

Advising France through the Example of England: Visual Narrative in the *Livre de la prinse et mort du roy Richart* (Harl. MS. 1319)

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Duke John of Berry's inventories of 1411 and 1413 record the gift of an unusual history that described the fall from power of Richard II, king of England:

Item, *the Livre de la prinse et mort du roy Richart d'Angleterre* (Book of the Capture and Death of King Richard II), written in rhyming French in *lettre de court* and illustrated in several places, the incipit of the second folio *qu'il eust*, covered with black silk with two round clasps of gilded silver enamelled with the arms of France, which the departed vidame de Laonnois, formerly the *grand maistre* of the king's household gave to the duke. [Item, le Livre de la prinse et mort du roy Richart d'Angleterre, escript en françoys rimé, de lettre de court, et historié en plusieurs lieux; et au commencement du second feuillet a escript: *qu'il eust*, couvert de drap de soye noir, à deux fermouers roons d'argent dorez, esmaillez aux armes de France; que le feu vidame de Laonnois, en son vivant grant maistre d'ostel du Roy, donna à Monseigneur].¹

This gift from John of Montaigu, the vidame of Laonnois, to the duke is the earliest surviving copy of an eyewitness account of Richard II's deposition in 1399 written by Jean Creton in a mixture of verse and prose. Penned some time between November 1401 and March 1402 at the request of Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, it is an important early source for historians curious about the events surrounding Richard's deposition and demise.² The account has recently been discussed by Ardis Butterfield as an example of the importance of French as one of two 'mother tongues' in England and by both Paul Strohm

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¹ Jules Guiffrey (ed.), *Inventaires de Jean, duc de Berry (1401-1416)*, 2 vols (Paris, 1894-96), vol. i, p. 249, no. 948.

² For an overview of contemporary literature concerning Richard II with further bibliography, see Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England ca. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca, 1982), pp. 157-93; Craig Taylor, "'Weep Thou for me in France": French Views of the Deposition of Richard II', in *Fourteenth-Century England*, III, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 207-22; and Glynnis M. Cropp and Alison Hanham, 'Richard II from Donkey to Royal Martyr: Perceptions of Eustache Deschamps and Contemporary French Writers', *Parergon*, xxiv:1 (2007), pp. 101-36.

and Craig Taylor as part of a body of fifteenth-century texts surrounding the Lancastrian succession that reflect the ongoing fascination with, and political relevance of, Richard's deposition in both England and France.³

This article complements historical and textual analyses of Creton's book by examining the visual narrative in Harl. MS. 1319, the only one of the seven surviving manuscripts of the text to be illustrated with a pictorial cycle of sixteen images (see Appendix I). Rather than contributing to the discussion of historical aspects of Creton's text, I will analyse the role of the images painted for Harl. MS. 1319 by the Virgil Master, examining them internally, as they function within the manuscript's text, and externally, as they may have resonated with members of the highly visually cultured French courtly audience in the first decade of the fifteenth century. Harl. MS. 1319 was given to Duke John of Berry, the uncle of the French King Charles VI, some time between September 1405 and January 1406 by John of Montaigu, the superintendent of finances for King Charles VI.⁴ What role might such an unusual illustrated tale of Richard's downfall have played for John of Berry and Richard's other in-laws in Paris when the duke of Berry was given this particular copy of Creton's work? How might the images devised to decorate it shape reception of Creton's text?

Sent in April 1399 by the French King Charles VI to join the English King Richard II on his military expedition to Ireland, Jean Creton was present when Richard first learned that his cousin Henry Bolingbroke had returned to England from exile in France to stir rebellion.⁵ Creton travelled with the Earl of Salisbury, whom Richard had sent back from Ireland to Wales to raise an army against Henry. They were unsuccessful in assembling a military force, because rumours circulated that the king was already dead. Once Richard realized that Henry's supporters had duped him into staying too long in Ireland, he returned to Wales disguised as a poor priest. There Jean Creton and the Earl of Salisbury joined him at Conwy Castle. With few supporters to defend Richard and with the Earl of Northumberland's successful deception, which lured Richard out of Conwy Castle, Henry easily captured the king. Creton was among those who accompanied Henry and Richard to London, where Henry turned the king over to the Londoners. He writes that after this he never saw Richard again. Fearing for his own life, Creton returned to France in September 1399 where he later completed his account of Richard's capture and death with the help of reports from a clerk who had stayed on in London.

Creton manipulated literary form both to structure his account and to give authority to his informant's report of events after September 1399.⁶ He began the book with a long poetic section (ff. 2-46v) that gave way to a short prose description (ff. 46v-54) that concentrates on the central event of Richard's capture and interaction with Henry. A ballad addressed to Henry follows (ff. 54-55), recapitulating key events that Creton had already

³ See Ardis Butterfield, *The Familiar Enemy: Chaucer, Language, and Nation in the Hundred Years War* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 308-49, especially pp. 311-13; Paul Strohm, *England's Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation, 1399-1422* (New Haven, 1998), and Taylor, "Weep Thou".

⁴ Meiss and Off were able to show through its placement in the inventory records that Harl. MS. 1319 was given to John duke of Berry during the last quarter of 1405. See Millard Meiss and Sharon Off, 'The Bookkeeping of Robinet d'Estampes and the Chronology of John of Berry's Manuscripts', *Art Bulletin*, liii (1971), pp. 225-35; and Anne D. Hedeman, *Translating the Past: Laurent de Premierfait and Boccaccio's 'Decasibus'* (Los Angeles, 2008), p. 242.

⁵ For Jean Creton and further bibliography, see J. J. N. Palmer, 'Creton, Jean (fl. 1386-1420)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.uiuc.edu/view/article/50197> (accessed 28 December 2010).

⁶ For an edition and translation into English of the text of Harl. MS. 1319, see John Webb, 'Translation of a French Metrical History of the Deposition of King Richard the Second, written by a Contemporary, and comprising the Period from his last Expedition into Ireland to his death', *Archaeologia*, xx (1824), pp. 1-423. I have modernized the English in my citations from this text.

described. The ballad's first stanza condemns Henry's treason. Its second contrasts Henry, who plotted against the king, with Richard, who fought the Irish and knighted Henry's son, and its third castigates Henry's agent, the Earl of Northumberland, for luring Richard into a trap by breaking an oath sworn on the sacrament. The final fourth stanza calls for an international response to the outrage from the French, Flemish, Germans and Bretons. The repeated refrain, 'You will lose in the end body and soul' [Tu en perdras en la fin corps & ame], reproaches Henry. After the ballad, the final poetic section (ff. 55-78v) continues with the eyewitness account given to Creton by his informant, a French clerk who had gone to England with Henry and remained there until after Richard was dead. The clerk described Parliament's deposition of Richard and selection of Henry, Henry's coronation, Richard's rumoured death in 1400, and the negotiation for and return of Richard's widow, Queen Isabella, to France in 1401.

Creton interlaced his rendition of the clerk's eyewitness account with his own by duplicating events at the beginning of the clerk's account that already had been recorded at the end of his own prose section. Both Creton and the clerk mention that Richard was taken to Westminster and describe Henry's arrival in London, where he first went to St Paul's to visit his father's grave and then to 'a hospital of the Templars', where he stayed for three weeks before going to the country to wait for Parliament to schedule its session.⁷ In these four distinct, yet interwoven, sections, Harley 1319 seamlessly traces Richard's fall from fortune.

The iconography and visual disposition of the miniatures painted in Harl. MS. 1319 by the Virgil Master both reinforce and restructure Creton's history (see Appendix II). Indeed, it seems that a cycle of images was planned by Creton, as suggestive wording in a letter written to Richard in 1401 outlines.⁸ With the exception of one image of the English Parliament, illustrations appear only in the first two textual units, the poetic and prose sections written by Creton that described his stay in England. Thus the distribution of images weighs the visual story towards Creton's eyewitness account of Henry's treachery.

Many paintings within the first two sections are noteworthy for their direct reinforcement of Creton's interwoven text. Because of the manuscript's vibrant illustrations, readers were doubtless expected to recall prior illustrated texts when they came to the two specific references in the ballad's middle stanzas. The second stanza spoke of Richard in Ireland:

Seeing he had gone abroad against his enemies in Ireland; where from the Irish, who are bold as lions, he received many a hard blow. There he made your eldest son a knight. Alas! you have forgotten to recompense him. It's a great sin; all the world blames you. [Veu quil estoit hors sur ses ennemis/ En irlande, ou mains durs horions/ Recent dirlois, qui sont fiers com lions./ Ton filz ainsne y fist chevalier: las! / Le guerdon a lui rendre oublias:/ Cest grant peche: tout le monde tenblasme.]⁹

⁷ Creton's summary of the clerk's information is more precise than that which Creton wrote under his own name. Creton records that Henry went to the hospital, and the clerk specifies that he stayed fifteen days. He also specifies that Henry then went to the country for three weeks.

⁸ The letter transcribed with additional ballads by Creton at the end of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. n.a.f. 6223 follows the transcription of the *Livre de la prinse et mort du roy Richart* and begins with the rubric, 'Epistre faite par ledit Creton'. For a discussion and full transcription of this letter from Creton to Richard, which Dillon dates to 1401, see P. W. Dillon, 'Remarks on the Manner of the Death of King Richard II', *Archaeologia*, xxviii (1840), pp. 75-95. The letter transcribed on pp. 87-8 contains phrases that suggest that Creton may have planned for illuminated manuscripts: 'Et sachiez par que touts les maux et horribles trahisons qu'ils t'ont faictes j'ay manifestées par figures, par dis au Royaulme de France affin que leur vie soit honteuse et plein de reproches...' and later in the letter, 'Et certes si tu ne viens bien brief pardeça j'iray à toy en quelque lieu que tu sayes, et te porteray par escript et par figures une grant partie des amères fortunes et dolences comme je les ny avenir, may estant avecque toy en Hybernie et en Angleterre...'.
⁹ See Webb, 'Metrical History', pp. 183 and 379.

The third stanza condemned the Earl of Northumberland's actions:

For you have kept with him neither faith nor treaty, as you had sworn and promised [to do]; when falsely, and under pretence of security, Northumberland was sent to him from you, promising upon the sacrament that they would be his friend, and that all was right. So the king untimely quitted his castles, and journeyed towards you, alas!, most humbly. Shamefully you carried him off in disgrace. [Car a ly nas tenu foy naliance,/ Comme Jure lavoies & promis,/ Quant faintement, & en nom dasseurance,/ Northomberlant par toy lui fu tramis,/ En promettant sur le corps dieu quamis/ Tu lui seroies, & que cestoit raisons:/ Ainsi le roy, ains quil en feust saisons,/ De ses chasteaulx wida & hault & bas,/ Vers toy sent vint tres humblement: helas!/ Honteusement lemmenas a disfame.]¹⁰

Readers could easily go back and find Creton's fuller illustrated descriptions of Richard knighting the future Henry V who was with him in Ireland (fig. 1) or Creton's extended account of the Earl of Northumberland's deception illustrated by figures 2-4. The scene in figure 1 emphasizes Richard's kingship by showing him crowned and bearing royal arms and emblems as he knights Henry. The distinctive robe that the Earl of Northumberland wears in his three sequential miniatures (figs 2-4) allows readers to identify him freely, first kneeling as emissary of Henry to Richard, then perjuring himself on the host in order to lure Richard from his secure castle retreat, and finally ambushing the king and taking him captive for Henry. These images serve dual purposes, illustrating both the text they accompany and the later ballad that refers back to the events they illustrate to offer an explicit condemnation of Henry Bolingbroke.

Other images work with the texts they accompany to make past events present and offer the reader a vivid eyewitness perspective. For instance, the Irish chieftain MacMorogh was carefully described by Creton, who had accompanied Richard's representatives when they met him. The phrase that ends the paragraph just before the miniature of their meeting (fig. 5), 'Here see the appearance he made exactly portrayed' [Sa semblante, e ainsi come il estoit,/ Veez pourtraite] associates MacMoragh's action and physical description explicitly with the image. The image incorporates details from Creton's textual description, which emphasized the haste of MacMorogh's descent with his forces from the woods towards the stream, riding without stirrups and brandishing his 'great long dart'.¹¹

Similarly, the illustration (fig. 6) of the sermon preached by Thomas Arundel, the former Archbishop of Canterbury who claimed that the pope had offered a plenary indulgence to those who supported Henry against Richard II, was carefully placed to follow the archbishop's words: 'Behold the sealed bull that the Pope of renowned Rome has sent me, my good friends, on behalf of you all' ['Et vesenci la bulle seellee,/ Que le pappe de romme la louee/ Ma envoie, & pour vous tous donnee,/ Mes bons amis].¹² The bull with its big red seal is made visible to the manuscript's viewers, as though they too were there to hear Thomas Arundel use religious authority to rally the English against Richard. Images like these encouraged readers to see what Creton saw or to experience significant events that happened in England while Creton himself was in Ireland and Wales.

The series of eyewitness moments builds to a visual climax in the last three miniatures of Harl. MS. 1319's visual narrative. These derive added power from their position in the text, because the first two in particular are placed against Creton's short prose section. The abrupt shift from poetry to prose in the manuscript draws on a literary topos that dates back to the earliest appearance of French vernacular history in the thirteenth century.¹³

¹⁰ Ibid, pp. 183-85, 379-80.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 39-40, 305-306.

¹² Ibid., pp. 53, 311.

¹³ For discussion of the truthfulness of prose in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries with further references, see Gabrielle Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1993), pp. 55-93.

Numerous prologues, even poetic ones, stated that the history they prefaced was written in prose because prose is more truthful than poetry; many asserted that in order to make the rhyme work a writer frequently has to introduce untruths. Still other prologues state explicitly that no rhymed account is true, and as recently as the reign of Duke John of Berry's grandfather, Philip of Valois (d. 1350), poetic prologues often gave way to prose texts in genres of literature as different from history as *Mirrors of Princes*.¹⁴ Because of the ubiquity of this topos, it seems likely that a French reader who came upon the transition from poetry to prose in this manuscript would expect the shift to signal a central truth or a particularly important portion of the text, even without being told by Creton in his last lines of poetry before his text shifts to prose:

Now I will tell you of the taking of the king, without seeking for any more rhymes, that I may better set down the whole of the words that passed between these two at their meeting, because I think I thoroughly remember them. So I will relate them in prose. Now may he who made us in his own likeness punish all those who committed this outrage. [Or vous vueil dire, sans plus rime querir,/ Du roy la prinse, et pour mieulx acomplir/ Les paroles quilz dirent au venir / Eulx deux ensemble;/ Car retenues les ay bien, ce me semble;/ Si les diray en prose; car il semble/ Aucunesfoiz quon adioste ou assemble/ Trop de langaige/ A la matiere, de quoy on fait ouvrage./ Or vueille dieux, qui nous fait a simage,/ Pugnir tous ceulx qui firent tel outrage].¹⁵

The shift from poetry to prose encouraged readers to look carefully at the prose passage where they could both read about Richard's deposition and hear and see it performed before their eyes. The prose text describes Henry's trip with the Earl of Northumberland from Chester to Flint Castle where Richard was held, Richard's greeting and conversation with Henry, Henry's arrest of Richard and their journey to London, the delivery of Richard to the Londoners for trial in Parliament, and Henry's visit to St Paul's and eventual departure from London. The two images placed against this passage draw attention to its central event, the transfer of power expressed visually by the shift of position and scale between Henry and Richard. In the first (fig. 7) Henry appears before Richard in full armour except for his helmet (*basinet*), an important detail of humility that the text immediately preceding it emphasizes, 'as you can see in this miniature' [*comme vous povez veoir en ceste ystoire*].¹⁶ The miniature contrasts Richard and Henry. Henry holds his hat and staff and almost kneels before Richard, who stands in the courtyard of Flint Castle bareheaded and wearing the priestly disguise he had assumed once he returned to Wales. Despite this humble garb, Richard is surrounded by supporters greater in number and scale than Henry's soldiers. Richard has both pride of position and voice in this picture, for his greeting to Henry, 'Fair cousin of Lancaster, you be right welcome' ['*Beau cousin de Lancastre, vous soiez le tresbien venu*'] begins right below it.¹⁷ The second of the pair (fig. 8), the last image of Richard, offers a sharp contrast. It illustrates the text directly preceding it, which expresses the horror of what happened through biblical analogy by comparing Henry's betrayal of Richard to Pilate's of Christ:

Then spoke Duke Henry quite aloud to the commons of the said city [London], 'Fair Sirs, behold your king! Consider what you will do with him!' And they answered with a loud voice, 'We will have him taken to Westminster.' And so he delivered him unto

¹⁴ For an example from the time of Philip of Valois, see Jean-Philippe Genet, *Four English Political Tracts of the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1977), pp. 174-219.

¹⁵ For the text in French and English, see Webb, 'Metrical History', pp. 151, 368.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 167, 373.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

them. At this hour did he remind me of Pilate, who caused our Lord Jesus Christ to be scourged at the stake, and afterwards had him brought before the multitude of the Jews, saying, 'Fair Sirs, behold your king!' who replied, 'Let him be crucified!' Then Pilate washed his hands of it, saying, 'I am innocent of the just blood.' And so he delivered our Lord unto them. Much in the like manner did Duke Henry, when he gave up his rightful lord to the rabble of London, in order that, if they should put him to death, he might say, 'I am innocent of this deed'.

[lors dist le duc henry moult hault aux communes de ladite ville; Beaux seigneurs, vecy votre roy ; regardez que vous en volez faire. Et ilz respondirent a haute voix, nous voulons quil soit mene a wemonstre: Et ainsi il leur delivra. A celle heure il me souvint il de pilate, le quel fist battre nostre seigneur ihu crist a lestache, et apres le fist mener devant le turbe des Juifs disant, beaux seigneurs, vecy votre roy; lesquelz respondirent, nous voulons qu'il soit crucifie. Alors pilate en lava ses mains disant, Je sui innocent du sanc iuste. Et ainsi leur delivra nostre seigneur. Assez semblablement fist le duc henry quant son droit seigneur livra au turbe de londres : afin telle que silz le faisoient mourir quil peust dire, ie sui innocent de ce fait icy.]¹⁸

The miniature shows a physically diminished Richard dwarfed by the towering figure of Henry Bolingbroke. Henry, backed by his armies, extends his hand to a paltry group of London residents. These prose images (figs 8 and 9) are the only two pictures to show Henry of Lancaster and Richard II together. It seems likely that the claim for textual truth of the prose against which they appear underlines their special function, enabling them to be read in association as a visual diptych that charts the shift of power from Richard to Henry all the while casting Henry in a decidedly negative light.

The first and last scenes set in the British Isles are the only two to represent attributes of kingship. They seem designed to reinforce the visual contrast between Richard as legitimate king and Henry as illegitimate usurper. When Richard knights the future Henry V in Ireland (fig. 1), he wears his crown and clothes covered with the ostrich plumes that had been borne by his father, Edward the Black Prince, the eldest son of King Edward III. Richard's soldiers bear a pennant with ostrich feathers and the English flag. In contrast, the final image of the book (fig. 9) emphasizes the absence of the king, showing the empty royal throne that was set up at the assembly at Westminster and the clerics and nobles – including Henry, the only securely identified participant in the miniature – who met to deliberate about who should be king. It is at this point, on the fifty-seventh of seventy-nine folios, that the visual narrative ends, not with a representation of Henry's coronation, or of Isabelle of France's restitution, both of which were subsequently described and would have made fine illustrations, but with a void at the centre of power, the effacement of the king.

By 1405–1406 when John of Montaigu gave Duke John of Berry this decorated manuscript, the throne was no longer empty; Henry IV had been king for over five years. As royal consort to Isabella of Valois, King Charles VI's daughter, Richard II was important to members of the French royal house, particularly to the Princes of the Blood like Dukes John the Fearless of Burgundy, John of Berry, or Louis of Orléans, who doubtless counselled the king on suitable candidates for Isabella's remarriage in 1406.

However that does not fully explain what it was about the story of Richard's deposition and death that made it an appealing gift to the duke and interesting to French courtly audiences. Nor does it clarify why the empty throne was such a suitable final image.

Like the visual narrative, rare marginal annotations in the manuscript seem less concerned with the immediate consequences of Richard's death and Isabella's widowhood

¹⁸ Ibid. pp. 179, 377–78

³² *Catalogus Bibliothecae Harlianae* (London, 1743–5), vol. i, p. 2.

than with the more lasting exemplary nature of Richard's fall from power. Creton emphasizes fortune repeatedly in his text, and an early fifteenth-century reader responded in one instance with a large 'No[ta] Fortune' penned in the margin and an added '¶' next to Creton's line 'and by fortune who at all times' on folio 26, part of the passage:

Now, considering the power, possessions and grandeur of King Richard, who was so great a lord, reflect what mischief, torment, and grief (must it be) for him to be thus dealt with by treason, and by fortune who at all times hath power and authority, severe as she is, to undo those whom she pleases. [Veu la force, l'avoir, & la grandeur/ Du roy richart, qui fu si grant seigneur,/ Lui estre ainsi demene par faveur,/ Et trayson,/ Et par fortune, qui en toute saison/ A la puissance et dominacion/ De deffaire ceulx qui lui semble bon.]¹⁹

Such an emphasis on fortune echoes exemplary texts like Boccaccio's *Des cas des nobles hommes et femmes*, which Laurent de Premierfait first translated into French in 1400 and which tracked Fortune's impact on people ranging from Adam and Eve to King John the Good of France.²⁰ It also finds contemporary echoes in Christine de Pizan's presentation of Richard as undone by fortune in the *Livre de la mutacion de Fortune*, written in 1403, and her *L'Avision Christine* in 1406.²¹

Creton develops the related exemplary chord of treason in his ballad's first stanza, when he addresses Henry as a 'mirror of treason' for his treatment of Richard:

O you, Henry, who have at present under your rule the territory and country of King Richard, who had so much power, whom you have driven out and put down; and have appropriated and taken to yourself all his goods; you, who are the mirror of treasons. Now every one knows, that never was man so falsely betrayed, as you have betrayed your king. [O tu henry, qui as en gouvernance/ Pour le present la terre & le pais/ Du roy richart, qui tant ot de puissance,/ Le quel tu as hors boute et demis,/ Et tous ses biens apropriez & mis/ A toy, qui es mirouer de traisons/ Or scet chacun conques maiz trahis homs/ Si faulcement ne fu come tu as/ trahi roy.]²²

Scholars who have looked at contemporary literary and historical discussions of Richard were unaware of yet a third early fifteenth-century exemplary context for Richard II in French literature. The French translation of Valerius Maximus, completed for John of Berry in September 1401 and presented to him at the *Étrennes* ceremony on 1 January 1402 (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. Fr. 182), also places Richard and Henry in an exemplary context. In 1401 Nicolas de Gonesse translated and annotated the final section of Valerius Maximus's *Les faits et les dits des Romains* to complete the translation begun for Charles V by Simon de Hesdin.²³ Simon had built on Valerius's practice of giving Roman

¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 110, 334. Taylor cited this passage in his discussion of the role of Fortune in Creton's text, but he did not note the contemporary reader's annotation in Harl. MS. 1319. See Taylor, "Weep Thou", p. 213.

²⁰ For Laurent de Premierfait and his translation of Boccaccio, see Hedeman, *Translating the Past*.

²¹ See Taylor, "Weep Thou", pp. 213-214, and Cropp and Hanham, 'Richard II', pp. 131-32. Both these authors outline the other concerns, such as tyrannicide, that seemed to preoccupy authors who mentioned Richard by the second decade of the fifteenth century.

²² See Webb, 'Metrical History', 182-83, 379.

²³ See Caroline Charras, 'La Traduction de Valère-Maxime par Nicolas de Gonesse', Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1982; and Elizabeth Morrison and Anne D. Hedeman, *Imagining the Past in France: History in Manuscript Painting, 1250-1500* (Los Angeles, 2010), pp. 247-8, no. 45, for further bibliography.

examples of the virtues and vices he discussed. In his translator's prologue Simon de Hesdin observed that Valerius first offered examples of Romans and then put examples of others whom he called 'foreign' [estranges]. He suggested that he would add examples to Valerius's at the end of some chapters in his translation, either describing cases that Valerius had not thought to add, or events that had happened since Roman times.

It seems significant that in 1401 when Nicolas de Gonesse completed the translation of Valerius Maximus from Book VII, chapter v to the end of Book IX for John of Berry, he continued Simon de Hesdin's practice, and the only contemporary events that he added featured the deposition of King Richard II. Nicolas refers to Richard twice: in the translator's comments in chapters dedicated to the vices of cruelty (Book IX, chapter ii) and of violence and sedition (Book IX, chapter vii). Nicolas emphasizes in the chapter on cruelty that Richard had put to death two English lords, the Duke of Gloucester and the Count of Arundel, and then after reigning twenty-two years and marrying the daughter of the French king, Richard himself was captured, imprisoned and put to death by Henry of Lancaster, the current king of England. Nicolas explains that Henry should be wary that the same should not happen to him.²⁴ In the chapter on violence and sedition Nicolas's addition describes how in 1399 Richard, who had reigned for twenty-two years and had won great victories in Ireland, was captured and imprisoned by the sedition of the people and of some prelates and nobles, and soon after killed. Henry of Lancaster, who had participated in the sedition, succeeded him.²⁵ After this second reference to Richard, Nicolas draws a broader moral that sedition, discord, or division are dangerous to the common good (*chose publique*)

²⁴ 'Assez a mon iugement me suis arreste a reciter les cruaultez neron et des autres empereurs rommains. Si ie me vouloie autant arrester a reciter les cruaultez des autres princes quon trouve es croniques, je doubteroye que trop longuement ie ne tenisse la matiere de ce chapittre.

Et de nouvel nous avons veu une merueilleuse mutacion au royaume dangleterre, qui est moult noble et moult puissant, par ce que le roy richard exerca trop grande cruaulte en mettant a mort plusieurs grans seigneurs de son royaume, comme le duc clocestre, le conte darondel et aucun autres. Lequel apres ce quil eust regne .XXII. ans, et qu'il avoit prinse en mariage la fille du roy de france pour consederacion fut prins et emprisonne en sa cite royalle. Cestassavoir a londres, et apres mys a mort par henry duc de lanclastre son cousin germain quil avoit un pou devant banny hors du royaume dangleterre, le quel Henry a present regne audit royaume. Et peut estre que autel luy adviendra comme a son predecesseur, car au commencement de sa dominacion il a fait mourir plusieurs tresgrans seigneurs de sa seigneurie et de son royaume, pourquoy il li en pourra bien mescheoir. "Las!" comme dit boece, "que cest griefve aventure toutes fois que glaive et grant puissance est adjouste a homme qui est effect du venin de cruaulte!" See *Valere le grant*. [Les neuf livres de Valère le Grant, translatez du latin en françois par très-révérend maistre Simon de Hesdin,... et achevez par Nicolas de Gonesse,...] / Valère Maxime (Paris, 1500), sig. riiij; Online <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1106657>. Consulted 28 December 2010.

²⁵ 'Exemples sans nombre pourroient ester amenez des seigneurs qui par sedicion de leurs subgetz ont este occis et mis a mort de nostre temps. Cestassavoir lan mil .CCC. IIII. XX. et .XIX. Il est advenu que Richard, roy d'angleterre qui avoyt regne notablement l'espace de .XXII. ans et eut grandes victoires en yrlande par la sedicion du peuple de aucuns prelatz et de aucuns nobles de angleterre fut prins et emprisonne et assez tost apres mis a mort. Auquel succeda henry duc de lenclastre son cousin germain, qui fut en partie cause de ladicte sedicion. Quant a la matiere de ce chapitre il est assavoir que sedicion discorde division est nuisable a la chose publique, car toutes les polices où elle domine elle dispose a ruine et destruction.' See *Valere le grant*, sig. ti.

and he quotes the gospels, Aristotle, Cicero, and others to underline that a realm divided against itself will be destroyed.²⁶ Within this context, events surrounding Richard's death and Henry's succession offered cautionary tales that were particularly appropriate for Duke John of Berry and others in France, where royal relatives of King Charles VI were jockeying for power, often violently, during his bouts of madness.

In 1405 this tale of a realm divided and the examples of the strife between royal cousins Henry and Richard and its fatal outcome would have been particularly edifying. John of Berry's brother Duke Philip the Bold of Burgundy had died in 1404 and conflict erupted over control of King Charles VI's heirs. Burgundian and Orléanist forces, each led by a nephew of John of Berry, struggled to control the government when Charles VI was 'absent', as he was described when suffering bouts of madness.²⁷ In 1405 the Orléanists went so far as to kidnap and remove the royal children from Paris, a move that was foiled by Duke John the Fearless of Burgundy, who brought them back to the capital.²⁸

The heightened tension which such actions engendered inspired other contemporary literary works like Christine de Pizan's well-known *Epistre à la reine* (1405).²⁹ Christine tried to persuade Queen Isabeau to act to bring peace, and later in 1405, she, John of Berry, the king's uncle, and Louis of Orléans, the king's brother, played an important role in calming the conflict.³⁰

In this charged environment the visual narrative of Creton's *Book of the Capture and Death of King Richard II* said even more about the present in France than it did about the recent past in England. Like the broader moral offered John of Berry in his Valerius Maximus, it asks, 'What house is so stable, what realm so firm that it can not be destroyed by dissention?'

²⁶ Ibid.: 'Pourtant disoit nostre sauveur iesuchrist en levangile que tout royaume en soy divise sera desole. Ce a este ce cuide ie la cause principale qui a ramenee a neant la domination de romme. Et pourtant dit aristote au .VIII.livre de ethiques que amittye et concorde contient les cites. Et tulle en son livre de amittye dit que par discencion et discorde appert comme grande est la vertu de concorde et de amittye qui est la maison si estable, qui est la royaume si ferme que par discencion ne voise a destruction. Et pourtant saluste en son iurgutin dit que par concorde petites choses accroissent, et par discorde tresgrans choses decheent. Et pourtant selon ce que recite orose au quart livre de Scipion laffrican apres ce quil eut destruyt numance et subiuguee planierement espaigne demanda a ung prince de ce pays la par quelle maniere numance avoit premierement dure si treslonguement sans ester vaincue, et apres elle fut destruite. Auquel ledit prince respondit que par concorde elle avoit este non vaincue, et par discorde destruite, laquelle response les rommains recevrent pour eulx, car ilz commenchoient a Romme les batailles civiles.'

²⁷ For an historical overview, see Françoise Autrand, *Charles VI: La folie du roi* (Paris, 1986) and Richard Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue: Crisis at the Court of Charles VI, 1392-1420* (New York, 1986).

²⁸ See Léon Mirot, 'L'Enlèvement du dauphin et le premier conflit entre Jean sans Peur et Louis d'Orléans (juillet-octobre 1405)', *Revue des questions historiques*, li (1914), pp. 329-55; lii (1914), pp. 47-68 and 369-419.

²⁹ On Christine's *Épistre à la reine*, see Éric Hicks and Thérèse Moreau, 'L' *Epistre à la Reine de Christine de Pizan* (1405)', *Clio*, numéro 5-1997, *Guerres civiles*, <http://clio.revues.org/index417.html>. Consulted 28 June 2009.

³⁰ For a similar visual and textual appeal to an older French statesman to intervene in the strife between the Burgundians and Orléanists, see Laurent de Premierfait's illustrated translation into French of Cicero's *De senectute*, which he presented to Duke Louis of Bourbon, another royal uncle, in 1405. See Hedeman, *Translating the Past*, pp. 14-16, 24-34.

Appendix I: Surviving Manuscripts of Creton's *Livre de la prinse et mort du roy Richart*

Harl. MS. 1319, c. 1405, sixteen images.

London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS. 598, early fifteenth century, unillustrated, with spaces left for sixteen pictures.

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. n.a.f. 6223, fifteenth century, unillustrated, inscribed with 'histoire' in fifteen locations, datable 1406/1413.

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. fr. 1668, fifteenth century, unillustrated.

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. fr. 14645, late fifteenth century, single image showing Richard departing for Ireland.

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. fr. 1441, sixteenth century, unillustrated.

Oxford, Bodleian MS. 9788, dated 1697, unillustrated.

Appendix II: Distribution of miniatures, directions for placement of miniatures, and initials in fifteenth-century surviving copies of Creton's *Livre de la prinse et mort du roy Richart*³¹

Textual incipits	Harl. MS. 1319	London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS. 598	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. n.a.f. 6223	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. fr. 1668	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. fr. 14645
Au departir de la froide saison	f. 2 min 2L	f. 1 min space 4L	f. 2 6L	f. 2 1L	f. 4 min 4L
Lors maronniers, sans plus faire	f. 3 2L	f. 2 2L		f. 3 1L	
A l'entree des haulx bois	f. 4 2L	f. 3 2L	f. 3 2L	f. 4 1L	
Et pour le plus honorer et cherir	f. 5 min	f. 3v min space 2L	f. 3 hist		
Ainsi les bois passasmes tout atraït	f. 5v 2L	f. 4v 2L	f. 3v 2L	f. 5v 1L	
Pour en avoit y ot	f. 7v min	f. 6 min space 2L	f. 4 hist		

³¹ In the columns adjacent to textual incipits, miniatures are indicated by the abbreviation 'min', spaces left for miniatures by 'min space,' marginal notes ('histoire') that indicate the desired placement of images are indicated by 'hist', and the line height of embellished initials greater than 1 line high are indicated by a number and 'L'. Because BnF MS. fr. 1668 is unillustrated, all one-line initials are included for that manuscript.

Entre deux bois, assez loing	f. 8v 2L	f. 7 2L	f. 4v 2L	f. 8 1L	
Jcy endroit, maiz sa gent	f. 9 min	f. 7v min space 2L	f. 4v		
Lost desloga sans plus faire	f. 10 2L	f. 8v 2L	f. 5 2L	f. 8v 1L	
Vueilliez lui dont aidier	f. 12 min	f. 10 min space 2L	f. 6 hist		
En gales fu la oymes nouvelle	f. 14v min	f. 12v min space 2L	f. 7 hist		
Quant le conte oy celle	f. 14v 2L	f. 13 2L	f. 7 2L	f. 13 1L	
Quant les galois entendirent	f. 15v 2L	f. 13v 2L	f. 7v 2L	f. 14 1L	
Ce dueil faisant disoit, my	f. 16 2L	f. 14v 2L		f. 14v 1L	
Le conte ainsi sa vie moult	f. 17 2L	f. 15 2L	f. 8 2L	f. 15 1L	
Ainsi passa le roy richart la mer	f. 18 min	f. 16 min space 2L	f. 8v hist		
Or est raison que sachiez	f. 18v 2L	f. 16v 2L	f. 8v 2L	f. 16v 1L	
Ainsi le roy sen ala	f. 19 2L	f. 17 2L	f. 9 2L	f. 17 1L	
A lassambler du roy et	f. 19v min	f. 17v min space 2L			
Or vous vueil dire la	f. 21 2L	f. 19 2L	f. 9v 2L	f. 18v 1L	
Vecy comment engloiz	f. 22v 2L	f. 20 2L	f. 10 2L	f. 20 1L	
Ainsi du roy se partirent eulx	f. 25 min 2L	f. 23 min space 2L	F. 11v hist 2L	f. 22v 1L	
De fortune parler plus	f. 26v 2L	f. 24 2L	f. 12 2L	f. 24 1L	
Lors dist, conte de falfebri	f. 27v 2L	f. 25 2L	f. 12 2L	f. 24v 1L	
La furent ils daccort	f. 27v 2L	f. 25v 2L	f. 12v 2L	f. 25 1L	
Encores ya trop pis	f. 29 2L	f. 26 2L	f. 13 2L	f. 26v 1L	
Or vous diray comment le due	f. 30 2L	f. 27v 2L	f. 13 2L		
Sui et marry et lors lui va comptant	f. 30v min	f. 28 min space 2L	f. 13v hist		

Lors dist le due henry	f. 31v 2L	f. 29 2L	f. 14 2L	f. 28v 1L	
Ainsi furent les deux dues	f. 32 2L	f. 29v 2L	f. 14 2L	f. 29 1L	
Soubs une roche	f. 36 2L	f. 33 2L	f. 15v 2L	f. 33 1L	
A fin quacort entre vous	f. 37v min	f. 34 min space 2L	f. 16 hist		
De tout cecy foiez certains	f. 39 2L	f. 36 2L	f. 16v 2L	f. 36 1L	
Ainsi le roy leur a dit	f. 40v 2L	f. 37v 2L	f. 17v 2L	f. 37v 1L	
Savoit il bien non obstant volt il	f. 41v min	f. 38v min space 2L	f. 17v hist		
Pour revenir a nostre fait	f. 42 2L	f. 39 2L	f. 18 2L	f. 38v 1L	
Ainsi convint passer	f. 43 2L	f. 40 2L	f. 18v 2L	f. 40 1 L	
Disant au roy, Je vous aloie querre	f. 44 min	f. 41 min space 2L	f. 18v hist		
Après disner fist ordonner	f. 44v 2L	f. 41v 2L	f. 19 2L	f. 41 1L	
Northomberlant au due henry	f. 46 2L	f. 42v 2L	f. 19v 2L		
SHIFT TO PROSE					
En ceste partie des affliccons	f. 46v 3L	f. 43 3L	f. 19v 2L	f. 43 1L	f. 60 3L
Helas ! or voy ie bien	f. 47v 2L	f. 44 2L	f. 20 2L	f. 44 1L	
Ainsi disoit le roy richart	f. 47v 2L	f. 44v 2L	f. 20 2L	f. 44 1L	
Beau cousin de Lancastre	f. 50 min 2L	f. 46v min space 2L	f. 20v hist 2L	f. 46 1L	
Il aura un roy en albie	f. 50v 2L	f. 47 2L	f. 20v 2L	f. 46 1L	
Ainsi comme vous avez oy	f. 51 2L	f. 47v 2L	f. 20v 2L		
En la forme & maniere que	f. 51 2L	f. 48 2L	f. 21 2L	f. 47 1L	
Le duc henry demoura iij Jours	f. 51v 2L	f. 48v 2L	f. 21 2L	f. 47 1L	
Or advint il ainsi que ceulx	f. 52 2L	f. 48v 2L	f. 21 2L	f. 47v 1L	

Ainsy enmenerent les communes	f. 53v min 2L	f. 50 min space 2L	f. 21v hist 2L	f. 48v 1L	
Ces choses veues et considerees	f. 54 2L	f. 50v 2L	f. 21v 2L	f. 48v 1L	
SHIFT TO BALLAD					
O tu henry, qui as en gouvernance	f. 54 2L	f. 50v 2L		f. 49 1L	f. 68 2L
Car faulcement, sans mander					f. 68v 2L
Car a ly nas tenu foy					f. 68v 2L
Princes & Roys					f. 68v 2L
INFORMANT'S POEM					
Quant ios acheve ma balade	f. 55 2L	f. 51v 2L	fol 22 2L	f. 50 1L	f. 69 2L
Ainsi quavez oy compter	f. 55v 2L		f. 22v 2L	f. 50v 1L	
Ainsi demouray longuement	f. 55v 2L	f. 52 2L	f. 52 2L	f. 50 v 1L	
En la ditte conte se tint	f. 56 2L	f. 53 2L		f. 51v 1L	
Ainsi fist assembler fes gens	f. 56v	f. 53 2L	f. 22v 2L	f. 51v 1L	
Ainsi firent leur assemblee	f. 57 min	f. 53v min space 2L	f. 23 hist	f. 52 1L	
Premier seoit le due henry	f. 57v 2L	f. 54 2L	f. 23 2L	f. 52v 1L	
Larchevesque apres	f. 58v 2L	f. 55 2L	f. 23v 2L	f. 53v 1L	
Quant larchevesque ot parfait	f. 59 2L	f. 55v 2L	f. 23v 2L	f. 54 1L	
Apres la lecture parfaite	f. 59v 2L	f. 56 2L	f. 24 2L	f. 54v 1L	
Quant les evesques & prelas	f. 60v 2L	f. 57 2L	f. 24v 2L		
Apres en firent instrumens	f. 61 2L	f. 57v 2L	f. 24v 2L	f. 56 1L	
Apres tous les interroga	f. 61v 2L	f. 57v 2L	f. 24v 2L	f. 56 1L	
Ou dit siege moult longuement	f. 62v 2L	f. 59 2L	f. 25 2L	f. 57v 1L	



Fig. 1. Richard II knighting Henry of Monmouth in Ireland. Harl. MS. 1319, f. 5.



Fig. 2. Richard II and the Earl of Northumberland who bears a message from Henry Bolingbroke. Harl. MS. 1319, f. 37v.



Fig. 3. The Earl of Northumberland kneeling at altar, swearing an oath on the host. Harl. MS. 1319, f. 41v.



Fig. 4. Richard II meets soldiers of the Earl of Northumberland on the road to Chester. Harl. MS. 1319, f. 44.



Fig. 5. Macmorog, Irish chieftain, approaches the Duke of Gloucester. Harl. MS. 1319, f. 9.



Fig. 6. Archbishop Arundel preaching about wrongs done to Henry of Lancaster. Harl. MS. 1319, f. 12.



Fig. 7. Richard II and Henry Bolingbroke at Flint Castle. Harl. MS. 1319, f. 50.



Fig. 8. Richard II being delivered to the citizens of London. Harl. MS. 1319, f. 53v.



Fig. 9. Bolingbroke and the empty throne. Harl. MS. 1319, f. 57.