

## IN, OF, OR THROUGH? TOWARDS A LITERARY HISTORY OF THIRTEENTH-CENTURY FRENCH AND FLANDERS IN PARIS, BNF, MS FR. 1446

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How we tell the story of medieval literature in French has changed a good deal in recent decades. Particularly notable has been the move, especially prominent in anglophone scholarship, to question a once self-evident link between the French language and the medieval kingdom of France or the modern Hexagon.<sup>1</sup> In its stead has come an increasing awareness of the complex social and cultural geographies of the medieval francophone world.<sup>2</sup> Not only has there been more attention given to the life and afterlives of French (and literature in it) in increasingly distant places, but this trend has also led to a reconsideration of the distinction between cultural proximity and geographical nearness. The life led by the French language abroad, or at least its apprehension in scholarship, can be tellingly traced through the use of prepositions. Taking England, for example, a case that has played a decisive role in rethinking French in the Middle Ages, scholars have variously chosen between ‘The French of England’ on the one hand, and ‘French in England’ on the

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<sup>1</sup> Compare, for instance, Michel Brix, *Histoire de la littérature française: voyage guidé dans les lettres du IX<sup>e</sup> au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Louvain-la-Neuve: De Boeck, 2014) and Michel Zink, *Bienvenue au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Livre de Poche, 2016) with *Medieval Francophone Literary Culture outside France: Studies in the Moving Word*, ed. by Nicola Morato and Dirk Schoenaers (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), and *Francophone Literature in the Low Countries*, ed. by Alisa van de Haar and Dirk Schoenaers (= special issue, *Queeste*, 28.1 (2021)). A notable exception is Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet, ‘Le Moyen Âge’, in *La Littérature française: dynamique et histoire*, ed. by Jean-Yves Tadié (Paris: Gallimard, 2007), pp. 27–204.

<sup>2</sup> Important advances can be attributed, amongst others, to the Fordham University-based projects on the Franches of England, Outremer, and Italy, as well as the UK-based ‘Medieval Francophone Literary Cultures outside France’ project (2011–15). The latter gave rise to Jane Gilbert, Simon Gaunt, and Bill Burgwinkle, *Medieval French Literary Culture Abroad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020). The idea of ‘medieval francophonía’ also played an important role in Keith Busby’s *Codex and Context: Reading Old French Verse Narrative in Manuscript*, 2 vols (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002).

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other.<sup>3</sup> Although essentially descriptive, these two options are a salient reminder of how our terminology colours the way we see the past. It is striking that both ‘French in’ and ‘French of’ depend in some measure on the ability to put clear water between the object of study and ‘France’, as seen, for instance, in Keith Busby’s recent work on French in Ireland.<sup>4</sup> The closer the object of study lies to the French border, however, whether one defines it politically or otherwise, the more difficult it becomes to perpetuate any clear sense of linguistic or literary identity. Perhaps most difficult of all in this regard is the county of Flanders.

Flanders, a major European power in political, economic, and cultural terms throughout the Middle Ages, was subject to multiple factors that complicate an easy appreciation of its role in literary life in French. It was a multilingual polity, with areas of native speakers of both French and Dutch, and played a decisive role in the development of literature in both languages.<sup>5</sup> Changes through time to the linguistic map further loosen our conceptual grasp on the region: towns we now think of as francophone Picard, such as Dunkirk, Calais, and Saint-Omer, were in the Middle Ages either Dutch-speaking or largely bilingual.<sup>6</sup> Flanders was also politically complicated, as a large part of the county was a fiefdom of the Kingdom of France. In the east, meanwhile, the area around Aalst, east of the River Scheldt — so-called Imperial Flanders — was part of the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>7</sup> Further, as a consequence of marriages and inheritances, for much of the thirteenth century Flanders was ruled as part of a personal union with the neighbouring county of Hainault, itself in the Empire.<sup>8</sup> Later, after the 1364 marriage of Philip the Bold and Marguerite de Male, Flanders was absorbed into the larger Burgundian state. The county was, in short, at a permanent crossroads and this position — and its

<sup>3</sup> For instance, Nick Watson and Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, ‘The French of England: The *Compileison, Ancrene Wisse*, and the Idea of Anglo-Norman’, *The Journal of Romance Studies*, 4 (2004), 35–59; Christopher Cannon, ‘Class Distinction and the French of England’, in *Traditions and Innovations in the Study of Medieval English Literature: The Influence of Derek Brewer*, ed. by Charlotte Brewer and Barry Windeatt (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2012), pp. 48–59; and the contributions to *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain: The French of England c. 1100 – c. 1500*, ed. by Jocelyn Wogan-Browne and others (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2009). On the other side, see William Rothwell, ‘English and French in England after 1362’, *English Studies*, 82 (2001), 539–59, and Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, ‘“Invisible Archives”? Late Medieval French in England’, *Speculum*, 90 (2015), 653–73. See also Matthew Si n Lampitt, ‘The “French of Wales”? Possibilities, Approaches, Implications’, *French Studies*, 76 (2022), 333–49.

<sup>4</sup> Keith Busby, *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in Medieval French: The Paradox of Two Worlds* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), and *The French Works of Jofroi de Waterford: A Critical Edition* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020).

<sup>5</sup> The best study of the language border remains in many respects Godefroid Kurth, *La Fronti re linguistique en Belgique et au nord de la France*, 2 vols (Brussels: Soci t  belge de librairie, 1896–98), but see also, more recently, *Language Contact at the Romance–Germanic Language Border*, ed. by Jeanine Treffers-Daller and Roland Willems (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 2002), esp. Hugo Ryckeb er, ‘Dutch/Flemish in the North of France’, pp. 22–35.

<sup>6</sup> Among the towns integrated into the French royal county of Artois in the late twelfth century, Calais, Dunkirk, and Bergues/Sint-Winnoksbergen were Dutch-speaking for much of this period. See Maurits Gysseling, ‘Calais diets in de 13de eeuw’, *Ons erfdeel*, 10 (1966), 68–73, and Cyriel Moeyaert, *Het Nederlands in Sint-Omaars door de eeuwen heen* (Saint-Omer: Polemos, 2021).

<sup>7</sup> On the distinct literary identity of Rijksvlaanderen, see Mike Kestemont, ‘Produits de terroir? La litt rature r gionale dans la Flandre imp riale et le cas de la chanson de geste moyen-n erlandaise’, *Publications du Centre europ en d’ tudes bourguignonnes*, 54 (2014), 37–55.

<sup>8</sup> On the literary scene in later medieval Hainaut, see Jane Gilbert, ‘Valenciennes (Hainaut)’, in *Europe: A Literary History, 1348–1418*, ed. by David Wallace, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 1, 53–69.

consequences for the writing of Flemish literary history — are a magnifying glass for the shortcomings of the principal heuristics for thinking about French as being ‘in’ or ‘of’ locations.

The first, the ‘French in Flanders’ approach, can be understood as emphasizing the French language as a larger entity, with place of composition at best an incidental detail. It implicitly takes the position that, if Flanders was a fiefdom of the King of France, then it was essentially French. The literature produced there is decoupled from its origins, and absorbed into larger histories of literature in French or, later, Burgundian literature.<sup>9</sup> In the Hasenohr–Zink revision of the *Dictionnaire de lettres françaises*, for instance, texts composed in the primarily Dutch-speaking Ghent or Bruges appear without qualification.<sup>10</sup> The other position, ‘French of Flanders’, sees scholars attend much more closely to place, for example, when Willy van Hoecke writes:

The literary activity in our regions was clearly an extension of French literature and culture of the time: here people explored the same genres, prized the same literary attitudes, and strove for the same innovations as in the rest of the French-speaking area. Within this broader context, our contribution was also significant. It was in our regions that the impulse was first given to the creation of a literature in the French vernacular.<sup>11</sup>

What exactly Van Hoecke means here is unclear, particularly whether he is referring to the earliest traces of vernacular literature in French, which can indeed be traced to the southern Low Countries, or the region’s equally significant contribution to the evolution of courtly literature and historiography.<sup>12</sup> Either way, these texts may well be in French and depend on literary trends from France, but, according to Van Hoecke, they belong in a fundamental way to their place of composition. Given that the literary texts that can be seen as belonging to this region include some of the most celebrated and oldest Old French literary texts, one can well understand the attraction of this approach.<sup>13</sup> I use ‘region’ here deliberately in that the overlapping social, economic, and cultural networks that criss-crossed the

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, 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).

<sup>10</sup> *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: le Moyen Âge*, ed. by Geneviève Hasenohr and Michel Zink (Paris: Fayard, 1992). This is not a new phenomenon: the monumental *Histoire littéraire de la France* includes essays on Gui de Dampierre’s younger son Jean de Flandres (but elides the only literary work he is currently thought to have patronized, *Reynardus vulpes*) alongside the Parisian schoolman Henry of Ghent, and the Brabantine chronicler Baldwin of Ninove, neither of them active in Flanders. See *Histoire littéraire de la France*, xx: *Suite du treizième siècle, depuis l’année 1286*, ed. by Victor Le Clerc (1842), pp. 141–44, 144–203, and 210–27 respectively.

<sup>11</sup> ‘De letterkundige bedrijvigheid in onze gewesten lag duidelijk in het verlengde van de toenmalige Franse letteren en cultuur: hier beoefende men dezelfde genres, huldigde men dezelfde literaire opvattingen en streefde men naar dezelfde vernieuwingen als in de rest van het oïl gebied. In dit brede kader is onze inbreng evenwel aanzienlijk geweest. In onze gewesten is de stoot gegeven tot het ontstaan van een letterkunde in de Franse volkstaal; Willy van Hoeke, ‘De letterkunde in de Franse volkstaal tot omstreeks 1384’, in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 15 vols (Haarlem: Fibula–Van Dishoeck, 1979–82), III (1982), 379–92, 457–58, and 477 (p. 392). Translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>12</sup> On two important early witnesses to the French vernacular likely produced on the frontiers of Flanders and Hainaut, see Gerold Hilty, ‘La Séquence de Sainte Eulalie et le sermon sur Jonas’, *Vox Romanica*, 27 (1968), 4–18.

<sup>13</sup> Similarly, Busby has estimated that around 50 per cent of surviving Old French manuscripts originate in the wider north-east (*Codex and Context*, 1, 535).

southern Low Countries make it extremely difficult to draw a line.<sup>14</sup> This is also true in a linguistic sense, due to the Picard *scripta* that bound together the north of France, Flanders, Hainaut, and sectors of the principally Dutch-speaking area to the north.<sup>15</sup> In consequence, talking about francophone literature *in* Flanders — literature that is so often, it seems, coming from somewhere else or going somewhere else —, seems to be as problematic as trying to talk about the French *of* Flanders. As such this article proposes, first, an alternative to the in/of paradigms and offers a reading of literature in French as seen *through* the county of Flanders, and, in a second section, medieval French itself. This more dynamic heuristic model not only responds better to the complexity of the historical circumstances of the case, but it also allows greater scope to acknowledge the material prisms that are our only point of access to the literature of the Middle Ages. In this instance, the prism is a late-thirteenth-century manuscript — Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fonds français 1446 — that acts as a witness to the literary tastes and patronage of the comital family, the Dampierres.

Originating among the nobility of Champagne, the Dampierre family enters the history of Flanders in 1223 as a result of the tensions between two sisters: Jeanne and Marguerite of Constantinople. The last members of the House of Flanders and daughters of Baudouin, Latin Emperor of Constantinople after the Fourth Crusade, they held both Flanders and Hainaut in personal union. Jeanne ruled from 1205 and never had any children, meaning Marguerite and her children would inherit both counties.<sup>16</sup> It was held to be undesirable for them to fall to the children of her first marriage to Bouchard d'Avesnes, and so Jeanne had forced Marguerite in 1223 into a second marriage with Guillaume de Dampierre in the hope of founding a new line. This did indeed happen, but despite the adjudication by Louis IX of France in 1246 (reaffirmed in the 1256 'Dit de Péronne') that gave Flanders to the Dampierres, and Hainaut to the Avesnes, the tensions between the two families resulted in military action at Westkapelle (now in the Netherlands) in 1253, and rumbled on for the rest of the century.

The two sisters were both active patrons of the arts.<sup>17</sup> Jeanne, alongside extensive religious benefactions, appears to have commissioned at least one

<sup>14</sup> Gilbert, Gaunt, and Burgwinkle propose, for example, that the Low Countries are 'better thought not of as a number of discrete places or polities but as a series of connections and lines of transmission that extend far beyond what the eye can see or the rational mind can calculate' (*Medieval French Literary Culture Abroad*, pp. 230–31).

<sup>15</sup> Serge Lusignan argued for a much larger 'Picardie linguistique' in his *Essai d'histoire sociolinguistique: le français picard au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2012). See also the discussion of Picard French below.

<sup>16</sup> See the summary of events in Henri Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, 4 vols (Brussels: Lamertin, 1902–11), 1 (1902), pp. 232–41.

<sup>17</sup> On the sisters' literary activities, see Lori J. Walters, 'Jeanne and Marguerite de Flandre as Female Patrons', *Dalhousie French Studies*, 28 (1994), 15–27. On the literary scene in Flanders, see Olivier Collet, 'Littérature, histoire, pouvoir et mécénat: la cour de Flandre au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Médiévales*, 38 (2000), 87–110, and now Lisa Demets, 'French Literature in Mono- and Multilingual Social Contexts: The Production and Reception of French Literary Manuscripts in Thirteenth-Century Flanders', *Queste*, 28 (2021), 30–60.

continuation of Chrétien's *Conte du graal*, and Wauchier de Denain's *Vie de Sainte Marthe*.<sup>18</sup> It has also been suggested, somewhat speculatively, that she played a role in the Middle Dutch reworking of *Aiol*, a *chanson de geste*.<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, Marguerite is perhaps best known for her support of the Hainaut poet Baudouin de Condé. Yet more active, however, was Marguerite's son Gui, who ruled as count from 1278, both in terms of the poets he supported (including Adenet Le Roy), and the manuscripts produced for him.<sup>20</sup> The manuscript that is the focus for the remainder of this article, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1446, is a late-thirteenth-century composite manuscript bound together progressively after 1294. While it is unclear whether the manuscript itself was produced for Gui de Dampierre, its contents and evolution are undoubtedly eloquent about his cultural milieu, and, moreover, of its contribution to literature in French. Above all, it demonstrates compellingly the need for a less static model for thinking about French in the southern Low Countries. Its contents are as follows:

None of these texts can reasonably be called 'French' in modern sense. Marie de France, famously, was active in England, while the other pieces can be localized to either Flanders or Hainaut. And it is precisely this split across Flanders and Hainaut that makes MS fr. 1446 a fruitful locus for thinking about the geographies of medieval literature in French.

The first item, *Le Couronnement de Renart*, is a satirical romance of around 3000 lines, in which the nefarious fox comes to power after the lion, King Noble, when it is presaged that he will shortly die. It is devoted to the memory of Guillaume de Dampierre, Countess Marguerite's eldest son. He predeceased her in 1251 at the tournament of Trazegnies — it was claimed, at the hand of Jean d'Avesnes.<sup>21</sup> The eulogistic prologue, long and rich in wordplay, explains that 'prou vaillant conte Willaume qui jadis fut contes de Flandre' (fol. 71ra) was a good and wise man who died too young, in stark contrast, then, with the falsehoods and *confusion* that accompany the Renardian pursuit for *avoir*. Although the romance does not mention Flanders by name, it locates the misdeeds of Renart against the background of the spread of chivalry 'en France [et] en toute Bretagne, en Engleterre en Allemagne, par tout l'Empire et le royaume' (fol. 71ra), and goes so far as to say

<sup>18</sup> See Molly Lynde-Recchia, 'The *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César*, the *Vie de saint Marciaue*, and Wauchier de Denain', *Romania*, 116 (1998), 431–60 (esp. pp. 459–60).

<sup>19</sup> On the *Aiol*, see *Aiol: chanson de geste (XII–XIII siècles)*, ed. by Jean-Marie Arduin, 2 vols (Paris: Champion, 2016), and also Johan Winkelman, *De Vlaamse 'Aiol': Fragmenten van een middeleeuwse riddergedicht uit het begijnhofarchief van Breda* (Breda: Stichting Begijnhof Breda, 2020).

<sup>20</sup> Among the manuscripts thought to have been produced for Gui and his children are his psalter, now Brussels, KBR, MS 10607; Paris, BnF, MS fr. 12203, a French witness of the *Flandria generosa* and Villehardouin's chronicles; Paris, BnF, MS fr. 9084, a copy of Guillaume de Tyr's history of the First Crusade copied at Acre between 1286 and 1291; Paris, BnF, MS n. a. fr. 6295, containing the chronicles of the Anonymous of Béthune and the Pseudo-Turpin; as well as the two-part Grail cycle associated with Gui's son Guillaume de Termonde, now Paris, BnF, MS fr. 95, and New Haven, CT, Beinecke Rare Books Library, MS 229.

<sup>21</sup> Busby, by contrast, identifies 'le bon conte Guillaume' (l. 1696) with Marguerite's husband, also called Guillaume de Dampierre; see *Codex and Context*, II, 478. This Guillaume also died young, at the age of thirty-five, in the year 1231.

**Table 1** The Contents of Paris, BnF, MS fr. 1446

MS	Text	Scribe
I	A composite text of the continuations of the <i>Roman des sept sages</i> , including:	A
fols 11ra–3ra	A summary of the first four continuations: <i>Marques de Rome</i> , <i>Laurin</i> , <i>Cassidorus</i> , and <i>Helcanus</i> .	
fols 3ra–26vb	The end of the fifth continuation, the <i>Roman de Pebyamenus</i> .	
fols 26vb–70rb	The sixth continuation, the <i>Roman de Kanor</i> . <sup>a</sup>	
II	Baudouin Butor, second draft of the beginning of <i>Le Roman des fils du roi Constant</i> . <sup>b</sup>	B
fols 71ra–88va	Anon., <i>Le Couronnement de Renart</i> . <sup>c</sup>	C
fols 88vb–108vb	Marie de France, <i>Fables</i> . <sup>d</sup>	C
III	Baudouin Butor, <i>Le Roman des fils du roi Constant</i> .	B
fols 108v–11v	First draft.	
fol. 112v	Third draft.	
fols 112v–14v	Fourth draft.	
IV	Baudouin de Condé, twenty-one <i>dits</i> , <sup>e</sup> and fifteen shorter <i>dits</i> by Jean de Condé [fol. 164: blank].	D (fols 115r–45r; fols 151v–63v); E (fols 145v–50v) <sup>f</sup>
V	Jean de Condé, twenty-six further <i>dits</i> .	F
VI	Jean de Condé, three <i>dits</i> [fol. 196: blank].	G
fols 197ra–210ra		
fol. 210v	Anon. poem, ‘Tres dous et loiaus amis   ou g’ai mis   cuer et parfaite pensee’.	H

<sup>a</sup> Edited without reference to MS fr. 1446 in Meradith Tilbury McMunn, ‘Le Roman de *Kanor*: édition critique d’un texte en prose du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Connecticut, 1978).

<sup>b</sup> The entirety of the text was edited by Lewis Thorpe: ‘The Four Rough Drafts of Baudouins Butors’, *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 12 (1968), 3–20; 13 (1969), 49–64; and 14 (1970), 41–63. See also his ‘Baudouins Butors et le *Roman des fils du roi Constant*’, in *Mélanges offerts à Rita Lejeune, Professeur à l’Université de Liège*, 2 vols (Gembloux: Duculot, 1969), II, 1137–42. A further partial edition was published, apparently without knowledge of Thorpe’s work, by Louis-Fernand Flutre, ‘Le Roman de *Pandragus* et *Libanor* par Baudouin Butor: texte inédit de la fin du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle’, *Romania*, 94 (1973), 57–90. Flutre edits fols 70–109 and fols 112–14, that is, the first and second drafts.

<sup>c</sup> Edition: *Le Couronnement de Renart: poème du treizième siècle*, ed. by Alfred Foulet (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1929). Lines 1675–2794 are also edited and translated by Sylvie Lefèvre in *Le Roman de Renart*, ed. by Armand Strubel (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), pp. 869–96.

<sup>d</sup> The standard edition remains *Die Fabeln der Marie de France, mit Benutzung des von Ed[uard] Mall hinterlassenen Materials*, ed. by Karl Warnke (Halle: Niemeyer, 1898).

<sup>e</sup> These and the following item are edited in Auguste Scheler, *Dits et contes de Baudouin de Condé et de son fils Jean de Condé*, 3 vols (Brussels: Devaux, 1866–67). For a full list of the individual *dits* in MS fr. 1446, as well as a summary of the contents at large, see *JONAS*: <[https://jonas.irht.cnrs.fr/consulter/manuscrit/detail\\_manuscrit.php?projet=45610](https://jonas.irht.cnrs.fr/consulter/manuscrit/detail_manuscrit.php?projet=45610)>.

<sup>f</sup> Foulet identified these two scribes as the same individual; see *Le Couronnement de Renart*, ed. by Foulet, p. xiii. Here, I follow Willy van Hoecke in separating two hands; see ‘L’Œuvre de Baudouin de Condé et le problème de l’édition critique’, 5 vols (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit te Leuven, 1970), II, 23.

that if good Count Guillaume were still alive, the rise of Renart, and his resulting misdeeds, would never have happened (ll. 1675–99).

The *Couronnement* is transmitted uniquely in MS fr. 1446, and forms a single codicological unit with following text, the fables of Marie de France. The connections between the two texts are not merely physical. Marie's *Fables*, a series of moralizing animal narratives based in part on the Latin *Romulus*, are also dedicated to a count called Guillaume.<sup>22</sup> This coincidence allows the scribe-author to conflate Marie de France's patron Guillaume with the Dampierre dedicatee of the *Couronnement*. There are many, the scribe writes, who are like the malicious Renart the fox and who will do anything to win:

Et pour cou di ie li soutiu  
 en malisse [et] en orgueil  
 qui traient le pene par l'ueil  
 as gentius cuers qui n'o[n]t tale[n]t  
 for que d'ounour [et] largement  
 faire a tous ice qu'il covient  
 vienent a cou que il covient  
 faire a la fois teille aramie  
 dont on parole en vilonie  
 par tout l'empire [et] le roiaume.  
 [Et] pour cou dou conte Guill[au]me  
 qui ceste honor eut encharcie  
 pris mon prologue co[m] Marie  
 qui pour lui traita d'Isopet  
 [et] pour itant ici fin met  
 de renart qui est courones  
 isi com vos oi aves. (fol. 88va)<sup>23</sup>

[And so I say, those with cunning in malice and in pride — who pull the wool over the eyes of those gentle hearts who want nothing more than honour and to be generous to all those who need it — come to a point where they must make such promises that are talked of in infamy throughout the Empire and the kingdom. Therefore, I take up good Count Guillaume, who maintained this honour, in my prologue like Marie (who told the story of *Ysopet* for him). And that is the end of Renart, who was crowned as you have heard.]

This conflation is open to various interpretations. As Sylvia Huot has suggested, this merger presented the copyist of this second gathering of MS fr. 1446 with the opportunity to make Marie de France, an exceptionally popular and well-transmitted author, into the narrator of a new text.<sup>24</sup> Alternatively, Busby has proposed that this merger responds to the animal allegory shared

<sup>22</sup> On the *Fables*' evolution, see Baptiste Laïd, *L'Élaboration du recueil de fables de Marie de France: 'trover' des fables au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2020).

<sup>23</sup> Compare *Le Couronnement*, ed. by Foulet, ll. 3350–66.

<sup>24</sup> Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book: The Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 32–35 (p. 34).

by the Renart material and the *Fables*.<sup>25</sup> Yet another possibility is available, however, if we view MS fr. 1446 as a witness to a literary scene as it developed around the Dampierre family. Specifically, the items collected in it seem to recall the members of the family and their relationships. For example, one notably plausible identification of the otherwise anonymous Marie de France is that with Marie de Boulogne, abbess of the Abbey of Romsey and daughter of the future King Stephen of England.<sup>26</sup> Later abducted out of religious life and married to Matthieu d'Alsace (brother to Philip, count of Flanders) when she inherited the county of Blois, Marie was maternal ancestor of the Dampierres.<sup>27</sup> It seems likely, then, that the compiler of MS fr. 1446 regarded the conflation of two separate Guillaumes as a means of combining literary history with the Dampierre family tree.

This family-oriented interpretation of the unity of MS fr. 1446 is also borne out by the dynastic dynamics that underpin the rest of the works brought together in the manuscript.<sup>28</sup> That is, the same family connections seem also to colour the inclusion of the first item in the manuscript, a separate codicological unit. The text is rubricized as 'Li histoire de Kanor [et] de ses freres li queil furent fil au noble Kassidorus emperoer de Constostantinoble [et] de Rome; li queil furent engendre en l'emperes Fastige ki fille fu a l'empeoreur Phiseus' (fol. 1r) [The story of Kanor and his brothers who were the sons of the noble Cassidorus, emperor of Constantinople and Rome, who were borne by the Empress Fastige, who was daughter to Emperor Phiseus]. It summarizes the first four continuations of the Orientalizing *roman à tiroirs* the *Roman des sept sages*, and includes part of the fifth continuation, the *Roman de Pelyarmenus*, before giving an abbreviated version of the final continuation, the *Kanor*. This last was dedicated to Hugues II de Châtillon, count of Saint-Pol, and thus a near neighbour to Flanders, who in 1287 had married Beatrix, Gui de Dampierre's daughter from his second marriage to Isabelle de Luxembourg.<sup>29</sup> More than that, Gui was himself the dedicatee of the anonymous *Roman de Cassidorus*, the

<sup>25</sup> Busby, *Codex and Context*, II, 478. On the thematic links between Marie's fables and the Renart material, see Sahar Amer, 'A Fox Is Not Always a Fox! Or How Not to Be a Renart in Marie de France's *Fables*', *Rocky Mountain Review*, 51 (1997), 9–20.

<sup>26</sup> On the hypotheses about Marie de France's identity, see the conspectus in Jill Mann, *From Aesop to Reynard: Beast Literature in Medieval Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 309–11, as well as in R. Howard Bloch, *The Anonymous Marie de France* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

<sup>27</sup> While it is true that Marie de Boulogne was a direct ancestor of the ducal family of Brabant, Gui de Dampierre cultivated close links with England. For instance, he betrothed his daughter Philippine to the future Edward II in 1294, although the marriage was never realized. Against this background, then, an English connection in the composition of MS fr. 1446 would perhaps have been desirable.

<sup>28</sup> A familial reading of the manuscript's contents was first proposed by Colette-Anne Coolput-Storms, in "Walsche boucken" voor het hof', in *Medioneerlandistiek: Een inleiding tot de Middelnederlandse letterkunde*, ed. by Rita Janssen-Sieben, Jozef Janssens, and Frank Willaert (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000), pp. 39–52 (pp. 45–46).

<sup>29</sup> Not to be confused with the Beatrice born of Gui's first marriage, to Mahaut (or Mathilda) de Béthune. This Beatrice married Count Floris V of Holland, a member of the Avesnes dynasty.



third and most extensive of the *Sept sages* continuations.<sup>30</sup> This shared literary interest evidently functioned as a literary means of securing an advantageous dynastic and political connection, and is one that highlights how porous the cultural frontiers of Flanders were.

Much the same is true of the fourth item, an Arthurian romance by Baudouin Butor that takes us yet further from 'Flanders'. Known under various titles including the *Roman des fils du roi Constant*, Baudouin's romance is a glorious oddity, in which we can see the medieval writer work his way through four separate drafts of the beginning of a prose romance.<sup>31</sup> MS fr. 1446 was originally made up of at least three individual codicological units. After the first two gatherings came together, someone — perhaps Baudouin himself — filled the blank space with four versions of the prologue and opening of an Arthurian romance in free spaces across the two gatherings.<sup>32</sup> After the *Fables* of Marie de France there follow six folios, originally blank. Beginning on fol. 108v, Baudouin fills three folios with the prose of his first draft before breaking off mid-sentence. He decides to try again, and — evidently preparing for a long text — turns back in the gathering to find a full blank folio (fol. 70v) and then continues in the lower margins of the following thirty-eight folios. Figures 1a and 1b show how his second draft in the margin overlaps by two folios with his first draft. The final two drafts follow on from the first in the main part of the page (from fol. 112v). The last is dated to Candlemas 1294 (fol. 112ra), giving a *terminus ante quem* not only for Baudouin's composition, but probably also for the binding together of the first two gatherings. The fact that Butor's second draft describes Hugues as having previously been count of Saint-Pol, and now being count of Blois (fol. 70va), dates it to after 1292, the year that Hugues acquired the county of Blois and conceded the older family title to his younger brother, who became Guy IV.

As well as crossing codicological boundaries, Baudouin Butor is also remarkable for his complicated geopolitical positioning, which he lays out at the beginning of his first draft:

Il est seut, seit on et est a savoir, ke nous, Guis Cuens de Flandres [et] Marchis de Namur, Hues de Chastillon, Cuens de Chartres [et] de Blois, Avomes proïie [et] requis Butor nostre clerch [et] boin ami, Daucuns biaus contes traitier [et] metre en escrit [et] en retenance. Des queus hautement nos len m[er]ciomes et avomes fait. Por la quele honor je Butors dessus dis, Je encore pour tres Noble Prince et honore, Jehan d'Avesnes, conte de Haynnau et Marchis

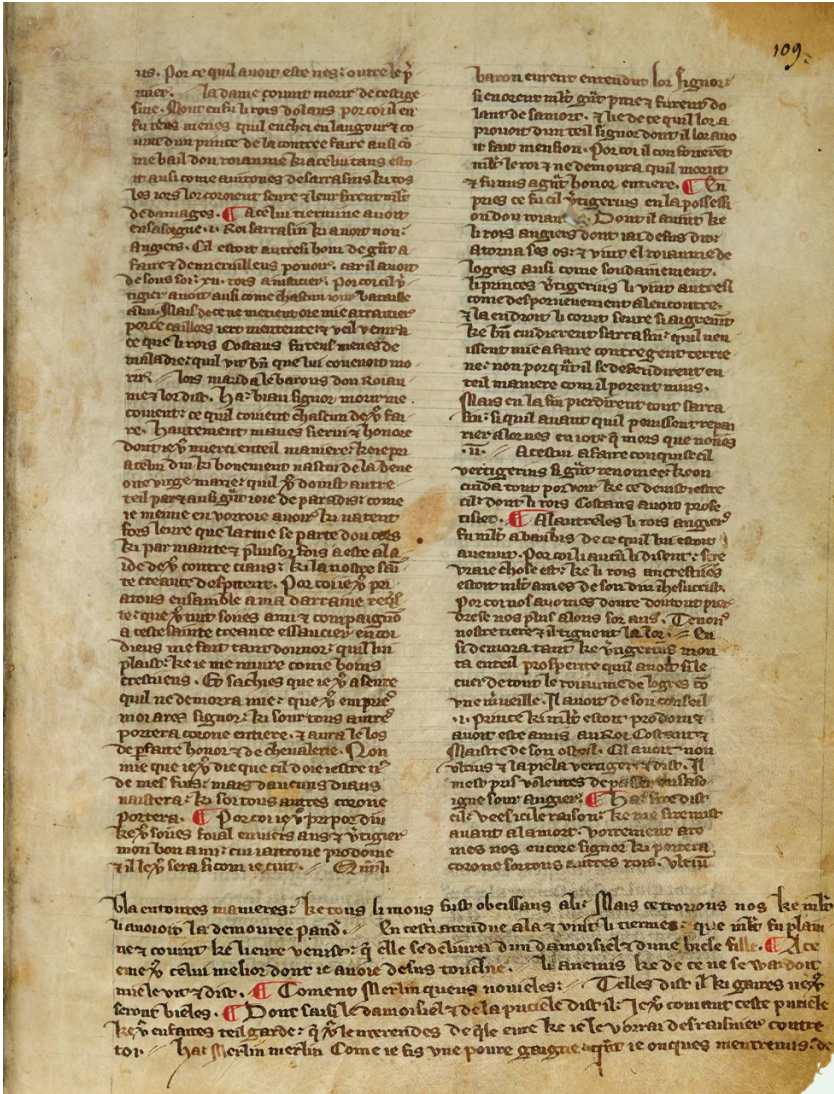
<sup>30</sup> Joseph Palermo has argued that the dedicatee of the *Kanor* and the remaining four continuations was in fact Gui de Dampierre himself, while MS fr. 1446 was as a whole produced for Hugues de Châtillon; Joseph Palermo, 'À la recherche du "seigneur devant nommé" du roman de *Kanor*', *Romanic Philology*, 12 (1958), 243–51. See also his edition: *Le Roman de Cassidorus*, ed. by Joseph Palermo, 2 vols (Paris: Picard, 1963–64).

<sup>31</sup> The title given to the text at the foot of fol. 108va, 'les histoires de Dafinor et Dorvant et de Perchevier, li queil furent frere et fil au bon roi de Tailleborch' [the history of Dafinor and Dorvant and Perchevier, who were the brother and sons of the good king Tailleborch], is one of many ideas that were jettisoned in the drafting process.

<sup>32</sup> Brian Woledge calls it an autograph copy, and Louis-Fernand Flutre holds it to be 'vraisemblablement' by him; see Brian Woledge, *Bibliographie des romans et nouvelles en prose française antérieurs à 1500* (Geneva: Droz, 1954), p. 23, and Louis-Fernand Flutre, 'Le Roman de Pandragus et Libanor par Baudouin Butor: texte inédit de la fin du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Romania*, 94 (1973), 57–90 (p. 59). Lewis Thorpe was, by contrast, rather less certain; see Lewis Thorpe, 'The Four Rough Drafts of Baudouin Butors', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 12 (1968), 3–20 (p. 5).



[It was known, is known and shall be known that we, Gui, count of Flanders and marquis of Namur and Hugo of Châtillon, count of Chartres and Blois, have entreated and requested our clerk and friend Butor to recount and arrange for posterity some good stories, for which we thank him and have done so greatly. For this honour, I, the abovementioned Butor, will set to work before I die for the most noble prince, the honoured Jean d'Avesnes, count of Hainaut and marquis of Ostrevant, even if I have not been requested as I was by the others named above.]



Figures 1a and 1b (continued)

Baudouin here appears to quote a request received by from Gui de Dampierre and Hugues de Châtillon, commissioning him to record the story in writing. In his prologue, however, he goes on to dedicate the text to Jean d'Avesnes, even though, as Butor himself notes, he had not asked for it. Given the long-standing tensions between the two dynasties, it is tempting to think that Baudouin was covering all eventualities, perhaps eloquent of a writer in a precarious position. Lewis Thorpe, for instance, reads Butor's prologue as an indication that he was originally clerk to Jean d'Avesnes, but at the time of writing was in the service of Gui de Dampierre.<sup>33</sup> Precisely what Butor means when reporting that Gui de Dampierre and Hugues de Châtillon addressed him as their 'clerk' is similarly unclear. There are striking parallels with the prose prologue to the roughly contemporaneous verse romance *Sone de Nansay*, probably composed at the Brabantine court, in which the author identifies himself as 'Branque, clers a le dame de Baruk, cui j'ai siervi .XL ans' [Branque, clerk to the lady of Baruk, whom I have served for forty years]. Like Butor, Branque seems to quote his patron's request; unlike him, he goes on to enumerate the scholarly disciplines in which he is trained, suggesting a depth of education not necessarily shared by Butor.<sup>34</sup> Either way, this clerical label may perhaps give some tantalizing clue to Butor's identity: there are payments in Gui de Dampierre's accounts made between 1273 and 1279 to 'Baudouin l'enlumineur' and 'Baudouin le clerc' for illuminating a romance and copying a troper for Countess Isabelle, as well as work on a breviary.<sup>35</sup> If this were indeed Butor, then it might not have been outlandish of him to write in 1294 in his second draft that he wished to finish his romance before he died.

The pivot in the orientation of the contents of MS fr. 1446 towards Hainaut begun by Baudouin Butor is completed in the final two items in the codex: two codicologically separate collections of *dits* by father and son Baudouin and Jean de Condé.<sup>36</sup> Here again the close involvement of the poets in the Dampierre–Avesnes fracture is clear: Baudouin de Condé had dedicated his 'Dit de l'éléphant' to Marguerite of Constantinople, and makes reference in a passage of his 'Vers de droit' to the death of the same Guillaume de Dampierre lamented in the opening

<sup>33</sup> Thorpe, 'The Four Rough Drafts' (1968), p. 9.

<sup>34</sup> *Sone de Nansay*, ed. by Claude Lachet (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2014), p. 141. Lachet leaves open the question of whether Branque is the true author or a fiction, and does not attempt to identify the lady of Beirut ('Baruk'); see pp. 64–66. I am grateful to Keith Busby and Remco Sleiderink for drawing this parallel to my attention.

<sup>35</sup> Malcolm Vale suggests that the two Baudouins were one individual; see *The Princely Court: Medieval Courts and Culture in North-West Europe, 1270–1380* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 268–69.

<sup>36</sup> Françoise Féry-Hue proposes that the two collections in MS fr. 1446 record the period of overlap between the two poets' careers, that is, in the very midst of the tensions between the two dynasties; Françoise Féry-Hue, 'Jean de Condé', in *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: le Moyen Âge*, ed. by Grente, Hasenohr, and Zink, pp. 762–64 (p. 763). Given the complicated copying detailed in Table 1 above, this is not impossible.

of the *Couronnement de Renart*.<sup>37</sup> A generation later, the moralizing poet Jean de Condé was active at the Hainauter court under Guillaume I<sup>er</sup> (c. 1286–1337) and his wife Jeanne de Valois, and thus far indeed from Flanders.<sup>38</sup>

Precisely how MS fr. 1446 came to be remains unclear. But its progressive composition invites the view that it bears witness not only to the literary tastes of the Dampierre–Avesnes milieu, but is also reflective in a way of the itinerant lifestyle of the medieval prince. As Malcolm Vale has noted, book production for princes such as Gui de Dampierre bore witness to their peregrinations.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, it is likely Gui's travels also precipitated the introduction of paper manuscripts to Flanders.<sup>40</sup> As has been seen already, the peripatetic qualities of MS fr. 1446's physical development are also active on a textual level, for while certain elements of MS fr. 1446 are intimately linked to Flanders, others are not, existing rather as part of a wider northern cultural network underwritten by ties of blood and marriage. As such, the manuscript as a whole should be viewed as the moment at which Flemish literature starts shading into Hainauter literature — one at which conceiving of French literature as belonging in a political unit seems every bit as unhelpful as trying to think of it as belonging to one.<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, just as these literary trends pass along a familial vector through the geographical entity of Flanders, they also pass through the French language, a highly changeable medium with its own intricate socio-cultural geography. As is well known, when we talk about written French north of — and in the north of — what is now France, we are for the most part not talking about a linguistic form that is 'French' in the sense of 'belonging to France', but rather Picard. More than merely being a dialect, however, Picard was, as Serge Lusignan has shown, a high linguistic form with carefully observed rules and an inherent value, in a sense more similar to Latin than the spoken forms of Romance in use in the region.<sup>42</sup> Much of the work on Picard, with good reason, focuses on evidence of more diplomatic and archival kinds, noting, for instance, that the

<sup>37</sup> Edited in Auguste Scheler, *Dits et contes de Baudouin de Condé et de son fils Jean de Condé*, 3 vols (Brussels: Devaux, 1866–67), I (1866), pp. 205–32; see in particular ll. 458–60, 469–72. There are also thematic links among the contents of MS fr. 1446 as Jean de Condé's 'Dit de l'entendement', copied on fols 197ra–206vb, is a version of the Renardian narrative 'Renars mestre de l'ostel le Roy', edited in Scheler, *Dits et contes*, III (1867), pp. 49–96.

<sup>38</sup> On Jean de Condé, see Scheler, *Dits et contes*. For the archival evidence of Jeanne de Valois's patronage of Jean de Condé, see Janet F. van der Meulen, "'Sche sente the copie to her doughter': Countess Jeanne de Valois and Literature at the Court of Hainaut–Holland', in *I have heard about you: Foreign Women's Writing Crossing the Dutch Border: From Sappho to Selma Lagerlöf*, ed. by Suzan van Dijk and others (Hilversum: Verloren, 2004), pp. 61–83.

<sup>39</sup> Vale, *The Princely Court*, pp. 269–70. For more details on Gui's travels, particularly around the Eighth Crusade, see Aurélie Stuckens, 'Itinérances aristocratiques: sur les pas des comtes de Flandre–Namur autour de 1270', in *Voyageurs, en route! Circonstances et objectifs de la mobilité des hommes au Moyen Âge, voies d'eau et de terre*, ed. by Aurélie Stuckens (Bouvignes: Maison du patrimoine médiéval mosan, 2019), pp. 37–55.

<sup>40</sup> On the first recorded use of paper for princely administration in the register of Jean Makiel, Gui's receiver, see Stuckens, 'Itinérances aristocratiques', esp. pp. 39–42.

<sup>41</sup> On the symbiotic relationship between the counties, see Thérèse de Hemptinne, 'Flandre et Hainaut, deux comtés par-delà les frontières', *Septentrion*, 38 (2004), 44–49.

<sup>42</sup> Serge Lusignan, 'À chacun son français: la communication entre l'Angleterre et les régions picardes et flamandes (xiii<sup>e</sup>–xiv<sup>e</sup> siècle)', in *Approches techniques, littéraires et historiques*, ed. by André Crépin and Jean Leclant (Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 2012), pp. 117–33 (p. 133).

*scripta*'s far-reaching currency was due in no small part to the role of the Picard nation at the University of Paris in gathering together the region's clerics.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, the continuing curation of Picard in primarily Dutch-speaking towns in Flanders into the fifteenth century has also attracted scholarly attention.<sup>44</sup> Thinking about the sociolinguistic geography of Flanders and the surrounding region has accordingly to some degree privileged the more urban aspects of society that are such a prominent part of its identity. By contrast, the mobile witness that MS fr. 1446 bears to the changing face of French in the north-east is one that goes beyond the often static one of letters and charters.<sup>45</sup> It is also a useful reminder of the contribution of literary texts in courtly milieux to our understanding of French in this region. As Jacques Chaurand noted in his study of French dialects, these provide valuable complications to necessarily schematic models:

La carte des dialectes se découpait aussi comme une carte des provinces; mais il devait y avoir des zones intermédiaires. Les confins sécrétaient les poètes. Or, comme on pensait qu'ils écrivaient dans leur langue, on n'est pas parvenu aussi vite à cette autre conclusion, tout aussi possible, que les poètes sécrétaient les confins.<sup>46</sup>

In this context, the Hainauter cleric Baudouin Butor seems to be the perfect metaphor for this literary and cultural moment. His four draft prologues trace the careful negotiation of allegiances between the rival Dampierre and Avesnes families, as he literally writes himself into the margins of Gui de Dampierre's literary sphere. This positionality is also legible in linguistic terms, and Butor's French has been the object of much discussion over time. Claude Fauriel in the *Histoire littéraire de la France* in 1847 used it as the reason to declare him to be a Fleming.<sup>47</sup> More recently, Louis-Fernand Flutre has located him in Hainaut: 'La langue de Butor est

<sup>43</sup> Lusignan, *Essai d'histoire sociolinguistique*, pp. 122–29. The Picard nation included students from the dioceses of Beauvais, Noyon, Amiens, Laon, Théroüanne, Arras, Cambrai, Tournai, and the southern (francophone) parts of Liège; Serge Lusignan, 'Espace géographique et langue: les frontières du français picard (XIII<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècle)', in *Construction de l'espace au Moyen Âge: pratiques et représentations* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2007), pp. 263–74 (p. 272).

<sup>44</sup> There is evidence of mercantile families exchanging their sons across the linguistic frontier to learn the 'other' language, for example, between French-speaking Tournai and Dutch-speaking Ghent; see Marc Boone, 'Langue, pouvoirs et dialogue: aspects linguistiques de la communication entre les ducs de Bourgogne et leurs sujets flamands (1385–1505)', *Revue du Nord*, 379 (2009), 9–33 (p. 30). This practice was not confined to Flanders: in the Burgundian period Hainauters also commonly spoke Dutch; see de Hemptinne, 'Flandre et Hainaut', p. 49.

<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, charters written for the counts of Flanders betray how choice of language and *scripta* contributed to the presentation of identity. Where Picard was dominant in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, under Count Louis de Male (r. 1346–84), a majority of charters were composed in Flemish, while those in French took on the central French *scripta*; see Lusignan, *Essai de sociolinguistique*, p. 78. On this point, see also Thérèse de Hemptinne, 'De doorbraak van de volkstaal als geschreven taal in de documentaire bronnen: Op zoek naar verklaringen en de context van de graafschappen Vlaanderen en Henegouw in de dertiende eeuw', in *Van vader naar moedertaal: Latijn, Frans en Nederlands in de dertiende-eeuwse Nederlanden*, ed. by Rita Beyers (Brussels: Koninklijke Zuidnederlandse Maatschappij, 2000), pp. 7–21.

<sup>46</sup> Jacques Chaurand, *Introduction à la dialectologie française* (Paris: Bordas, 1972), p. 126.

<sup>47</sup> Fauriel, 'Baudouin Butor', in *Histoire littéraire de la France*, cxxi, ed. by Le Clerc (1847), pp. 565–71 (p. 566).

le francien, mais avec un mélange, avons-nous dit, de formes picardes propres plus particulièrement à l'extrême Nord-Est.<sup>48</sup> These linguistic traits include:

- Diphthongization of *e* before *r/s* + consonant, or before *l*, for instance in *tierre*, *iestre*, *biele*, or *pucele*. NE Picard, and particularly typical of Hainaut.<sup>49</sup>
- *-eil* < *-ALIS*, *-ALEM*, as in *teil*, *lequeil*, and *osteil*. NE Picard, Walloon, Champenois, and Franc-Comtois.<sup>50</sup>
- *-iu* in *hastiu* < *HASTIVUS*, *diu* < *DEUM*, *mius* < *MELIUS*. Typical in Picard French.<sup>51</sup>
- Palatalization of *c* and *t* before *e* or *i*, for instance in *rechevoir* or *chaiens*. Typical of Picardy, and to a lesser degree Wallonia.<sup>52</sup>
- Vocalization of *l* to *u* after *i*, giving *FILIUM* > *fiu*, and *SUBTILIS* > *soutius*. Found in Picard, Walloon, and NE French.<sup>53</sup>
- Final *-t* in past participles, as in *pierdut* and *abatut*. Common across Picardy, Champagne, Wallonia, and Lorraine.<sup>54</sup>

This is far from an exhaustive analysis, but gives some idea of how Butor's French sits in the middle of a linguistic spectrum both in terms of scale and geography. That is, it exhibits characteristics common to multiple locales. Alongside some that are specific to Hainaut, other traits are simultaneously reflective of the 'Frenches' in use in the arc between the geographical Picardy and the north-east of modern France.<sup>55</sup> His text thus reflects in linguistic terms the ways the literary milieu mirrored in MS fr. 1446 repeatedly breaks out of any analytical frame in

<sup>48</sup> Flutre, 'Le Roman de Pandragus et Libanor par Baudouin Butor', pp. 61–64. Thorpe, on the strength of a marginal note on fol. 111v reading 'Johan(s) de Morcumpont pour Mestre Bauduin de Montigny, per II februarium huius anni, 2 libras 1 solidum', also locates Butor to Hainaut, specifically to Montignies-sur-Roc, midway between Mons and Valenciennes; Lewis Thorpe, 'The Four Rough Drafts of Bauduins Butors', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 13 (1969), 49–64 (pp. 49–50).

<sup>49</sup> See Chaurand, *Introduction à la dialectologie française*, p. 57; Louis Remacle, *Le Problème de l'ancien wallon* (Liège: Presses universitaires de Liège, 1948), pp. 49–50; and Reine Mantou, *Actes originaux rédigés en français dans la partie flammingante du comté de Flandre (1250–1350): étude linguistique* (Liège: Michiels, 1972), pp. 115–18.

<sup>50</sup> See Eduard Schwan and Dietrich Behrens, *Grammaire de l'ancien français*, trans. by Oscar Bloch, 2 vols. in 3 (Leipzig: Reisland, 1923), III, 122, no. 11. Compare Walther von Wartburg and others, *Französisches etymologisches Wörterbuch. Eine Darstellung des galloromanischen Sprachschatzes*, 25 vols (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1922–2002), II.2, 141I, s.v. 'qualis', and XIII, 55, s.v. 'talis'.

<sup>51</sup> See Chaurand, *Introduction à la dialectologie française*, p. 86; and Charles Théodore Gossen, *Grammaire de l'ancien picard* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1970), §14, 18, 25.

<sup>52</sup> See Gossen, *Grammaire de l'ancien picard*, §38, pp. 91–93. Compare Wartburg, *Französisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, x, 145, s.v. 'reçipère'.

<sup>53</sup> See Chaurand, *Introduction à la dialectologie française*, p. 60; and Flutre, 'Le Roman de Pandragus et Libanor par Baudouin Butor', p. 62. Compare Wartburg, *Französisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, III, 521, s.v. 'filius'.

<sup>54</sup> See Carl Theodore Gossen, *Französische Skriptastudien. Untersuchungen zu den nordfranzösischen Urkundensprachen des Mittelalters* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1967), pp. 326–27. Later, Gossen described this trait as especially typical of Hainaut and Wallonia (*Grammaire de l'ancien picard*, pp. 104–06).

<sup>55</sup> Gossen also emphasizes the porosity of Old French *scriptae*, Picard and otherwise: 'N'oublions pas qu'une scripta — de chancellerie ou littéraire — n'est jamais le miroir de la langue parlée. Elle est le produit artificiel d'une certaine couche sociale. Il est hors de doute que les scribes du moyen âge ne connaissaient pas seulement leur propre dialecte. Ils auront senti le besoin de normaliser la langue écrite, de la placer, pour ainsi dire, dans un cadre plus vaste. La scripta du domaine d'oïl possède un fonds commun. C'est sur ce fonds que se greffent les traits régionaux, locaux et même individuels et créent ainsi les traditions graphiques que nous appelons normande, picarde, wallonne ou lorraine'; *Petite grammaire de l'ancien picard* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1951), p. 32.

which we try to put it. It is as such a salutary reminder of the difficulties and drawbacks of pinning literary artefacts to any one place or trying to claim any kind of possession over them. Butor is, then, a capital example of Chaurand's poet who simultaneously hides and bestrides the linguistic boundary. And it is exactly in this movement that such boundaries exist — at the very moment at which they are being blurred.

Similar blurring is also at work beyond the boundaries of the francophone world. The region was a multilingual one, as was noted in the Introduction. It is generally held that French held a high status among Dutch-speaking populations, in particular the rich burghers and other urbanites who were so characteristic of the region. There is also good reason to think this polyglossia came much closer to the comital circle in which we can perhaps locate MS fr. 1446. Although Vale describes the courts of the north as 'a Francophone culture', the non-French names of those he cites as being in the service of the count of Flanders remind us that the multilingualism of the Flemish population was never far away.<sup>56</sup> This tightly interwoven linguistic scene had clear consequences for the literary sphere. Joost van Driel, in his discussion of a distinctive Flemish style in Middle Dutch texts, cites — alongside a delight in detail, verbal games, and an 'elegante losheid' [elegant abandon] — a taste for Gallicizing lexis as especially typical of Flemish writers.<sup>57</sup> The *Couronnement* along with the Renart material at large is especially striking in this regard. At around the same time as the anonymous author was working on the *Couronnement*, one 'Willem', possibly one of Marguerite de Constantinople's clerks, was composing the Middle Dutch *Van den vos Reynaerde*.<sup>58</sup> Based on the *Jugement de Renart*, which may itself have originated in Flanders, the Gallicisms in the Middle Dutch text of *Van den vos Reynaerde* reproduces some of the traits of Picard French detailed above.<sup>59</sup> For example:

*castyen* (l. 489) < *castier*  
*keytijf* (ll. 640, 838) < *caitif*  
*siere* (l. 937) < *sire*<sup>60</sup>  
*stage* (l. 2753) < *estage*

<sup>56</sup> Vale, *The Princely Court*, pp. 282–94, 327–30.

<sup>57</sup> Joost van Driel, *Meesters van het woord: Middelnederlandse schrijvers en hun kunst* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), pp. 12–31 (p. 26).

<sup>58</sup> Rik van Daele identifies the author with Willem van Boudelo; see Rik van Daele, 'De robotfoto van de Reynaert-Dichter: Puzzelen met overgeleverde wrakstukken', in *Maar er is meer: Avontuurlijk lezen in de epië van de Lage Landen. Studies voor Jozef D. Janssens*, ed. by Remco Sleiderink, Veerle Uyttersprot, and Bart Besamusca (Leuven: Davidsfonds, 2005), pp. 193–215. Another of Marguerite's clerks, Diederik van Assenede, is also attributed with the Middle Dutch translation of *Floire et Blancheflor*. For other literary contacts between French and Middle Dutch, see Jelmar Hugen, 'Vernacular Multilingualism: The Use of French in Medieval Dutch Literature', *Neophilologus*, 106 (2022), 181–98.

<sup>59</sup> See Serge Lusignan, 'Une source pour l'histoire sociolinguistique du français picard', *Queeste*, 18 (2011), 10–17; and *Of Reynaert the Fox: Text and Facing Translation of the Middle Dutch Beast Epic 'Van den vos Reynaerde'*, ed. by André Bouwman and Bart Besamusca, trans. by Thea Summerfield (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009).

<sup>60</sup> Gossen wonders whether *sieres* may in fact be the fruit of a svarabhaktic *e* calqued on the Middle Dutch; see *Französische Skriptastudien*, p. 234, with reference to Adolphe van Loey, *Middelnederlandse spraakkunst*, 2 vols (Groningen: Wolters, 1964–71), II: *Klankleer* (1971), p. 85.



However, it is not only in Middle Dutch texts with Old French ‘originals’ that we find this Gallicizing style, but also in others such as *Walewein*, for which there is every reason to think it is an original Dutch composition. We can see, then, how the linguistic shading at work in MS fr. 1446 can also be pursued even across the boundary between Romance and Germanic languages. Ultimately, it seems, the boundaries of medieval French lie well beyond what we might usually think of as ‘French’.<sup>61</sup>

Fr. 1446, then, is not as *français* as its shelf-mark suggests. Along with the wider literary landscape in the southern Low Countries it represents, this manuscript points us towards the fuzzy edges of the French language itself and the Picard *scripta* that is so central to many accounts of French in the Low Countries. Time and again, this region and its literature break out of any analytical frame into which we might attempt to put them, linguistic or political, and invite us to consider the dissolving frontiers of Flanders as a cultural entity. Fr. 1446 and its remarkably neat cross-section of the interests of one group of readers and patrons is good evidence of the need for a more considered, and more dynamic, approach to the French-language literary production of this region. It illuminates how this literary scene interacts with the wider linguistic landscape, and how ill served this region is by more traditional modes of literary and linguistic history. When examining a literary milieu such as the Dampierres — so often found in histories of literature that is supposedly French in a national sense — there is much to be won, both by placing it in multilingual context, and by reconsidering the baggage of the labels we use to write histories of languages. The county of Flanders, along with the networks that traverse and subtend it, poses productive challenges to traditional literary narratives, not least of all about how we think about France, the supposed centre to Flanders’s periphery.<sup>62</sup> Above all, it reminds us of the need to bring to the fore those people who used medieval French, both the anonymous and named actors such as Baudouin Butor, to better understand the values that underpinned their choices — linguistic, artistic, professional. Only in this way can we trace the movements through entities such as the county of Flanders that together make up the dynamic realities of medieval Francophonia.

<sup>61</sup> The Renart tradition also reached beyond the vernacular: Gui de Dampierre’s son Jean, provost of St Donatus in Bruges and ultimately Bishop of Liège, was the dedicatee of *Reynardus vulpes*, a Latin translation of the Middle Dutch *Van den vos Reynaerde*. See *Reynardus vulpes: De Latijnse Reinaert-vertaling van Balduinus luvenis*, ed. by R. B. C. Huygens (Zwolle: Tjeenk Willink, 1968).

<sup>62</sup> As Simon Gaunt notes, ‘Rather than a history of French courtly literature being exported to the rest of Europe from a central point, the literature of France starts to look like a bricolage of influences from elsewhere’: ‘French Literature Abroad: Towards an Alternative History of French Literature’, *Interfaces*, 1 (2015), 25–61 (p. 59).