

Cambridge Version

Owre lord God, whan he had storid the [world], of all creatures he made man and woman resonabill creatures and bad hem waxe and multiplie. And that man, that is hote and drye matier, shuld sowe the seed, and that the woman, that is made of cold nature and
5 moyste, shuld resseyue the seed, so that be the [tempure] of colde and hete, moyste and drye, the childe shuld be engendrid, right as we se trees, cornis and erbis may not growe with-owte tempure of the foure. And for as meche as women ar more febill and cold be nature than men and haue gret trauayle in chilynge, ther fallith
10 onto them mo diuers syknes than to men, and namely to the membris [that] longe to engendure.

Wherefore in the worship of oure Lady and all holy seyntis I thynke to do myn ententif besynesse to drawe owte [f. 1v] of
15 Frensh and Latyn in-to Inglysh the diuers causes of here maledies,

1 world] S, word C 4 the²] *om.* S made] *om.* S 5 tempure] temperature C, tempreture S 6 hete] hote S right] + so S 7 cornis] come S 8 foure] erthe S be] of S 11 that] þat S, 'tho' to C engendure] engendring S 15 Frensh and] *om.* S

the signe that ye shal know hem by and the cures helpynge to them, aftir the tretys of diuers maistris that han translaticid owte of Greek in-to Latyn and Frensh. And be-cawse that women of oure tunge kunne bettir reede and vnderstonde this langage than any
 20 other, and euery woman lettrid [maye] reede it to other vnlettrid [and] helpe hem and counseyle hem in here maladyes with-owte shewynge here dishese to man, I haue this drawn and wreten in English.

And yif it falle any man to reede it, I praye hym and charge
 25 hym on oure Lady be-half that he reede it in no despite and slaundir of no woman nor for no cause but for the hele and helpe of hem, dredynge that vengeaunce myght falle to hym as it hath doon to [f. 2] other that hath shewid here prevites in slawndrynge of hem, vnderstondynge in certeyn that they haue non othir
 30 evillys, women that now be on lyve, than tho women had that now be seyntis in heuene.

Ffor right as God hath ordeyned trees for-to burion and floure and aftir-ward to bere frute, in the same maner he hath ordeyned to all women to haue espurgement callid the floures, with-owte
 35 the which may no chyld be conceyuyd a-fore that it is comyn, nor after that it is gon. Ffor right as pollucion be superhabundaunce of humours fallyth to a man, so doth the flouris to a woman, as ye shall see hire-aftir.

40 But firste ye shal vnderstande v diuersites be-twen man and woman. The firste diuersite is a-boue here fronte, for ther are summe men ballyd and so ar no women. [The] secunde diuersite on her berd, for ther ar men pik [f. 2v] herid and women smothe. The thirde diuersite on her brestis, for ther haue men litill wertis

16 signe] singnes S 17–18 that ... Frensh] *om.* S 18 be-cawse] *om.* S 18–20 of ... woman] *om.* S 20 maye] S, *om.* C it] *om.* S vnlettrid] vnlernyd S 21 and'] S, an C 22 dishese] dyseases S this] *om.* S 23 English] + & at the pleasure of my ladye S 24 falle] happen S praye hym and] *om.* S 26 hele] helpe S helpe] hele S 27 myght] maye S hym] them S 28 other] others S 29 hem] other S 29–31 vnderstondynge ... heuene] *om.* S 32 hath] *om.* S for-to ... floure] to burione flouris S 34 espurgement] esporgementis S 35 that it] the flouris S 36 pollucion] pollucyons S 40 be-twen] *twice* S 42 The] S, Te C

45 and women longe pappis and hangynge. The fourte diuersite
 be-twyn here leggyes, for ther haue men a membir callid a pyntyll
 with othir portenaunce and ther haue women an openynge callid a
 cunte or priuyte of the wombe. The fyfte diuersite is with-jnne the
 body of the woman be-twen her navyll and here pryuyte, for ther
 50 she hath a vessell that no man hath, the which is callid the matrice.

This vessel callid the matrice is a thenne skyn, rowh with-inne
 and pleyn with-owte, sclydyng, thikly frettid and enterlasyd with
 smale senues all a-bowte, and hath a longe nekke & streyte and a
 55 large mowth and plener shapen lyke an vrynall, the botom lyinge
 to the navyll of the woman and sydys [f. 3] to sydes of 'þe'
 woman, and it is partid in-to vij vessellis, of the which iij ar in the
 parte toward the right syde, and iij are in the parte toward the lyfte
 syde, and the vij euen in the myddes be-twen the navill and hire
 60 pryvite. The which matrice is ordeyned to reseuye and holde the
 seed of man, the child to be conseuyed, fourmed and norished to
 conabill tyme of his birthe.

65

And yif it so be that the seed falle in-to ony of the chambris of
 the ryght syde, it shal be a man childe. And yif it falle in-to ony of
 'þe' vessellis of the lyfte syde, it shal be a woman chylde. And if it
 70 falle in the myd vessell, it fallith owte a-yen, and perysshith fro
 the place of creacion. And if it a-byde it fallith to corrupcion of
 the superfluite of hete, colde, drynesse and moystour, and other
 [f. 3v] corrupcions that passith vp fro here priuite with-oute
 resistance to the seed and rote it. And yif the seed happen ther to
 75 be conceuyd, it shal haue the token both of man and woman, as it

44–45 men ... hangynge] women longe pappes & hangynge & men haue wartis S
 45 diuersite] *om.* S 46–48 be-twyn ... wombe] is of ther preue members S 48 is]
om. S 49 body ... woman] womans bodye S 55 botom] + lyke C 57 it] *om.* S
 59 myddes] myddill S the³] her S hire] the S 60–61 and ... man] the seed of
 man to hold S 62 conabill] convenient S his] her S 67 it] *om.* S 72 superfluite]
 superfluites S 73 passith] goothe S vp] furthe S 74 to'] to S 75 token] marke S
 of] + the S

this is from another manuscript of the same text. Compare the various words for genitalia

45 brestys, for þer hath men but lytyll vertis & þer hath women long pappis & hangynge. The iiij diuersite ys by-tvene here leggis, for þer have men a yerde with oþer portynavns & þer hathe women an opynyng wyche ys calde in Frenche a bele chose or ellys a wykket of þe wombe. The v dyuersite is þat in þe body of þe
50 woman be-tvene here navyll & here wyket, for þer hath sche a vessyll þat no man hath, þe wych ys callyde þe maryce.

And be-cause hit ys with-in þe woman, þat no man may se what hit ys, reson wolde þat I schulde telle yow fyrst how hit ys schapyn & [made] & where-of hit is formyde. The matrice ys a
55 vessell made of thyn leddy, rowgh with-in & playn with-owt & slydynge, thykly fretyde & enterlacyde with small synovys all a-bovt & hath a longe nekk & straye & [a] large mowthe & a large entre & a plenere eyn schapp [f. 3] lyck [an] vrinall, þe bottvm þer-of to þe navyll of þe woman & þe ij sydys to þe ij
60 sydys of þe woman, & hit ys partyde in-to vij vesellys, of þe wyche iij lyth in þe party towarde þe ryght syde, & iij in þe party towarde þe lyfte syde, & þe vij evyn in þe myddys be-tvene þe navyll & þe wykket. The whyche matrice vs ordende to receyve & holde þe
65 vn-to c[on] you don't have to reread this section, but go on to next page & norsche ys rowgh with-ynne for-to hold þe sede þat hit goyth not ovte & peryche.

And yf hit so be þat þe sede fall in-to eny of þe chambyrs of þe ryght syde, hit schall be a man chylde yf it þer-in a-byde & be conceyvydde, & yf hit falle in-to eny of þe vesels of þe lyfte syde,
70 hit schall be a maydyn schyld, and yf hit fall in-to þe vesyll þat ys in þe myddes, hit fallyth owt & [peryschyth] fro þe place of creacyon. And yf hit [f. 3v] a-byde hit fallith to corrupcion of þe superfluite of hote, cold, drynesse & moysture & oþer corrupcions þat passun ovt by þe wyket with-ovtyn resistens to þe sede &
75 rotyth hyt; & yf hit so be-fall þat hit be conceyuyde þer, hit schall

46 by-tvene] be twix B 48 in ... chose] ye knowe the name B in Frenche] *om.* A
48-49 a² ... þe] her B 49-50 in ... woman] within her body B 50 wykket] wombe
51 maryce] matrice B 54 made] BA, formyde D 57 a²] B, *om.* D 58 a ... schapp]
playne and even shapen B, playn schapyn A an] BA, & D 61 in² ... party] *om.* D
63 wykket] wombe B 64 norsche] ther to be norysched B 67 of²] on B 69 þe¹]
+ iij B 71 peryschyth] perysch D, peryschyth B 73 hote] hete & B 74 ovt ...
wyket] vp from the wombe B

hath ben se in many cuntres.

[An] experiment for 'a' woman that will conceyue a man chyld: let her dresse here in suche maner wise in the deede of hire
 80 naturall lykyng: let hire lefte hype lye hier than here right, for so she shal make the seed of man to falle on the right syde where the male is conceyued. And in the same maner do on the tother syde for the female.

Heer is taught yow what is þe matrice and how it lyth. Now
 85 vnderstonde the [syknesses] that deshese it. Ffirst ye shal knowe that iij syknesses pryncipally dishese women be here matrice. The firste is traueylyng of child; the secunde is [suffocacyon], prefo[f. 4]cacion, precipitation of þe matrice. The thirde is retencioun, defaute [or] superfluite of flours.

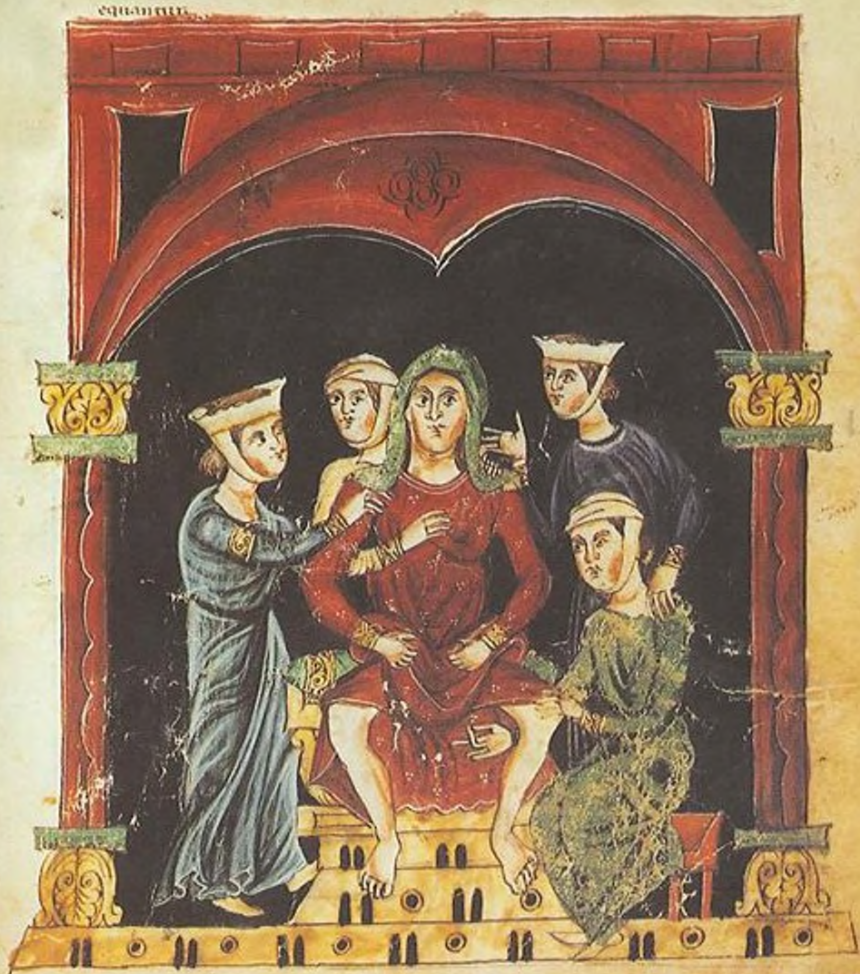
90 The firste [is] chilydnye; that cause euery discreet body knowith. Suffocacion of the matrice is a syknesse that makith a woman to swelle at the poynte of here herte [& cawsethe her] to swone and to falle down, hire teeth [joyned] to-gedir with shewyng of breth, and but they be holpe in suche cas it is wonder
 95 yif they leue. Prefocacion or precipitation of the matrice makith her backys vpward and downward to the reynes for-to ake, and hir hed for-to ake, al for deliuerance of hire body, as ye shal see aftirward.

100 The flowris is a syknes that fallith to euery woman be nature euery monyth onys at a certeyn tyme, and than are they purgyd of corrupcion that risith in hem of corrupte blood, so that summe women haue it many dayes [f. 4v] and sume but fewe dayes, summe surfetously and summe lytill while and esyly. This

78 An] And C, Ane S 80 hire] + lift her S here] the S 81 on] to S 82 in] one S
 85 syknesses] S, syknesse C it] Yet S knowe] vnderstand princypally S
 86 pryncipally] om. S be] in S 87 suffocacyon] S, om. C 88 precipitation] + or
 prefocacion C matrice] + or dyslocacyon S 89 defaute] om. S or] S, of C 90 is]
 S, in C cause] om. S 92 & ... her] S, om. C 93 joyned] S, joyneth C
 97 deliuerance] payne S 104 summe²] + but S while] well S

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Contents

Preface	ix
Abbreviations	xi
1. General Introduction	1
The Text and Its Readers	1
The Sources	5
2. The Manuscripts	11
Manuscripts of the Middle English Texts	11
Manuscripts of the French and Latin Sources	18
3. Textual Introduction	23
Oxford Bodley MS Douce 37 and Cambridge University Library MS li. 6. 33	25
Oxford MS Bodley 483	30
British Library MS Sloane 421A and MS Additional 12195	31
The Texts	39
Commentary	115
Glossary	141