lice ou noble champ cloz, dagues ou poinctures en habillemens de chevaulx' and it is only later that reference is made to the *chapitres* of the combat, which he had been given and by which he should have known that such equine trappings were illegal. Elsewhere in the account La Marche gives other examples of how to conduct such a combat which are particularly relevant to the role of the judge. He asks the *officiers d'armes* stationed for the combats on foot how the distance which the two combatants have to retreat from each other between their blows is measured, and receives the reply that:

chascun pas fut prins pour deux piedz et demy, à mesurer par la main d'ung chevalier, ou pour le moins de la main d'ung homme noble et que ceux là estoient mesurez par le mareschal de la lice, estant ce cas du dependant de son office. (La Marche, II, 71)

The conveying of this information suggests once more that the passage is intended to be a didactic work, illustrating how good combats are to be conducted, and the explicit approval of Philippe le Bon's judgement ('le duc, qui moult bien se congnoissoit en tel

cas') in his handling of the incident in which Ternant loses his sword indicates that this didactic content is intended mainly for the instruction of the prince.

In keeping with this reading of La Marche's accounts of single combat as partly intended as instruction manuals for judges, we should note that La Marche consistently reports on a feature of the *pas d'armes* which is absent in the work of other authors. When, for example in the case of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs*, two protagonists have decided to meet each other in a series of separate combats either with different weapons or on foot and on horseback, La Marche never portrays the symbolic reconciliation of the combatants at the end of the first combat. It was traditional in the *pas d'armes* for combatants to touch when their combat was over to signal that they bore each other no lasting ill will. This touch was often the site of genuine reconciliation and an essential part of the peaceful rhetoric of the *pas d'armes*. However La Marche frequently stresses that no such reconciliation can take place while the combatants are still engaged to fight each other. Thus, in the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* confrontation between Jacques de Lalaing and Jacques d'Avanchies, a squire who had touched all three shields and who thus wanted to participate in combat with axe, sword and lance, La Marche ends his account of the first combat with 'pour celle fois ne touchèrent point l'ung à l'autre, pour ce que encores n'estoient pas faictes les armes emprises.' (La Marche, II, 187) After the horseback combat he writes that 'lors touchèrent ensemble, pour ce que leur emprise estoit achevée'. (La Marche, II, 191) This implies that the challenge to fight an opponent in three different ways should be regarded as a single *emprise*, a word with a number of connotations in the literature of Burgundian combat.¹ Other accounts of the same event do not seem to take this line. For example the *Livre des faits du bon chevalier Jacques de Lalain* depicts the champions

¹ The *emprise* is at once the intention to undertake a *pas d'armes*, the *pas d'armes* itself and the symbol, frequently a piece of clothing, by which the *entrepreneur* signals his intention. It is discussed in Michel Stanesco, *Jeux d'errance du chevalier médiéval: Aspects ludiques de la fonction guerrière dans la littérature du Moyen Âge flamboyant* (Leiden: Brill, 1988).

touching at the end of all three of their combats.¹ This is not an isolated aberration on La Marche's part: he makes the same point in the Ternant/Galiot confrontation, and this in itself suggests that he considered it to be important. (La Marche, II, 75) As it was the judge of a *pas d'armes* who made the request that combatants should touch, insistence on the fact that this should only take place at the end of an *emprise* and that the end only occurred when all forms of combat undertaken had been exhausted, can be read as a further message to the judge on how court combat should be conducted. In this, La Marche's writing on court combat can be seen to have a similar didactic purpose to that of his work on judicial duels.

Bastons, bastons and bastons: Lexical equivocality in accounts of combat.

The primary role of the judge in court combat, as these instances demonstrate, was not so much to decide upon the winner or loser of a combat as to judge upon its proper conduct. In many instances La Marche appears deliberately to shy away from a judgement on which of two combatants has won a court combat. In many *chapters* for court combat, the killing of a horse entails immediate disqualification.² Nevertheless, when Anthoine, Bâtard de Bourgogne, has his horse killed in a collision with his opponent, Anthony Woodville, Lord Scales, La Marche's attitude is that no blame is to be apportioned 'ains avint ce cop et ce chocq par mesadventure, comme je l'ay devisé.' (La Marche, III, 52) The fact that Scales was not disqualified suggests that this was the view of others present. Moreover this avoidance of a conclusive outcome for court combat was not a feature solely of this event or of La Marche's rhetoric. Part of the

¹ *Livre des faits*, p. 231, p. 233, p. 234. The first of these instances is most explicit on the point: 'sy leur dit [le juge] que bien et vaillamment avoient fait leurs armes, et leur pria qu'ils touchassent ensemble, et qu'ils fussent bons amis, laquelle chose ils firent.'

² Loys de Beauveau, 'Le Pas d'armes de la bergière' in *Œuvres complètes du Roi René* ed. by M. de Quatrebarbes, 4 vols (Angers: Cosnier & Lachère, 1845-46), II, 43-96:

'[...] qui cheval blesse, en vain se travaille:
Le pris avoir plus ne s'atende', (p. 53).

decor of fifteenth-century court combat was the *baston*: a white stick with which the judge stopped the combat if he felt that the participants had fought bravely, or it looked as if one was in danger of injury or death.¹ This form of intervention was particularly used in the *Pas de la fontaine des pleurs*, where challengers could chose the number of blows struck in an axe combat, and where, according to Jean Lefèvre's *Épître* and the *Livre des faits du bon chevalier Jacques de Lalain*, Philippe le Bon stopped eight of the final combats as they were getting too long.² The *baston*, which also appears in Hardouin de la Jaille's treatise on judicial duels, and to a lesser extent in that of La Marche, is thus the highest arbiter in court combat: the symbol of the authority of the judge and of his mercy.³ But *bastons* appear in single combat under a variety of guises. In the judicial duel in Valenciennes the weapons used were *bastons*, cudgels which reflected the non-noble status of the protagonists, although, as La Marche says, '[...]me fut dit que quant le plus noble homme du monde combatroit à Valenciennes, il n'auroit aultre advantaige, sinon que la pointe de son escu seroit en bas, et pourroit porter son escu comme ung noble homme le doit porter.' (La Marche, II, 405) It seems, therefore, that the lack of nobility of the weapon stems from the fact that the combat itself is regarded as ignoble. This conclusion is supported by the use of the word *baston* in two other combats described by La Marche, These combats, both of which occur in the account of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs*, and are represented firstly as 'luite de mortelz ennemis' referring to a battle between Jacques de Lalaing and Claude Pietois, and secondly as a combat in which 'requeroit chascun son compaignon en signe de

¹ White sticks were not the only implements which could fulfil this function. Malcolm Vale cites an instance in 1435 in which Philippe le Bon threw an arrow into the midst of a court confrontation (Malcolm Vale, *War and Chivalry: Warfare and Aristocratic Culture in England, France and Burgundy at the End of the Middle Ages* (London: Duckworth, 1981), p. 85). Nevertheless, the *baston* is the most frequently mentioned object used for this purpose.

² This information is contradicted in La Marche's account, which often implies or states explicitly that combats went their full term.

³ Hardouin de La Jaille, *Formulaire des Gaiges de Bataille in Traités du duel judiciaire: Relations de pas d'armes et tournois*, ed. by B. Prost (Paris: Léon Willem, 1872), pp. 135-191 La Jaille suggests that the prince judge is free to stop the combat if he feels that both protagonists have fought well, p. 187.

mortelz ennemis', in that involving Jacques de Lalaing and Gaspart de Dourtain.¹ At crucial points in his description of these *luites des mortelz ennemis* La Marche refers to the weapons used, axes in both cases, as *bastons*. While commonly found describing the handle of an axe (in both cases it is the handle which is being used, either in an attempt to trip up an opponent or to fend off his blows), this word is not used in those accounts of fights with axes in the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* which precede that between Lalaing and Piemois. The fact that both combats, alone amongst those in the account of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs*, are qualified as *mortelz* suggests that La Marche may be attempting to draw a parallel between the ferocity with which they are fought and the deadly intent of the judicial duel. Certainly there are other features of the two combats which are reminiscent of his account of the Valenciennes duel. One example of this can be seen in the fact that, in each case, La Marche only describes the two protagonists once they have embarked upon their battle. This technique, which distinguishes between the combatants only at the moment when their physical strength comes into question, is one to be found in the Valenciennes duel. Although it does occur in other accounts of court combat, it is much less typical than the structure whereby the combatants are described as they arrive at the lists, and is a sign that La Marche may regard the *luite des mortelz ennemis* as having features in common with the judicial duel. It is tempting to draw the conclusion that La Marche uses the word *bastons* because of its association with combat outside the world of the court and thus to assume that, for him, the *luite des mortelz ennemis* resembles the judicial duel insofar as it brings its noble participants down to the level of commoners, fighting with non-noble weapons. In this instance, as in that of the duel itself, the *baston*, far from being the highest symbol of ducal justice and the instrument of mercy, is the most brutal weapon to be found in single combat and the instrument with which mortal blows are dealt.

¹ La Marche, *Mémoires*, II, 179 and 195.

However, the *baston* is not simply one of these things or the other, but both at the same time, and it also appears in accounts of combat with yet a third meaning: one which is devoid of many of the implications of status inherent in the other two. Here it is a generic term for any weapon. A knight who is armed is *embastonné* and this may be with a noble *baston*, such as a sword or an axe, just as well as with a cudgel. Thus La Marche is able to use *baston* with two meanings in the same discussion in the *Livre de l'advis de gaige de bataille*, on whether a non-nobleman can take on a nobleman in a judicial duel. Some people, he reports, are of the opinion that they can:

combatre selon l'anchienne coustume armé de cuir bouilly, et atout ung baston sans poincte, sans tranchant et sans fer itel [...]. Mais [...] si le cas touche trahyson contre le prince et de cryme de lèse-majesté, le prince peut anoblir celluy qui le veult advertir de son peril ou danger, pour asseurer sa personne; et par ceste seconde voye l'appellant annobli nouvelement peut combatre comme ung noble homme, d'armeures et de bastons, et porter cotte d'armes et telles armes que le prince luy donnera.¹

In the first case, the *baston* is the weapon of the commoner, forced into unequal combat with his social superior. In the second, it is the symbol of his new-found equality, acquired together with other trappings of nobility. In the account of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* too, we find that once the word *baston* has appeared referring to an axe handle in descriptions of *luites de mortelz ennemis*, it turns up in most subsequent accounts of axe fights in the *fontaine des pleurs*, including that between Lalaing and Amé Rabustin, of which La Marche explicitly states his approval when he writes '[...] sa maniere de faire me sembla honneste et de bon exemple'. (La Marche, II, 181)

The case of the *baston*, therefore, demonstrates the extent to which accounts of one sort of combat in La Marche's writing are dependent upon the same vocabulary as others, and can often be read in the context of these other sorts of combat. A *baston* in a *pas d'armes* is the stick with which the judge brings the confrontation to an end. It is also the stick carried by the marshals of the lists, where it separates those inside the lists

¹ *Livre de l'advis et de gaige de bataille*, pp. 43-44.

from those outside. In this context it is a miniature version of the judge's *baston*, fulfilling a similar role in policing the combat, but controlling only one aspect of it. However, its role, separating the noble protagonists of the *pas* from the potentially common spectators, recalls the non-noble association of *baston* found in the combats of the judicial duel. Meanwhile, within the lists, the protagonists themselves carry *bastons*, once more invested with a number of potential meanings: either the weapon wielded with deadly intent, found in the duel, or a weapon of any sort which is a sign of a participant's nobility. In war too, we find this proliferation of significance being attached to weapons, although in this case the word *baston* is not used.

La Marche gives his readers a description of a scene which took place during the siege of Neuss:

ung debat se meust aux logis entre les Angloix et les Ytaliens, et, à la verité, les Angloix avoient le pire, car toutes les nacions se joindoint avec les Ytaliens. Mais le duc de Bourgoingne chevaleusement, l'espée au poing, se mist entre deux, et appaisa le debat, qui estoit bien dangereux. (La Marche, III, 96)

To be sure, the word *baston* is not used, but its many meanings are present in this short passage. An 'espée' is a *baston* in the value-neutral sense of the term: it is a weapon. However, it is not the 'espée d'armes' of court combat which is being referred to here but a war sword, to be wielded with deadly intent.¹ As such it has more in common with the *baston* of judicial combat or the *luite des mortelz ennemis*, a point which is underlined by the stress placed on the danger inherent in the situation. Again, in this passage it is the duke who wields the sword, intervening to defuse the potential danger. In war as in peace, the duke is portrayed as the righteous judge of those who fight before him. In war, as in peace, he wields a *baston*.

¹ For a discussion of the difference between the weapons of court combat and those of war see C. Gaier, 'Technique des combats singuliers d'après les auteurs "bourguignons" du XV^e siècle', *Le Moyen Âge*, 91(1985), 415-57 and 92 (1986), 5-40.

Ordering the combat: the structure of an account

Once the judge had thrown his *baston* in single combat a debate arose: which of the protagonists should leave the field first? La Marche reports this controversy on a number of occasions, as do other authors, and demonstrates its resolution in the same way on each occasion. Frequently the combatants are asked to ride off at the same time.¹ This concern with the order in which one left the field can, I think, be traced back to the judicial duel, and demonstrates once more the extent to which both duel and court combat were viewed within the same context. In a duel the first man to leave the lists did so either because he was carried off dead, he had conceded defeat or had confessed to his crime. A sentence of death, a fine or degradation from noble status was the result of his departure and sometimes more than one of these sentences was carried out.² It was therefore important in the context of judicial combat to avoid leaving the lists first and this concern filtered through into court combat which, as we have seen, had in any case a reluctance to pronounce judgement upon the outcome of the confrontation. In the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche, however, we find this concern extended to warfare, so that he judges the outcome of a battle purely on the criterion of which of the two sides left the field first. The event is that of the battle of Montlehéry, which La Marche argues was a victory for Charles le Hardi, despite claims to the contrary by French historians: ‘mais garda le champ, comme sa victoire, le conte de Charrolois par trois jours, sans eslongner en tout plus d’une lieue’. (La Marche, III, 17-18) Here Charles’s possession of the field after his opponent has left is seen, as it would be in single combat, as proof of his victory. Of course the analysis is as applicable to war as it is to single combat; a protagonist who flees is likely to have been defeated. Nevertheless, the

¹ An instance where a decision was made to the advantage of one of the protagonists can be seen in La Marche, I, 302, however, it should be borne in mind that in this case preference is given to Pierre de Charny on the grounds that he is the defendant in the *pas d’armes* and the implication is that to give judgement against him would be to suggest that the *arbre Charlemagne* had been taken.

² A list of punishments to be imposed in judicial duels can be found in Hardouin de La Jaille, *Formulaire des Gaiges de Bataille* in *Traité du duel judiciaire*, pp. 166-69.

fact that La Marche applies it to both situations shows once more how different sorts of combat were indissociably linked within the same conceptual framework.

The question of order comes up again in an examination of La Marche's rhetoric of single combat and demonstrates the author's use, and adaptation, of formulaic narratives in his accounts. The formulaic presentation of the *pas d'armes* followed a strict order, with only minor variations; but it is in these variations that La Marche's particular rhetoric of combat can be identified.

The description of a confrontation in a *pas d'armes* begins typically with an account of deciding what form the combat should take. The combat does not, however take place immediately but, in the *fontaine des pleurs*, as in other *pas d'armes* described by La Marche, the challenger has to wait to have a day assigned to him. The account of the combat itself begins with the arrival of the judge, who is frequently named and less frequently described. This is followed in the *pas d'armes* by the entry of the two champions and a description of their clothes before battle commences. Typically in this section, the clothes of the *entrepreneur* are described before those of his opponent. Cripps-Day, quoting M. Nielson's *Trial by Combat*, points to this as one of the differences between single combat in a court setting and the judicial duel, arguing that 'In the judicial combat the defendant denied the charge, appeared first in the field, and was the first to be sworn; exactly the opposite took place in a combat in chivalry.'¹ Certainly this seems to be the case in the accounts of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs*, with one exception: that of La Marche.

There are three detailed accounts of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs*, which Jacques de Lalaing undertook over the course of a year in Chalon-sur-Saône. There is reason to believe that one of these three, the *Livre des faits du bon chevalier Jacques de Lalain*, draws heavily on another, the *Epître* of Jean Lefèvre, and may even have the

¹ Francis Henry Cripps-Day, *The History of the Tournament in England and France*, ([n.p.]: Bernard Quatrach, 1918), p. 47.

same author.¹ Even if this is the case, and the accounts in the *Livre des faits* and the *Epître* should be regarded as a single source, they provide a comparison for the account supplied in La Marche's *Mémoires* which points up some interesting features of La Marche's account. All the more interesting, perhaps, because Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy was the herald Toison d'or, and so his account is written in the tradition of heraldic writings which La Marche cites as sources. If La Marche was working from accounts written by heralds, then we must assume that he was aware of the formulaic conventions for describing combat. Indeed in most other court confrontations he describes he follows these conventions, describing the *entrepreneur* first. However, on a number of occasions in the account of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs*, he departs from this convention and presents a description of the challenger before that of the *entrepreneur*. There seems to be no logic to this modification: it does not signal a combat in which Lalaing's opponent is victorious, nor one in which he is defeated; nor does it seem to have anything do with the nationality of the opponent, as the same man may be described before Lalaing in one combat and after him in another.² In a number of instances it does seem to coincide with a combat which was stopped before its allotted end by the judge, but this is not always the case, and we find Guillaume Basan's description preceding that of Jacques de Lalaing, even though the combat appears to have run its course. The rule that the *entrepreneur* in a combat be described before his opponent was one which was strictly observed, and La Marche's departure from it in the case of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* is remarkable. Are we to consider it as being a fifteenth-century *effet de réel*, a change in order which gives an account greater

¹ For a discussion of the authorship of the *Livre des faits*, see Elisabeth Gaucher, *La Biographie Chevaleresque: Typologie d'un genre (XIII^e-XV^e siècle)* (Paris: Champion, 1994), pp. 174-75.

² However, it is worth noting that two of the four knights where such a reversal occurs are singled out by Jean-Pierre Jourdan in an unpublished article, 'Le Thème du pas dans le royaume de France (Bourgogne, Anjou) à la fin du Moyen-Âge: Le Chiffre du pas, le maniement d'un symbole' as the only two knights to participate in the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* not to come from countries which already had political alliances with Burgundy – Jacques d'Avanchies and Jean de Boniface.

verisimilitude by ignoring the traditional fiction that the *entrepreneur* was always in a position to turn up on the field of battle first?¹ However, in defining this term Roland Barthes argues that the detail in question should be structurally neutral and, in a system as structurally elaborate and stylized as a fifteenth-century account of court combat, it is difficult to argue that any departure from the norm could fulfil this condition. The departure from the conventional structure invites interpretation but the apparent lack of system whereby La Marche varies the entrance of the protagonists frustrates this impulse.

La Marche was an experienced manipulator of the structures of court combat and had a much greater experience of it – and of war – than of the judicial duel, the other form of combat which he describes in his *Mémoires*. It is therefore not surprising that the account of the one duel which he did witness is structured in a way which is reminiscent of the formulaic account of court combat. The choice of the form of combat, made in the case of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* by touching a shield of the colour symbolizing that form of combat is a preliminary which can be compared to the ceremony described in La Marche's account of the Valenciennes duel where the two participants, Jacotin Plouvier and Mahuot, declare their reasons for seeking a duel.² In the account of the Valenciennes duel too, there is a gap between these preliminaries and the combat itself where both protagonists are put into prison, awaiting the duke who

¹ The term *effet de réel* is used by Roland Barthes in several articles, most notably in 'Le Discours de l'histoire', first published in 1967 in *Information sur les sciences sociales* and reprinted in Roland Barthes, *Le Bruissement de la langue (Essais critiques IV)* (Paris: Seuil, 1984), pp. 153-66 and 'L'Effet de réel', originally published in 1968 in *Communications* and reprinted in *Le Bruissement de la langue*, pp. 167-74. However, the way in which Barthes applies the term varies slightly in a way which significantly affects the extent to which it is applicable in this case. In 'Le Discours de l'histoire', he describes the procedure as being that in which 'le réel n'est jamais qu'un signifié informulé, abrité derrière la toute-puissance apparente du référent', that is to say a system in which the purpose of a detail in a text is to assert that the subject matter is that which really happened (which Barthes calls the 'réfèrent'). In 'L'Effet de réel' Barthes's analysis is similar but concentrates only on those details which are 'structurellement superflues' and whose sole purpose is therefore to signal that the text depicts reality.

² It should be noted that these reasons differ slightly in La Marche's two accounts of the duel. In the *Livre de l'avis de gage de bataille*, which he says was the first of the two accounts to be completed, he writes that Valenciennes had the authority to free any murderer who admitted his crime and agreed to fight in single combat, while in the *Mémoires* he writes that this power was only given in cases where the killer claimed to have acted in self defence. La Marche, II, 402-407.

comes to watch their battle. The account of the battle itself begins in this case too with the entry of the judge, followed by that of the combatants. Thus far the account of the Valenciennes duel has followed the same basic pattern as that of a *pas d'armes*, but there are some differences. One is a description of the lists in which the duel was to take place occurs between the entry of the judge and that of the combatants. This can be explained by the fact that this is an account of an independent confrontation, not one which is incorporated into the larger narrative structure of a *pas d'armes*, where the description of the lists would precede the first account of a battle. It is, however, preceded by an intervention which, as far as I have seen, does not appear to have a parallel in La Marche's accounts of courtly combat:

Le peuple estoit grand sur le marchié, et estoit conduit par ung nommé Nycolas du Gardin, qui se tenoit, en une garite, à l'hostel de la ville, à tout ung grant baston; et s'il veoit que le peuple se desrivast ou muast en riens, il feroit de son baston et crioit: "Guare le ban!" Et sur ce mot chascun se tenoit coy, et doubtoit la punicion de justice; et, à la verité tout le peuple et ceulx de la ville estoient pour Mahuot en couraige, pour ce qu'il combatoit pour la querelle de la ville. (La Marche, II, 404)

Such a description of the conduct of the crowd is not out of place in writing on duels or on courtly combat; René d'Anjou's treatise on tournaments describes the way in which the lists should be arranged saying that there should be two rings of fences, one inside the other 'et là dedans se doyvent tenir gens armez et non armez commis de par les juges pour garder les tournoyans de la foule du peuple.'¹ However, it is rare that La Marche should mention the presence of the spectators, and even rarer that he should draw attention to the measures taken to prevent them from becoming involved in the conflict. One explanation for this may lie in the nature of the crowd, designated at three points in the short extract quoted above as 'le peuple'; that is to say commoners as

¹ René d'Anjou, *Traictié de la forme et devis d'ung tournoy*, pp. 15-16. Indeed, Barber and Barker argue that the presence of the spectators was what led to the elaboration of court combat, with the aim of involving them in a way that would have been impossible in a tournament which more closely mirrored the conditions of war. Richard Barber and Juliet Barker, *Tournaments: Jousts, Chivalry and Pageants in the Middle Ages*, p. 7.

opposed to the nobles whom La Marche normally describes as forming the audience for courtly combat. The implication may be that, as the crowd is not bound by the same moral code of *noblesse*, a word La Marche uses to refer to both moral and genealogical qualities: they need to be restrained, and the interruption of the normal structure of the description of courtly combat serves to remind the reader of the extent to which the duel described falls short of noble ideals. The other departure from the standard ordering of a formulaic account is one which I have mentioned earlier: the fact that the two protagonists are only distinguished at the moment that their battle begins. Prior to this, they are described when they have both entered the lists and are making their vows; yet this initial description does not distinguish between them in any way, concentrating instead on the identical way that the two men are dressed; with their heads shaved, their nails clipped and clothed in close-fitting leather garments. The departure from the pageantry associated with court combat is clear and intentional. By using the standard formulaic ordering of accounts of court combat La Marche is able to demonstrate all the more strikingly the extent to which the judicial duel departs from standard court practice. It should not be forgotten that La Marche's approach to the judicial duel, in contrast to his approach to court combat, is critical. By contrasting the two using the same discursive structures, La Marche is able the more firmly to underscore this criticism.

'Sa cotte d'armes vestue': Dressing up the *pas d'armes*.

One feature of the decor of the *pas d'armes* in La Marche's *Mémoires* which is thus absent from the stark description of the judicial duel, but which has associations with the world of warfare, is the *cotte d'armes* and it is one which tells us much about the social conception of combat in the work. The *cotte d'armes* is not what would be translated into English as a 'coat of arms', but is related to it. It is a coat, bearing the

heraldic device of the man who wears it. Consequently it is a garment reserved for nobility and, as we saw above, La Marche treats it as symbolic of noble status when he shows the newly-enobled knight putting on his *cotte d'armes*. In the fifteenth century, a number of writers on warfare bemoaned the fact that nobles no longer wore their *cotte d'armes* into battle. Thus Anthoine de La Sale argues that in the past knights carried their *cottes d'armes* tied to their saddles just in case they were involved in a battle, because it was thought a disgrace to appear in battle without one's *cotte d'armes*, the implication being that if a knight did not wear his *cotte d'armes* he was not committed to staying to see the end of the battle.¹ In contrast, he says 'seroit huy honte, fust en bataille ou en assault, qui sa cote d'armes porteroit.' La Marche too seems to have been a partisan of the practice of wearing the *cotte d'armes* in battle. Alone amongst the knights at the Banquet of the Pheasant vowing oaths to go on a military mission to recapture Constantinople, La Marche mentions his desire to put on his *cotte d'armes* in open battle.²

The argument that this practice had fallen into disuse was often supported by assertions that nobles no longer knew what their heraldic coat of arms looked like.³ Those who thought that this was a bad thing made efforts aimed at educating the nobility in heraldry; and we can read La Marche's introduction to his *Mémoires*, where he explains the origin of countries and of princely houses in terms of their coats of arms in this context. More relevant to a discussion of the presentation of combat, however, are the efforts made by René d'Anjou and others to instruct the nobility by requiring

¹ Anthoine de La Sale, *Des anciens tournois et faitz d'armes in Traités du duel judiciaire, relations de pas d'armes et tournois*, ed. by B. Prost, pp. 193-221 (pp. 198-202).

² The oath, not reproduced in La Marche's *Mémoires*, can be found in Mathieu d'Escouchy's version of the account of the Banquet of the Pheasant; d'Escouchy, I, 221-22 'je yray [...] ne n'en retourneray, pour quelque chose qui ne puist advenir, se ce n'est par l'express commandement de mondit seigneur, jusques à ce que je me soye trouvé en lieu où par honneur je puisse vestir de ma cotte d'armes, s'il me plaist, à l'encontre des infidelles, ou en sy honnorable rencontre ou besoingne qu'il y ait v cens hommes desconfis au mains.'

³ Thus Anthoine de La Sale quotes his conversation with a man 'qui portoit d'argent à troiz paulz de gueulles, [et qui] me dist "je sçay que nous portons ung champ blanc à troiz bendes par long, vermeilles ou bleus, ne m'en souvient pas bien."

that they wear their *cottes d'armes* in the course of court combat. Thus René d'Anjou's *Traictié de la forme et devis d'ung tournoy* has prospective participants displaying their heraldic arms before the beginning of the tournament.¹ Here court combat is once again envisaged as the training ground for warfare and military necessity is cited as a reason for adopting the practice in court confrontations for, as Anthoine de La Salle writes, 'les tournois représentent courtoise bataille.'

We know that La Marche invested the act of wearing one's *cotte d'armes* into battle with some significance. If he did not, then he would not have sworn to do so at the Banquet of the Pheasant. Therefore it is not surprising that he should make frequent references to the practice of wearing the *cotte d'armes* in court combat, as this was an act encouraged by those who advocated its use in battle. However, the way in which La Marche mentions the *cotte d'armes* differs from other references in similar accounts of combat, and raises questions as to its rhetorical value. A good case in point is that of the accounts of the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs*. As a herald, Jean Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy recording the events of a *pas d'armes* might be expected to show a keen interest in the *cotte d'armes* and in the family coat of arms which it bore. Many of Jacques de Lalaing's opponents in the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* wore their *cottes d'armes* and all three accounts of the *pas* mention this. However, where the *Epître* and the *Livre des faits* usually precede to give a description of the heraldic coat of arms worn, La Marche never does so. If La Marche was drawing upon heraldic sources, as seems more than likely, then we must imagine that his decision to omit the description of the *cotte d'armes* was a conscious one. It was a herald's job to record the coats of arms used in combat, if only because it was heralds to whom knights appealed in a case of debate

¹ René d'Anjou, *Traictié de la forme et devis d'ung tournoy* in *Œuvres complètes* ed. by M. de Quatrebarbes, 4 vols (Angers: Cosnier & Lachère, 1845-46), II, 1-42.

over heraldic devices.¹ Therefore it is difficult to imagine a heraldic account of a *pas d'armes* which did not include this detail. The accounts La Marche supplies rarely do so.² Why is this? We cannot argue that this is because La Marche regarded heraldry as unimportant: his oath at the Banquet of the Pheasant and the content of the 1488 Book One show that this was not the case. There must, therefore, be other reasons for his choosing to omit heraldic descriptions.

One possible reason may be found in the account of the combat between Philippe de Ternant and Galiot de Baltasin. Whereas Ternant's clothing is described in detail (it is mainly black and blue – the colours of the 'esguillette' which formed the *emprise* for the combat and, according to La Marche, Ternant's colours – gold and white), Galiot only wears his coat of arms throughout the four confrontations and this is not described. This allows La Marche to present the colour-scheme of the *pas d'armes* more forcefully than could be the case were he to include description of a heraldic coat of arms whose colours had not been chosen to fit in with the decor of that particular *pas*.³ Another remark occurring in the same combat suggests that this was La Marche's intention, since he describes the horses on which the protagonists enter for the final combat, saying once more that Ternant's was covered in blue and black and adding that Baltasin was accompanied by three other horses 'couvertz de soye et d'orfavrerie de diverse sorte, et dont je n'ay pas bien souvenance.' (La Marche, II, 76) By forgetting the colours worn by Baltasin's horses, La Marche obviates the need to describe them. The

¹ Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 134 defines the role of the herald as being 'acknowledged experts in armoury and in all matters of secular ceremony: in the display of jousts and tournaments, in the judgement of prowess, in the panoply of coronations, knightings and funerals. They also had important functions in the field in wartime. It was their business to record promotions in knighthood on the eve of battle, to search after it among the dead and to note the names and arms of those who had shown prowess in the field. Most important of all, perhaps, in practical terms, they had achieved recognised immunity from hostile action, and therefore acted in war as messengers between belligerents.'

² He mentions Anthoine, Bastard of Burgundy's coat of arms in the account of his combat against Anthony Woodville, Lord Scales, to draw attention to the transverse bar marking Anthoine's illegitimacy.

³ A study of the different colour schemes of *pas d'armes* is to be found in Jean-Pierre Jourdan's unpublished article, 'Les Fêtes de la chevalerie dans les états bourguignons à la fin du moyen-âge (aspects sociaux et économiques)'.

overall impression, therefore, is one in which the colours chosen by the *entrepreneur* as characteristic of the *pas* are stressed and, by extension, the *entrepreneur* himself. In the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs*, too, La Marche's silence when it comes to describing the *cottes d'armes* of the challengers serves to underline the three colours; black, white and purple, which the *pas* gave special significance.¹ The fact that these were also the colours worn by Jacques de Lalaing means that his clothing receives greater attention than that of his opponent, and this serves to underline his importance as the central figure of the *pas*.

However, there are other reasons for which La Marche may have wished to omit descriptions of *cottes d'armes* despite, or rather because of, the importance with which he invested them. If, as Anthoine de La Sale suggests, nobles really had lost the art of recognizing heraldic devices, mentioning a *cotte d'armes* without describing it would point up this deficiency and suggest to La Marche's readership that they should know what these *cottes* looked like. Of course, it would be equally possible to conclude that La Marche was writing for an audience that did know its way around family coats of arms and so did not need them explained. Certainly, when La Marche's audience is a boy, in the 1488 Book One, heraldic devices receive more explicit attention. Finally, it is possible that the phrase *cotte d'armes* is intended to be not descriptive but evocative, referring to an ideal of combat in this costume, which La Marche wished to advocate. In this case the physical description of the garment would detract from the overall message, as it would demonstrate the superficial differences between various *cottes d'armes* rather than referring to their essential similarity. It is certainly the case that the *cotte d'armes* was an idealized garment; regarded by some writers as the paradigm in

¹ Challengers chose the form taken by the combat in the *pas de la fontaine des pleurs* by touching a shield in one of these three colours. Black signified combat with lances, white combat with axes and purple combat with swords. At the resultant confrontation Jacques de Lalaing wore clothing in the colour which represented the type of combat chosen.

both court combat and war and its prominence in La Marche, albeit not described, suggests that he shared this ideal.

La Guerre du Bien Public: A War without Commoners.

The *cotte d'armes* represents the ideal for court and military combat because it is a symbol of nobility. On several occasions in this chapter, we have seen how concepts of nobility and of court combat are inextricably linked. Court combat is reserved for those who can prove descent from four quarters and even the distance which the two protagonists retreat in the Ternant/Galioi confrontation is measured with the hand of a nobleman.¹ In the matter of judicial duels too, La Marche appears to have a strict conception of nobility as a qualification for participation in combat.² His opening statement in the *Livre de l'avis de gaige de bataille* that he has never seen a judicial duel fought is immediately modified by his supplementary 'Or est bien vray, affin que je rende compte de ce qui est venu à ma congnoissance, que je veiz à Valenciennes ung gaige combatu entre deux hommes non nobles, fondez sur franchise de ville.', which implies that La Marche does not consider such duels between non-nobles as being genuine *gaiges de bataille*.³

¹ René d'Anjou's *Traictié* is more relaxed on the question of nobles of less than four quarters participating in tournaments. He says in a note that 's'il vient aucun au tournoy, qu'il ne soit point gentil homme de toutes ses lignes, et que de sa personne il soit vertueux', the man in question should be beaten symbolically by the princes and 'grans seigneurs' present and allowed to participate, *Traictié de la forme et devis d'ung tournoy*, p. 22. Similarly Evelyne van den Neste has shown that, particularly in the fourteenth century, bourgeois tournaments were also held. However, as Neste points out, these tournaments were occasionally open to nobles but non-nobles were never permitted to enter noble tournaments, Evelyne van den Neste, *Tournois, joutes, pas d'armes dans les villes de Flandre à la fin du moyen âge (1300-1486)* Mémoires et documents de l'École des Chartes, 47 (Paris: École des Chartes, 1996).

² La Marche's concept of nobility, if flexible, is very strictly elaborated. He argues that one can be enobled, through service to the prince or for another reason, but that this does not give one access to *gentillesse*, a quality which is only achieved after generations of nobility: 'par ce moyen sont anobliz et eulx et leurs postérité, et par entretenance de franchises conditions, et de mener vie honneste de nobles hommes, et se peuvent les hoirs venans d'eulx nommer gentilzhommes.' *Livre de l'avis de gaige de bataille*, p. 45.

³ *Livre de l'avis de gaige de bataille*, pp. 2-3.

Court combat is thus reserved for nobles by its laws and by its decor, where the stress placed on the *cotte d'armes* means that only those possessing a heraldic coat of arms fit in. Strict segregation of nobles from commoners in combat means that the judicial duel too is reserved for the nobility, and commoners must be enobled before they can enter a duel against a nobleman. La Marche reinforces this point by seeming not to consider duels fought between commoners as being proper duels at all.¹ It is as if only noble combat interests the author. And yet in the case of warfare it is impossible to portray such segregated combat. As was said above, war in the fifteenth century was a discipline which was becoming increasingly remote from the techniques of noble combat as practised in the *pas d'armes*. Archers and artillery were permanent features of warfare; but although bowmen were often incorporated into the decor of the *pas* by accompanying the champions as they entered, archery played no part in the noble competition and artillery still less.² The stress placed by La Marche on nobility when discussing *pas d'armes* and judicial duels raises the question as to how he conceptualizes warfare, where nobles have to fight alongside commoners.³ One answer is presented in the *Livre de l'avis de gaigne de bataille*, where La Marche argues that war is ennobling, or, at least, that in creating a knight on the battlefield, a prince creates a nobleman.⁴ However not all participants in war are in a position to be knighted and La Marche's treatment of commoners in general seems to suggest that his ideal in war, as in other forms of combat, is that they be excluded.

¹ And indeed La Marche writes of the town of Valenciennes being redeemed from the disgrace of the judicial duel by a noble combat, using the word 'noble' three times in a short account of their confrontation and stressing the fact that they wore their *cottes d'armes*. La Marche, II, 407.

² Evelyne van den Neste, in *Tournois, joutes, pas d'armes dans les villes de Flandre à la fin du moyen âge*, p. 197 discusses archery and points out that, members of shooting guilds, with the exception of their chief, were almost never taken from amongst the ranks of the well-to-do bourgeoisie, still less the nobility.

³ Malcolm Vale (*War and Chivalry*, p. 148) comments that this was more true of the Burgundian army than of any other at the time after 1473, with a restructuring of the army that meant that 'for the first time in European history since the fall of the Roman empire, an army was subjected to a system of differentiation by insignia which had no connection with social status.'

⁴ 'n'y a point tant à faire de créer ung chevalier que ung gentilhomme, et ung noble homme samblablement.' *Livre de l'avis de gaigne de bataille*, p. 45.

When La Marche draws a comparison between two Burgundian squires and a group of professional soldiers who capture them, he describes the former as *gens de bien*. (La Marche, II, 32) This is a military term but it is also a moral judgement and one which was applied in a social sense to qualify people of financial standing in the fifteenth century.¹ Social rank here is clearly associated with a number of values; bravery, loyalty and steadfastness, which common protagonists lack. Similarly in two incidents in La Marche's accounts of Charles le Hardi's wars, we find commoners censured for their unchivalrous conduct. In both cases Charles exercises his role as judge to discipline soldiers who have departed radically from the chivalric ideal. In both cases the soldiers who are punished are archers, whose weapons demonstrate their lack of noble status. In the first example, Charles enters Dinant with his army and finds three archers who, in the sack of the town, had taken advantage of the general chaos and raped a woman:

mais le noble conte tira celle part, et print les malefaicteurs, et prestement les fit pendre et estrangler au premier arbre qu'il trouva; et à la femme il fit des biens, comme il appartenoit; et signifia à son père, par le seigneur d'Imbercourt, la victoire qu'il avoit de ses ennemis, et l'execution qu'il avoit faicte [...] (La Marche, III, 46)

In making this judgement Charles's nobility is underlined and La Marche associates his role as noble judge with his defeat of his enemies by making both the subject of Charles's dispatch to his father. Non-nobles in this passage are viewed as violators of the chivalric ideal which urges the protection of women and it is the role of the noble leader of the army to exercise his power as judge (a power he also has in court and judicial combat) to re-establish the norms of chivalric conduct. The same point is made in the second passage, where Charles makes his way to the church during the sack of Liège in the hope of saving the relics and finds a number of archers in the process of pillaging it. Again Charles exercises summary justice, killing some of the men 'de sa

¹ *Larousse: Dictionnaire du moyen français: La Renaissance*, (Paris: Larousse, 1992).

main'; and the ideal whereby the knight (a nobleman) upholds religious standards is once more re-affirmed.¹

In both these instances the values of nobility in warfare are threatened by the non-noble protagonists and nobility has to intervene to re-establish order. This is not always the case in La Marche's accounts of warfare; he occasionally refers to non-noble soldiers in inclusive terms, counting them amongst 'noz gens'.² However it seems that in general La Marche prefers to consider warfare within the same noble framework as the *pas d'armes* or the judicial duel. Non-nobles who appear in accounts of war in the *Mémoires* are often marginalized and serve as a contrast with noble values, of which the author approves. It therefore follows that the ideal war for La Marche would be one which corresponded more closely to the *pas d'armes*, from which all non-noble participation could be excluded. With his description of the 'Guerre du Bien Public' we see this ideal being actualized.

La Marche's account of the 'Guerre du Bien Public' begins in a way that is reminiscent of a *pas d'armes*:

Et fut une journée tenue en Nostre Dame de Paris, où furent les seelez envoyez de tous les seigneurs qui voulurent fair alliance avec mondit seigneur le frere du Roy; et portoient iceulx qui avoient les seelez secretement, chascung une esguillette de soye à sa saincture; à quoy ilz congnoissoient les ungs les aultres; et ainsi fut faicte ceste alliance, et dont le Roy ne peust oncques riens sçavoir. Et toutteffois il y avoit plus de cinq cens, que princes, que chevaliers, que dames, que damoiselles et escuyers, qui tous estoient acertenez de ceste alliance; et se faisoit ceste emprise

¹ A similar incident occurs in La Marche's account of Philippe le Bon's Luxemburg wars (La Marche, II, 47-48), although this case is presented more equivocally. Philippe is called upon to judge the conduct of another archer who, in a state of inebriation entered a barn belonging to an ally of the duke, in search of pillage. When the owner of the barn surprises him, the man, nicknamed 'le petit Escoçoix', does not recognize him and strikes 'd'une hache par la teste si grand cop que l'on cuydoit qu'il fust mort'. Despite the pleas of the victim's family, Philippe has the man put to death by strangulation. In this case, the duke's justice, although exercised against a commoner, is not unequivocally approved of: La Marche qualifies the archer as 'homme vaillant, bien renommé et fort agreable' and dwells on the pleas of the duke's army and the victim's relations to spare him. In passing, it is worth noting, with Reiffenberg, that the victim's name was not, as La Marche gives it, Bourset, but Bourscheidt, M. de Barante, *Histoire des ducs de Bourgogne de la maison de Valois*, ed. by le baron de Reiffenberg, 6 vols, 6th edn (Brussels: Meline, 1835), V, 200, n. 5.

² La Marche, III, 78. The men in question are those who are too poor to afford food, which is scarce and therefore expensive.

soubz umbre de bien publicque, et disoit on que le Roy gouvernoit mal le royaulme et qu'il estoit besoing de le refformer. (La Marche, III, 7-8)

The 'esguillette' taken by the nobility is reminiscent of an *emprise* for a *pas d'armes*. Indeed the *emprise* taken by Philippe de Ternant when he fought Galiot de Baltasin took the form of an 'esguillette'. Moreover La Marche refers to the event as one where 'se faisoit ceste *emprise*' [my italics]. This could be seen as the rhetoric of the event, the nobles regarding their own actions in the terms of court combat, but La Marche's use of *emprise* suggests that he at least recognized the significance with which these actions were invested and sought to present them in those terms. As the account of the war progresses, it becomes clear that La Marche is interested only in the actions of the noble protagonists so he writes:

avoit une moult belle et puissante compaignie, où estoyent le seigneur de Ravestain, le conte de Saint-Pol, le bastard de Bourgoingne, et plusieurs autres seigneurs; et fut pour celle armée, par le commandement du duc, le seigneur de Haulbourdin, lieutenant general du conte de Charrolois; et ainsi se tira celle armée aux champs où il y avoit plus de dix mille chevaux, sans les sommiers et l'artillerie, qui estoit une grosse bende. (La Marche, III, 9-10)

This technique of presenting the strength of an army without its non-noble members is one which is found in other historiographers of the period.¹ It is a rhetorical device which stresses the size of the army by citing a large number of men, who only made up a part of the total number. However it also serves to marginalize those who are not included in this number. By presenting the origins of the war as an *emprise* and stressing the nobility of the protagonists, La Marche seems to be representing war as if it were a *pas d'armes*. Indeed he goes further along this path when he describes the action within the French ranks: 'le Roy de France ordonna ses batailles outre ung foussé, et fit partir trois cens hommes d'armes, la lance sur la cuisse, sans varlet ou

¹ For example La Marche's editors quote Commynes I, chapter 2, writing of the same army that it was made up of 1,400 men at arms 'très fort bien montez et bien accompagnez, car peu en eussiez vous veu qui n'eussent cinq ou six grands chevaux'. La Marche, III, 10, n.2. Similarly Chastelain (I, 156) records only the names of the illustrious dead at Melun, finishing his account with 'et beaucoup d'autres que je trèspasse, qui ne furent point de si grand nom'.

mesquine.’¹ This section of the French army is portrayed as being entirely devoid of non-noble soldiers. The comment that it is also without female camp followers has been explained by La Marche’s editors as a scribal error, with the original reading being ‘mesquin’, another word meaning a non-noble servant. While this seems probable, no surviving manuscript of the *Mémoires* which includes this scene has anything other than ‘mesquine’.² At any rate a ‘mesquine’ is also a woman entirely lacking in noble status and the whole implication of the account of the beginning of the ‘Guerre du Bien Public’ is that it was a noble enterprise, akin to court combat, from which commoners were excluded.³ The section ends in keeping with this reading of the text when Charles, having won the battle of Montlehéry, marches off ‘et ce en intencion de rencontrer le duc de Berry, le duc de Bretagne et leur armée, qui estoit très belle et puissante et plaine de noblesse.’ (La Marche, III, 17)

The case of the Duke of Clarence: A War without War.

The noble ideal has thus been preserved, but we should not forget that the ‘Guerre du Bien Public’ marks the first in a series of combats leading up to the very ignoble death of Charles le Hardi. From this point on, war becomes more and more prevalent in La Marche’s *Mémoires* until La Marche reports that his master was defeated on the battlefield at Nancy, where ‘fut en sa personne rataint, tué et occis de coups de masse.’ The *masse* was a weapon with even fewer noble associations than the *baston*. Charles’s end is thus, like that of Jacques de Lalaing killed twenty years earlier by a canon ball,

¹ La Marche, III, 11. See also Beaune and d’Arbaumont’s comments, n. 4.

² Mss *B*, fol. 297^r, *Par*, fol. 271^r, *S*, fol. 354^v, *H*, fol. 287^r, *A*, fol. 171^r Ms *L* also contains this reading, but its folios are unnumbered and it is impossible to number them with reference to microfilm in which blank openings may have been photographed more than once.

³ This reading is supported by similar comments in Commynes’s *Mémoires* that the English army of 1475 did not contain a single page (Commynes, II, 11, 28). Commynes’s editors argue (II, 11, n. 1) that the aim of this statement is to suggest that the army was made up of only combatant troops, but the absence of servants in the army not only underlines its battle-readiness but also its nobility.

the antithesis of the noble ideal of court combat.¹ However, unlike Lalaing, La Marche implies that Charles's ignoble death is the result of his own moral degradation. His account of the battle of Nancy is brief and appears at the end of the section which began with a description of La Marche's own actions when ordered by Charles to take the Duchess of Savoy and her children prisoner. La Marche repeats three times in this account that he carried out these actions against his will, and on pain of death. First he writes that 'il me manda, sur ma teste, que je prinse madame de Savoye et ses enfans', then he says that 'pour obeir à mon prince et mon maistre, je fiz ce qu'il me commanda, contre mon cuer.' Finally he writes that the son, the eleven-year-old Duke of Savoy, escaped him in the night

et ce par le moyen d'aucuns de nostre compaignie, qui estoient subjects du duc de Savoye; et certes ilz ne firent que leur debvoir; et ce que j'en fiz, je le fiz pour saulver ma vie; car le duc mon maistre estoit tel, qu'il vouloit que l'on fist ce qu'il me commandoit, sur peine de perdre la teste. (La Marche, III, 234-35)

This final comment is a judgement upon Charles's fundamental character and La Marche's reiterated disclaimers of his own actions show his disapproval of his master's orders. Charles has departed from the chivalric ideal of the defense of women, which he policed in Dinant, and his death is notable for the absence of an epilogue showing the grief of his family or commenting on his good character. If war is believed by La Marche to be ennobling, then it is no less the site of Charles's final departure from the noble standards illustrated in other combats of the *Mémoires*.

However it cannot be argued that this degradation is a sudden one. Even in the account of the noble war *par excellence*, the 'Guerre du Bien Public', there are implications that the nobles of France have departed from an ideal; that of loyalty to their monarch. As we saw in chapter four, La Marche could envisage circumstances in

¹ Jean Rychner, in *La Littérature et les mœurs chevaleresques à la cour de Bourgogne* (Neuchâtel: Secrétariat de l'Université de Neuchâtel, 1950), p. 24, describes Lalaing as having been 'tué dans une rencontre avec son siècle', an opinion which reflects the increased technological sophistication of warfare in the fifteenth century and its contrast with the practices of the jousts in which Lalaing had excelled.

which the deposition of tyrants would be justified, but the implication of his account of the ‘Guerre du Bien Public’ is that these are not such circumstances. La Marche had no love for Louis XI, as many of his scholarly readers have commented, but he writes that those who swore against him did so ‘*soubz umbre de bien publicque*’ [my italics], a phrase which is usually associated in the *Mémoires* with an illegitimate justification. Thus, despite an alliance that the two princes had, Louis intrigues secretly against Charles le Hardi with the Emperor Sigismund ‘*soubz umbre qu’il se tenoit prince de l’empire.*’¹

If the degradation which leads to Charles’s death can be seen to begin with the ‘Guerre du Bien Public’, declared for reasons which La Marche suggests are suspect, it can be traced through subsequent scenes of war which include the three in which Charles disciplines his troops discussed above. However there is another instance in the final volume of the *Mémoires* which is particularly interesting as it displays La Marche engaged in revisionism and juxtaposition of events to provide yet another portrait of a world at war where the natural order is upset.

The incident takes place in 1470.² The King of England, Edward IV, has fallen out with his brother, George, Duke of Clarence, and Clarence has been forced to flee to France with his ally, the Earl of Warwick. Edward, hoping to prevent his brother from returning to England with an army, puts together a navy, in alliance with Charles le Hardi. La Marche gives an extended description of the navy and of what happened next:

Et en ce temps firent le Roy d’Angleterre et le duc de Bourgoingne une grosse armée par mer, dont fut chief pour les Angloix le seigneur d’Escailles, et pour le duc de Bourgoingne le seigneur de la Vere, conte de Grand Prel, lequel estoit moult experimenté en la mer. Et certes le duc de Bourgoingne fit son armée par mer sy grande et sy puissante de gens et de navieres, que c’estoit moult fiere chose à veoir. Et tira ceste armée à la Hogue Saint Vas en Normandie, pour ce que les navieres du duc de

¹ La Marche, I, 138. The phrase ‘*soubz umbre du bien public*’ is also used in La Marche’s discussion of the war in the Introduction to the *Mémoires*, I, 124.

² Although La Marche reports it as taking place in the same year as events of 1467, La Marche, III, 68, n. 2.

Clairance et du conte de Warvich s'y estoient retirez; et estoit l'intencion du duc de Bourgoingne de leur destourber leur retour en Angleterre. Le Roy Edouart et le duc de Bourgoingne se conclurent ensemble de retirer celle armée; et ainsi fut icelle armée rompue pour celle saison, et deppuis le Roy d'Angleterre trouva maniere de r'avoir son frere, et le fit mourir en ung baing, comme l'on disoit [...] (La Marche, III, 69-70)

This last reference, to death in the bath, is the story of drowning in the butt of Malmsey wine, familiar to most readers today via Shakespeare, but current, particularly in the works of francophone historiographers, as little as five years after Clarence's death.¹ Its appearance in La Marche, however, is significant because it substitutes for the naval battle which the author's description of Edward and Charles's preparations seem to be introducing. The abrupt way in which the navy is broken up, without explanation other than that it was thought to be the best course of action, frustrates the expectation that a battle is about to be portrayed; an expectation made all the greater by the presence of Anthony Woodville, Lord Scales, at the head of the English, because La Marche's readers have last encountered him engaged in court combat against Anthoine, Bastard of Burgundy. Instead of this battle La Marche presents his reader with a scene of treachery, in which a man is murdered by his brother. In fact Clarence, who was sentenced to death for treason and probably beheaded, did not die until 1478. However by juxtaposing the aborted naval mission of 1470 and the death of Clarence eight years later, La Marche is able to present one as the replacement for the other. His audience expected a battle at sea. Instead they read of a death by drowning. By presenting this death as being in the bath, rather than in wine, La Marche makes the parallels between the two scenes all the more clear. In the context of the progressive degradation of the noble ideal of warfare, the case of the Duke of Clarence presents a picture of unnatural death, at the hands of one's kin and in treacherous circumstances where war, presumably a more noble pursuit, has been avoided.

¹ As well as in La Marche's *Mémoires*, it appears in the works of Jean de Roze, Commynes and Molinet and is discussed in M. A. Hicks, *False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence: George, Duke of Clarence 1449-78* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1980), pp. 200-204.

War, the judicial duel and the *pas d'armes* appear in La Marche's *Mémoires* distinguished, one from the other, but sharing common values and modes of representation. This is not surprising as they had common origins and much of the ideology, particularly that of chivalry, surrounding them was the same. Towards the end of the *Mémoires* this ideology seems to undergo a kind of degradation in the case of warfare. Perhaps in the case of court combat, too, this degradation can be identified. We began by examining a scene which parallels La Marche's Bourbon primal scene and yet seems to subvert the ideals of poverty and humility which Bourbon embraced, with La Marche's approval. If Ravenstein's entry is a criticism of combat, it is not one of court combat in particular but can be read within the context of a degradation of the noble ideal of all combat, military or otherwise. Ravenstein's mockery is not that of the frivolous *pas d'armes* poking fun at the serious business of life – La Marche's treatment of the *pas d'armes* was serious enough – it is the mockery of a period of Burgundian history in which the rules of combat are no longer observed.

Conclusion

Ce qui caractérise, peut-être pour une bonne part la seconde moitié du XV^e siècle, c'est que nous avons affaire à des gens, à des écrivains malins, malicieux, retors, compliqués, souvent masqués, dont il n'est pas facile aujourd'hui de saisir la personnalité et les intentions.¹

This thesis has demonstrated the truth of Jean Dufournet's comment. Olivier de La Marche is a difficult character to pin down, despite the fact that so much is known about him. Or rather, it is difficult to identify the character of Olivier de La Marche in the text of his *Mémoires*. Perhaps this should not surprise us: as the opening chapter demonstrated, it is impossible to reconstruct fully the narrative of textual transmission from manuscript to print, from manuscript to manuscript or even from author to page via (or possibly not) the intermediary of a compiler. And this in spite of the apparent simplicity of the text tradition: only two editions draw on a manuscript and then apparently mainly on the same manuscript, there are only six complete manuscripts, comparatively few fragments and very little textual variation between witnesses. At first sight, it would seem that the history of textual transmission of the *Mémoires* would be straightforward and yet, the closer it is examined, the more elusive it becomes. The same can be said for La Marche's personal narrative, which appears to underpin the account and guarantee its veracity but which omits some of the most significant moments of the author's public life and which, from the outset, finds its expression in a formula borrowed from George Chastelain.

At times it seems as if some intimation of the author's individuality is available through details that point to his close observation and idiosyncratic interest in the events that he witnessed. Thus, the specificity of reported events such as the provost eaten by the sow, the tea freezing in a silver pot and the corpse of the Bâtard de Dampierre being carried into the church of the Cordeliers seems to reveal not only La Marche's presence

¹ Jean Dufournet, *Études sur Philippe de Comynes* (Paris: Champion, 1975), p. 123.

on the scene but his presence in the text, as a controlling influence selecting a version of events which differs from the neutral recitation of facts that one might expect from official histories. Like the presence of pickled fish in the account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, these details appear as ‘tiny chink[s] through which we see plain historical light’, so motiveless and exact do they seem.¹ And yet, just like the details provided by the Gospel accounts, each of these instances from the *Mémoires* can be demonstrated to fit into a complex symbolic system formed in conjunction with other instances of the same motif either in the *Mémoires*, in the work of La Marche’s contemporaries or in the wider realms of folklore. Such details, which at first seem to be the most reliable indicators of historical accuracy, in fact operate as literary motifs, linking the *Mémoires* thematically both to themselves and to the intertexts of La Marche’s culture.

Viewed from this perspective, what at first appears to be the somewhat naive personal narrative of an old man who forgets – and knows that he forgets – the details of the story he is telling and who puts events in the wrong order, in fact takes on the appearance of a myth – a narrative which is not strictly historical because its message is invested with greater significance than mere history. Does this make La Marche a mythomaniac? Those who have not regarded him as simply mistaken have accused him on this count. But to argue this is to argue that Olivier de La Marche is a conscious manipulator of facts, and I do not believe that this is always the case. Does La Marche’s account of the entry of the seigneur de Ravenstein into the lists of the *arbre d’or* echo his description of Jacques de Bourbon’s entry into Pontarlier because the author wanted the two scenes to parallel each other, or does it do so because La Marche remembered them as being similar and unconsciously grafted details from the one event onto his

¹ A. N. Wilson, *Jesus* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1992), p. 42. Wilson is commenting on the use, in John’s Gospel, of the specialist term *opsarion* rather than the general term *ichthus* used in the other Gospels.

description of the other? True, the manipulation of facts reveals something about the narrative that the *Mémoires* convey – a narrative of continued splendour in the Burgundian court subtended by increasing pessimism about its military standards – but is this a comment that La Marche intends to make or is it one that his text makes despite him? And, indeed, the rhetorical import of the text goes beyond the question of conscious control on the part of the author. A modern reader may find the Bourbon narrative interesting because it presents a primal scene: a moment in which the nascent personality of the writer of history gains consciousness or one which the young La Marche subsequently invested with significance because of the parallels with his father's funeral procession. La Marche does not make these conclusions explicit. The modern reader could argue, as I have, that the former conclusion at least is implicit in the text, but there is no escaping the fact that the Bourbon episode is one that has attracted biographers of La Marche only since 1837. We read such messages as latent in the text because they accord with our cultural and generic expectations of the centrality of childhood experience to the definition of one's self identity. Earlier readers, who came to the text with other horizons of expectation, have developed different readings of La Marche's rhetoric.

The title of this thesis speaks of the 'rhetoric of fifteenth century historiography' and this is not the same thing as rhetoric in the fifteenth century, for whilst both have their starting points in the fifteenth-century text one goes beyond the perspective of the fifteenth-century reader. I have as far as possible striven to avoid an anachronistic evaluation of La Marche's *Mémoires* and yet I must acknowledge that the interstices where I have found chinks of light into the rhetoric of the *Mémoires* are where the text addresses themes which accord with modern preoccupations. Nationalisms and their relation to language politics is an obvious example of this, but so too is my preoccupation with the author's initial contract with the reader, reflected in the fact that

every chapter of this thesis deals with the opening sections of the *Mémoires* and that three of them actually begin with a quotation from these sections, with a fourth opening with a description of the portrait which forms the frontispiece both to BnF, f. fr. 2868 and to this thesis. Current academic practice is fascinated with the issue of prologues, prefaces, introductions and frames for texts, and particularly for medieval texts. However, this is not simply a modern preoccupation and there are many scholars who see this as a return to a medieval conception of literary technique.¹ Certainly La Marche's repeated references to his initial contract with his reader and the way that motifs from the opening pages recur elsewhere in the *Mémoires* suggest that he viewed the beginning of the work as being of capital importance. In this instance my perspective and that of the fifteenth-century author coincide. The *Mémoires* provide an elusive system of associations and references and often present an ambiguous relationship with what we would like to think of as historical fact. Nevertheless, as this study has shown, it is possible to identify some aspects of their argumentation and to understand the way in which these aspects operate.

¹ So, for example, Jacques Lemaire argues that the prologue is central in defining the scope of fifteenth-century Burgundian historiography, Jacques Lemaire, 'La Conception de l'histoire chez les chroniqueurs bourguignons d'après les prologues de leurs œuvres' in *Histoire et littérature au moyen âge. Actes du Colloque du Centre d'Etudes Médiévales de l'Université de Picardie (Amiens 20-24 mars 1985)* ed. by Danielle Buschinger (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1991), pp. 235-49 (p. 236).

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