UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham
Research at Birmingham

Fabricated saracens, female agency, and cultural complicity

Burge, Amy; Kertz, Lydia

Document Version
Peer reviewed version

Citation for published version (Harvard):
Burge, A & Kertz, L 2019, 'Fabricated saracens, female agency, and cultural complicity: the imperial project of Emaré', *Medieval Feminist Forum*.

Fabricated Saracens, Female Agency, and Cultural Complicity: The Imperial Project of *Emaré*

Abstract

Extant in only one mid-fifteenth-century manuscript, the Middle English romance *Emaré* has nevertheless captivated modern scholars and readers. The majority of studies have focused on the text's material culture, centred on the description of a luxurious cloth that takes up 10% of the poem. A recent global turn in medieval studies has consistently highlighted the role of medieval Europe in defining and supporting imperial projects, simultaneously challenging the Eurocentrism of medieval studies and the supposed neutrality of medieval European culture. This article brings *Emaré* into conversation with material culture and postcolonial critique to investigate the imperial politics of the text. Using *assemblage* theory, developed by Deleuze and Guattari, we argue that the cloth can be read as an assemblage, made up of components that can be understood individually and as part of a whole. The cloth as assemblage emphasises the connections between the Saracen woman who made the cloth and Emaré herself, imbricating Emaré into the cloth-assemblage. Yet, Emaré's persistent separateness serves as a reminder of Emaré's simultaneous position in yet another assemblage - that of Christian Empire. Emaré's actions resignify the cloth and uphold the patrilineal project of empire. Ultimately, by reading the cloth as assemblage in *Emaré*, the complicity of white Christian women in support of Christian imperial power is made overt.

Keywords

Empire; assemblage; material culture; ekphrasis; Christian/Muslim relations; women's cultural

production; Middle English romance.

Introduction

Extant in only one fifteenth-century manuscript, the Middle English romance *Emaré* has

nonetheless enjoyed significant critical attention in recent years.[1] A short, tail-rhyme romance in

the Breton lay tradition, the romance follows the titular heroine, Emaré, daughter of the emperor

Sir Artyus, who escapes her father's incestuous desires through exile in a rudderless boat.

Washed up on the shores of Galys, Emaré is rescued and eventually marries the reigning king

yet, due to the machinations of her mother-in-law, she is once again exiled, this time with her

infant son. The pair eventually beach in Rome, where Emaré and her son are finally reunited

with her repentant father and husband. One of the most prominent aspects of *Emaré* is a

luxurious cloth gifted near the beginning of the romance to Emperor Sir Artyus by Sir Tergaunte,

"The rych Kynge of Cesyle".[2] The Emperor orders the cloth to be refashioned into a robe or a

---

[1] Over twenty versions of the Constance narrative to which *Emaré* belongs survive in various

European languages, but the Middle English text is only extant in London, British Library, MS

Cotton Caligula A.ii (folio: 71r-76v).

[2] *Emaré*, in *The Middle English Breton Lays*, ed. Anne Laskaya and Eve Salisbury, TEAMS

Middle English Text Series (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1995, rev. 2001),

80, also available online at http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/laskaya-and-salisbury-middle-

cloak for his daughter Emaré to mark their upcoming nuptials. The description of the cloth – its various material and figural subcomponent parts, the process of its making, and its early history – takes up a significant portion of the text; Amanda Hopkins has calculated that approximately one-tenth of the poem's 1035 lines are spent describing the cloth and its context, and the cloth reappears at key moments of the text.[3] With explicit references to the cloth and the process of figural embroidery woven throughout the narrative, *Emaré* is a text that capitalises on material culture.

Assembled from silk and gold thread, decorated with gems and precious stones, and embroidered with recognizable images from known romance narratives, the cloth functions as a new reconfigured totality, capable of consolidating amatory and political alliances. The very process of weaving and of decorating the cloth can be read as a gathering of cross-cultural narrative and materials. Much of the description foregrounds its locus in the near and far east, populated by elite Muslim men and women. The cloth was made by the Emir's daughter (109) for the man she loved – the son of the sultan "of Babylone" (158). The unnamed Muslim princess decorated the cloth with gems and stones, birds and flowers, and images of famous

english-breton-lays-emare. All quotations are from this edition of the poem, cited parenthetically by line numbers.

[3] Namely Emaré's refusal to marry her father (lines 242-250), her rescue in Galys (350-351), the attraction of the king of Galys to Emaré (391-400), Emaré's mother-in-law's expression of hatred (438-450), her exile from Galys (590-591), and her arrival at Rome (697-702). Amanda Hopkins, "Veiling the Text: The True Role of the Cloth in *Emaré*," in *Medieval Insular Romance: Translation and Innovation*, ed. Judith Weiss, Jennifer Fellows, and Morgan Dickson (Rochester, NY: D. S. Brewer, 2000), 71-82.

romance couples. Into this romance compilation, she had inserted a group portrait of herself and her lover, for whose sake the cloth was wrowght" (160). That this cloth was made for a non-Christian by another non-Christian suggests that it was never meant to leave the Islamic cultural and material world. Yet, the materials with which it is constructed, come from undefined and distant locales: "full wyde" (117). It is composed of metal and organic threads, gold and silk, twisted together, embroidered in "gold and asowr" (113). The cloth also has a history in the west, amongst Christians. It is "wan" (173) from "the sowdan" (173) through the "maystrye and […] myghth" (174) of the King of Sicily's father, who gave it to his son, Sir Tergaunte, "for gret love" (175), who subsequently gave it to the emperor. *Emaré* thus alludes to the plunder of Islamic wealth, which occurred during the Crusades and outlines one of the main routes by which Islamicate fabric entered western Europe. The geography of the cloth's trajectory – from Babylon through Sicily to Artyus' court – also traces some of the trade routes that connected Christian and Islamic worlds. The cloth is thus composed of multiple components and, in its own movements, draws attention to the relations between these components.

The unusual prominence of the cloth has intrigued scholars who have recognised its significance but disagree as to its meaning. Ad Putter notes various interpretations of the cloth as representing Emaré's inner perfections, and as an "indirect expression of her sexual allure", whilst himself asserting that the text appears clueless of what the significance of the robe is: this conclusion is shared by Amanda Hopkins who states that the cloth "seems to have no clear function".[4] Margaret Robson and Anne Laskaya identify the cloak as a love-charm which

---

[4] Ad Putter, "The Narrative Logic of Emaré," in *The Spirit of Medieval English Popular Romance*, ed. Ad Putter and Jane Gilbert (New York: Longman, 2000), 175; Hopkins, "Veiling the Text," 72.

represents explicitly sexual love and inspires it; Laskaya and Roberts suggest "that blame for the father-daughter incest rests with chance, with heathen practices, with exotic Eastern magic, rather than with Artyus himself".[5] Edith Rickert has proffered a historically-specific reason for the text's focus on the cloth, proposing that *Emaré* is here alluding to the visit of Richard I to Sicily in 1191, where he was presented, by King Tancred, with "many magnificent gifts, including *pannis sericis*: a silken cloth".[6] Elizabeth Sklar recenters the conversation on the robe and, particularly, on the figure of Emaré within it, arguing that "its exotic provenance, its suspect origins, and its polysemous textuality, crucially determines the course of her destiny".[7] Nicholas Perkins reads the cloth as a *mise en abyme*, an encapsulation or a distillation of the entire narrative in miniature, as an aesthetic set piece.[8] On the level of scholarly discourse, the cloth performs as it does within the text: it spurs controversy, it dazzles, it intrigues, it repels, and it is

---

[5] Margaret Robson, "Cloaking Desire: Re-reading Emaré," in *Romance Reading on the Book: Essays on Medieval Narrative Presented to Maldwyn Mills*, ed. Jennifer Fellows et al (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), 67; Anne Laskaya and Anna Roberts, "The Rhetoric of Incest in the Middle English *Emaré*," in *Violence against Women in Medieval Texts* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 97-114, 107.

[6] Edith Rickert, *The Romance of Emaré*, EETS e.s. 99 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner: 1908), xxxi.

[7] Elizabeth Sklar, "'Stuffed wyth Ymagerye': Emaré's Robe and the Construction of Desire," *Medieval Perspectives* 22 (2007): 155.

[8] Nicholas Perkins, "Ekphrasis and Narrative in *Emaré* and *Sir Eglamour of Artois*," in *Medieval Romance, Medieval Contexts*, ed. Rhiannon Purdie and Michael Cichon (Rochester, NY: D. S. Brewer, 2011), 47-60.

ultimately discarded. In our reading of the cloth, we do not attribute any magical powers to it, nor do we use the cloth as exculpating evidence for incestuous desires. Instead, we frame our reading of the cloth as well as the image of Emaré enclosed in it as a fabricated Saracen through the lens of assemblage theory to circumscribe networks of power, in which Emaré as a white Christian princess participates.

Most scholarship on *Emaré* attempts to place the text within networks of other texts, inviting readers to see *Emaré* as a sub-component of a larger assembled whole. Editors tend to stress the poem's affiliation with the Constance group, bringing it into interpretive clusters that include Chaucer and Gower as well as continental works. Helen Cooper classifies it as belonging to a group of texts about a "calumniated wife," widening the Constance group to include Shakespearian romances.[9] Sklar finds productive parallels between *Emaré* and romances of the East and travel narratives, noting the exoticizing and Orientalizing trends in the text.[10] Other approaches stress the supernatural elements from Christian (penitential romance) to fairy (fairy needlework), bringing the poem into conversations with other similarly inclined texts.[11] Amy

---

[9] Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 106-136.

[10] Sklar, "'Stuffed wyth Ymagerye'".

[11] Dieter Mehl, *Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968); Andrea Hopkins, "Female Saints and Romance Heroines: Feminine Fiction and Faith among the Literate Elite," in *Christianity and Romance in Medieval England*, ed. Rosalind Field, Phillipa Hardman, and Michelle Sweeney (Rochester, NY: D. S. Brewer, 2010), 121-38; Anne Laskaya and Anna Roberts, "The Rhetoric of Incest in the Middle English *Emaré*"; Andrzej Wicher, "The Fairy Needlewoman Emaré: A Study of the Middle

Vines looks at *Emaré* within the context of literary and didactic literature contained in the manuscript and suggests that romance becomes yet another vehicle for educating the country noblemen.[12] Of particular significance for our argument on the cloth-assemblage is the work of Elizabeth Scala and Tom White, both of whom extrapolate from the text toward a larger compiled unit.[13] Scala argues that the cloth can be read as a textual composite like a late medieval manuscript anthology. In a sense, Scala is reading the cloth as an assemblage, though she does not call it that, recognizing the compilational function of named romance couples embroidered on its surface. Such texts are frequently found bound together with other romance and non-romance texts, serving as discrete units within a larger assembled whole. Tom White expands on Scala's argument with a theoretical component from Bruno Latour, Michel Serres, and Tim Ingold, arguing that "*Emaré* models the movement between the textile objects of romance, romance texts, and the textile object that is the medieval manuscript".[14] White connects this textile metaphor back to "the pliability of the fabric of romance itself", a point he makes that is in line with Eugene Vinaver, Christine Chism, and Monica Wright: "the fabric of romance produces new works in a textile economy of use and reuse. ... Romance, like tapestries and other

---

English Romance *Emaré* in the Context of the Tale of Magic," in *Evur happie & glorious, ffor I hafe at will grete riches*, ed. Liliana Sikorska and Marcin Krygier (New York: Peter Lang, 2013), 145-53.

[12] Vines, Amy. "'Who-so wylle of nurtur lere': Domestic Foundations for Social Success in the Middle English *Emaré*," *The Chaucer Review* 53, no.1 (2018), 82-101.

[13] Scala, "The Texture of *Emaré*," *Philological Quarterly* 85 (2006): 223-246; Tom White, "Textile Logics of late Medieval Romance," *Exemplaria* 28.4 (2016), 297-318.

[14] Tom White, "Textile Logic," 306.

woven objects, is dependent on replicating patterns, both structurally and aesthetically".[15] In doing this cultural work of producing and reproducing social, political, and literary forms, romance becomes a test-case for examining how the workings of empire are habituated and replicated.

While these scholars are thinking on the larger scale of manuscript and genre as in themselves amenable to assembly, or structurally assembled of various in-themselves-complete component parts, we focus on *Emaré* not as part of a larger network of texts but as a text itself invested in ideas of connection and assemblage. Rather than foregrounding the connections the cloth makes outwards from the text, we examine the cloth as in itself already an assemblage, the inter-weaving networks of which help us articulate the medieval workings of empire. We draw on the work of Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Manuel DeLanda, Geraldine Heng, and Reina Lewis to articulate this reading of the cloth. Within this program of Christian empire building

---

[15] Tom White, "Textile Logic," 307, 298; Additionally see Christine Chism, "Romance," in *Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Literature 1100-1500*, ed. Larry Scanlon (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 57-70; Monica Wright, *Weaving Narrative: Clothing in Twelfth-Century French Romance* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009). This replication of patterns is suggestive of Chrétien de Troyes' definition of his romance work as "Une mout bele conjunture," or "une molt bele conjointure," *Erec et Enide*, Édition critique d'après le manuscrit B.N. fr. 1376, ed. Jean-Marie Fritz, Le Livre de Poche, ‹‹Lettres gothiques›› (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1992), line 14. For further discussion see Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox, "*Erec et Enide: The First Arthurian Romance*," in *A Companion to Chrétien de Troyes*, ed. Norris J. Lacy and Joan Tasker Grimbert, (Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 2005), 103-119.

Emaré, as a white Christian princess who exhibits conventional piety, traces the movement of faith-based imperial expansion. Emaré's changing status – from victim of incestuous desires, to fabricated Saracen, to herald of imperial advancement – can be understood in terms of assemblage. By bringing together assemblage theory, medieval material culture, postcolonial medieval studies, and feminist scholarship, this article models new ways of approaching medieval feminist material culture and invites further material feminist intervention in postcolonial medieval studies.

Cloth as Assemblage: A Theoretical Framework

A concept first developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *assemblage* is a helpful way to illuminate the argument we are making about the function of the cloth in *Emaré*. Initially figured in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980 in French; 1987 in English) and *What is Philosophy?* (1991 in French; 1994 in English), and subsequently developed by Manuel DeLanda in *A New Philosophy of Society* (2006), assemblage is concerned with the relations between a whole and its parts.[16] Medieval studies has become aware of the usefulness of the concept, particularly for studies of material culture and the 'global Middle Ages'. The appropriateness of assemblage to

---

[16] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. By Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987); Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, *What is philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Manuel DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006).

think about the relationship between micro and macro, or local and global, is evident from Ben Jervis' work on English towns and the Anglo-Italian wool trade, in which he uses assemblage theory to examine "the multi-scalar interactions that defined the lives of communities in the Middle Ages".[17] Within literary studies, the concept of assemblage has been taken up by new materialism, object-oriented ontologies, and queer studies scholarship as a productive way of excavating modes of relation.[18] We here set out the main aspects of assemblage that we use in our reading of *Emaré* in expectation that it will be useful for future scholarship, particularly for identifying the relations of exteriority and the processes of territorialization, de- and re-territorialization as complex ways through which peoples and objects are detached, integrated, and reintegrated into the social fabric of a medieval literary text.

Drawn from the French word *agencement*, meaning "a construction, an arrangement, or a layout",[19] in its simplest form, an assemblage is:

---

[17] Ben Jervis, "Assembling the archaeology of the global Middle Ages," *World Archaeology* 49, no. 5 (2017): 666; see also Ben Jervis, "Assemblage theory and town foundation in medieval England," *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 26, no. 3 (2016): 381-395.

[18] Examples of medieval literary scholarship that has made use of Deleuze and Guattari's work more widely include essays in Glenn Burger and Steven F. Kruger, eds. *Queering the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2003) and much of Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's work, especially: *Medieval Identity Machines* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2003) and Jeffrey J. Cohen and Todd R. Ramlow, "Pink Vectors of Deleuze: Queer Theory and Inhumanism," *Rhizomes* 11/12, (Fall 2005/Spring 2006): n.p.

[19] Thomas Nail, "What is an Assemblage?" *SubStance* 46, no. 1 (2017): 22.

A multiplicity which is made up of many heterogeneous terms and which establishes

liaisons, relations between them, across ages, sexes, and reigns – different natures. Thus,

the assemblage's only unity is that of a co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a "sympathy'. It

is never filiations which are important, but alliances, alloys; these are not successions,

lines of descent, but contagions, epidemics, the wind.[20]

Nail explains that "an assemblage is a multiplicity, neither a part nor a whole" – what Deleuze

and Guattari call a "fragmentary whole'.[21] Variously referred to as "bundles of associations"[22]

and self-organizing material systems,[23] these assembled multiplicities are defined by their

external relations "according to which they change in nature and connect with other

multiplicities".[24] This emphasis on the interactions between components is key to assemblage

theory. In contrast to organismic entities, where component parts are constituted by relations of

interiority and thus reciprocally constituted (i.e. the constituent parts do not exist outside of the

complete entity), assemblages are defined by relations of exteriority, where component parts are

---

[20] Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, 69, quoted in Manuel DeLanda, *Assemblage Theory*

(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 1.

[21] Nail, 23; Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 16.

[22] Jervis, "Assembling the archaeology," 670.

[23] Daniel Smith and John Protevi, "Gilles Deleuze," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*,

ed. Edward N. Zalta (Spring 2018 Edition),

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/deleuze/>.

[24] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 9.

"self-subsistent".[25] In other words, "a component part of an assemblage may be detached from it and plugged into a different assemblage in which its interactions are different".[26] In this, assemblage is the inverse of intersectionality, an idea first introduced into feminist theory by Kimberlé Crenshaw;[27] while intersectionality recognizes networks of connection through which humans experience relations of power (gender, race, class, sexual orientation, etc.), these subcomponents are integral to one's identity and are therefore not separable or movable. Assemblage theory, on the other hand, reveals the way subcomponents can stand alone and be deliberately shifted. Assemblage theory thus offers a way to look at the whole and the part simultaneously.

The cloth-as-assemblage is composed of multiple separable parts, which in themselves constitute complete entities, capable of being removed and plugged into other systems or assemblages. The gems that decorate the cloth – "stones of myche prys" (92) that are "Sowghte [...] full wyde" (117) – collectively create kaleidoscopic colour combinations as well as refracted light, merging with the shine of gold and silk threads to create a dazzling quality that often prevents onlookers from actually seeing the cloth or the woman who wears it. The same gems and stones participate in other systems of signification, external to the text, such as medicinal and lapidary science, biblical foundations of the New Jerusalem, decorative programs of devotional objects, and as trim and accessories for aristocratic costumes. The decorative ground

---

[25] DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society*, 9.

[26] DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society*, 10.

[27] Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum* Issue. 1, Article 8 (1989): 139-167.

of "bryddes" and "Flowres" (166) is a common motif found in tapestries and other woven fabrics across Christian and Islamic worlds, which makes this decorative element imminently replaceable.

The figural embroidery of romance couples that adorns the three corners of the cloth – "Ydoyne and Amadas" (122), "Trystram and Isowde" (134), "Florys and Dam Blawncheflour" (146) – reference texts that proliferated in manuscript and visual form, often in conjunction with other texts. As we mention above, Scala describes this gathering of figural images of romance as a similar practice to that of compiling late medieval manuscript anthologies.[28] The ability to remove and replace romance images in various combinations is also evident in fourteenth-century ivory romance caskets.[29] The addition of an autobiographical image in the fourth corner – the Emir's daughter and the sultan's son – renders this particular combination of images of romance rather unique, while simultaneously testifying to the love connection forged between the two. This image, however, is composed as a recognizable maiden with "an unykorn" (164) scene, itself often found on ivory romance caskets, wooden misericords, and in manuscript painting. This scene is the epitome of detachable, as it circulates independently and in conjunction with other images, locating its meaning, whether secular or devotional, from

---

[28] Elizabeth Scala, "The Texture of *Emaré*."

[29] Lydia Yaitsky Kertz, "Shadows and Reflections: *Tristan and Isolde* in Manuscripts and Ivory," *Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Inquiry* 30, no.2 (2014): 131-54; Elizabeth L'Estrange, "Gazing at Gawain: Reconsidering Tournaments, Courtly Love, and the Lady Who Looks," *Medieval Feminist Forum: A Journal of Gender and Sexuality* 44, no. 2 (2008): 74-96; Paula Mae Carns, "*Compilatio* in Ivory: The Composite Casket in the Metropolitan Museum," *Gesta*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (2005), 69-88.

additional context. The cloth, therefore, breaks apart these romance compilations like manuscript anthologies or ivory caskets by separating out certain items and creating a new assemblage.[30] Enclosed within the outer boundaries of this new cloth-assemblage, the internal boundaries between autobiography and romance iconography, between sacred and secular, between Christian and Saracen, are collapsed and reconfigured to bring about a new totality circumscribed by the boundaries of the finished cloth.

Yet, as noted above, an assemblage is held together by extrinsic junctures that "connect them but do not constitute them"; "what counts are not the terms or the elements, but what is 'between' them, the in-between, a set of relations."[31] Based on the nature of the relations of exteriority, assemblages can "be structured in a *hierarchical* way, which is to say, in a vertical dimension, by transferring more and more power and decision-making processes to the top, or they can grow as *meshworks* of horizontal agglomerations by distributing decision-making processes along smaller scales of equal status".[32] Assemblage as a series of power relations invites us to look more closely – or to look differently – at the various networks of power the cloth is implicated in and, in particular, their shifting from vertical, hierarchical relationships to horizontal, more apparently egalitarian relationships.

The horizontal connections in the cloth-assemblage are between the body and the cloth, between amatory partners, and between the two women who work silk. The cloth-assemblage's

---

[30] This is precisely what Deleuze and Guattari mean by de- and re-territorialization, a concept we will explain later in this article.

[31] Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues*, p. viii, cited in Nail, p. 23.

[32] Dennis Mischke, "Assembled Togetherness: New Materialism and the Aporias of Cosmopolitanism," *Rhizomes* 21 (Winter 2010): n.p.

vertical connections trace power relations between parent and child and within the project of

Christian empire building, which implicates and makes use of royal women, while ultimately

relegating them outside the realm of political power. In its original design, the cloth marked a

horizontal love relationship between the Emir's daughter and the Sultan's son; it is a love token

created by the Emir's daughter and freely given to her lover. This relationship carries the

promise of an alliance between two Islamic political units. We can surmise that the gift is

accepted by the intended lover, for it passes into the possession of his father, the Sultan of

Babylon. An optimistic reading allows for a happy union of the lovers, however brief. This

relationship is frozen in time as an embroidered image even after the cloth is diverted from its

intended destination. The transfer of the cloth from the Sultan to Sir Tergaunte's father brings in

vertical relations of power to imply a military connection between the generation of now elderly

men. Sir Tergaunte then expands the connection by bringing the cloth to the Emperor Sir Artyus,

Emaré's father, as a gift, thereby reconfiguring the assemblage to include yet another father

figure. Scala notes the echo of the original love relationship marked by the cloth, arguing that the

cloth is a betrothal gift, intended to mark a future relationship between Tergaunte and Emaré: a

betrothal that never materializes.[33]

In a radical break of assemblage-style horizontal alliances, which are not intended to

mark lines of descent or filiation, the emperor gifts the cloth to his daughter Emaré, ordering that

it be unmade and refashioned into a robe or a cloak. His intention is to reformulate the

relationship with his daughter as an amatory one.[34] Once he has dismissed Sir Tergaunte, the

---

[33] Elizabeth Scala, "The Texture of *Emaré*," 232.

[34] We note, as Ross G. Arthur does, that "Sir Artyus becomes enamored of his daughter before

she is given the cloak in "Emaré's Cloak and Audience Response," in *Sign, Sentence, Discourse:*

Emperor Sir Artyus experiences a sudden longing to see his daughter Emaré (188), who had been residing with a noblewoman, Lady Abro. The emperor recognizes that his daughter has grown to become a beautiful and courteous lady and that he wishes to marry her:

> "So he was anamored hys thowghtur tyll,
>
> Wyth her he thowghth to worche hys wyll,
>
> And wedde her to hys wyfe." (226-28)

The Emperor also recognizes that his desires are not quite licit. He therefore sends messengers to Rome to acquire papal dispensation to validate his lust for his own daughter (232-40), and he secures said permission in the form of a "Popus bullus" (239). The Christian emperor's incestuous intentions, validated by a papal bull, are an attempt at reconfiguring the assemblage from the forbidden vertical relation between father and daughter into a horizontal marital alliance. Happy at the prospect of his now-sanctioned nuptials, the emperor orders the cloth to be reshaped into a robe or a cloak for his daughter/bride, exploiting the cloth's own history of shifting vertical-horizontal alliances:

> Then was the Emperour gladde and blythe,
>
> And lette shape a robe swythe
>
> Of that cloth of golde;
>
> And when hyt was don her upon,
>
> She semed non erthely wommon,
>
> That marked was of molde. (241-46)

Language in Medieval Thought and Literature, ed. Julian N. Wasserman and Lois Roney (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1989), 80-92, at 85-86).

Emaré's refusal and eventual expulsion circumvent his plans, yet this moment in the text is revealing of how the unstable assemblage is reconfigured in the union of Emaré with the cloth, in which "She semed non erthely wommon". Until the moment Emaré dons the robe, right before her first expulsion from her father's land, no one had actually worn the cloth: Emaré becomes the first instantiation of the cloth as clothing, intended to join a human body with a piece of textile. It is at this point that Emaré becomes the most recent in marked relationships integrated into the cloth-assemblage.

Thus, the cloth is itself an assemblage of text, character, and culture, that knits together stories from the Christian and Muslim world that can be read as a whole (as a synecdoche for medieval imperial culture) but which can also be separated into its constituent parts. Thinking about the cloth as an entire object woven by the Emir's daughter, it is a complete, whole item. Yet, as a construction of narrative and object, the individual elements that make up the cloth can be understood separately, with their own symbolism. In this way, the cross-cultural elements that constitute the cloth (especially the mixing of Christian and Saracen lovers) – in other words, the *relations between them* – are brought into focus. It is by further focussing on these relations – the in-between parts – that we can read Emaré herself as part of the assemblage and make visible the ways in which the cloth-assemblage mediates and is mediated by her identity. It is through a reading of Emaré as implicated in the cloth-assemblage that the romance's imperial politics can be discerned.

Becoming Saracen: virtual and fabricated identities

The cloth as an assemblage reveals the connections between its constituent elements and integrates the Emir's daughter and Emaré into the cloth-assemblage. Deleuze and Guattari

outline the boundaries of assemblages using the example of a wasp and an orchid: what DeLanda calls "self-subsistent components".[35] They identify the wasp and the orchid as "heterogeneous elements" that nonetheless form an assemblage:

> It could be said that the orchid imitates the wasp, reproducing its image in a signifying fashion (mimesis, mimicry, lure, etc.). But this is true only on the level of the strata – a parallelism between two strata such that a plant organization on one imitates an animal organization on the other. At the same time, something else entirely is going on: not imitation at all but a capture of code, surplus value of code, an increase in valence, a veritable becoming, a becoming-wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp.[36]

Just as the wasp and the orchid are drawn from different natural categories, so too does medieval understanding of religion indicate how a Christian and a Saracen can be seen as separate categories. This is evident in medieval art and literature; the presentation of Saracens as monolithic 'others' is particularly apparent in Middle English literature (although this may be more nuanced than it appears).[37] Despite the continued economic contact between East and

---

[35] DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society*, 11.

[36] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 10.

[37] See, for instance, Amy Burge, *Representing Difference in the Medieval and Modern Orientalist Romance* (New York: Palgrave, 2016); Siobhain Bly Calkin, *Saracens and the Making of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript* (New York: Routledge, 2005); Suzanne Conklin Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100-1450* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

West, many European writers envisioned Christian and Saracen as categorically different from each other, creating fictive civilizations as representations of each. Geraldine Heng reads medieval travel writing, for example, as "*a project of distinguishing Christian and Islamic civilizational identities as absolutely different from each other, shorn of commonality, and denying the trace of any resemblance.*"[38] Yet, in *Emaré*, through the cloth-assemblage, a connection is made between Emaré and the Emir's daughter that is constituted in precisely the terms Deleuze and Guattari outline: we can observe a "becoming-Saracen" of Emaré and a "becoming-Christian" of the cloth and, by extension, of the Emir's daughter.

The text is quick to foster a connection between the two women through the cloth and its associated craft. As many critics have noted, Emaré's craft skills are repeatedly emphasised; the text notes "Of her hondes she was slye" (67) and her host, Sir Kadore, remarks that "She ys the konnyngest wommon / I trowe, that be yn Crystendom, / Of werke that Y have sene" (427-429). Her skill with "sylke" (730) evokes parallels with the Emir's daughter who originally made the "glysteryng" (100) cloth. If Emaré is the best seamstress in "Crystendom", is the Emir's daughter the best in "hethennes"? Robson takes this further, arguing that the cloth is effectively a message from the Emir's daughter to Emaré: women weave their messages to one another, even if the Emir's daughter had originally intended the message to woo a male lover.[39] This suggests that the love story of the Emir's daughter, woven into the cloth, but unresolved in the text, is

---

[38] Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 135, emphasis in original.

[39] Robson, "Cloaking Desire," 68. Women of romance weave messages for their partners as well as for their female friends. Most notably, Soredamors weaves a message of love in a shirt she makes for Alexander in Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligès*.

continued by Emaré. The intense visuality of Emaré similarly encourages the reader to associate

her with the cloth. Emaré is unusually *seen*: Laskaya notes that she doesn't speak until line 251,

a quarter of the way into the romance, and suggests that the construction of scenes focused on

male voices, actions and perspectives align *Emaré* with the scopophilic.[40] Anne Savage argues

"when people see her, they see it [the cloth]".[41] When Emaré first puts on the robe, refashioned

from the cloth, "She semed non erthely wommon, / That marked was of molde" (245-246). This

description is repeated: "She semed non erdly thyng" (396); "he thowghth right / That she was

non edryly wyght" (700-701). When the king of Galys' mother sees Emaré for the first time, we

are reminded that Emaré is wearing the cloth which "on her shon so bright" (439). This prompts

the queen to comment "I sawe never wommon / Halvendell so gay!" (443-444), and further

establishes Emaré's primary identity as visual and bound up in the cloth.

Through these signifiers of association, Emaré's connection with the cloth is

foregrounded, allowing us to observe her as part of the cloth-assemblage. The shift from wearing

to becoming part of the cloth-assemblage is accounted for in the components of an assemblage

which can be *material* or *expressive*. DeLanda gives the example of a community network as

assemblage, where a group of people are constituted by material components (bodies, buildings,

food) as well as by expressive components (language, body language, choice of conversation).[42]

Understanding that an assemblage is made up of both material and expressive components helps

---

[40] Laskaya "The Rhetoric of Incest," 105.

[41] Anne Savage, "Clothing Paternal Incest in *The Clerk's Tale*, *Emaré*, and the *Life of St
Dympna*," in *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain: Essays for Felicity
Riddy*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne et al. (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2000), 353.

[42] DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society*, 12-13.

to outline its active function; as DeLanda points out, an assemblage is constituted not by the sum of its parts, but by the "exercise of their capacities".[43] Reading the cloth as an assemblage helps to illuminate its expressive function (which is its effect on Emaré's body when she wears it) and how this develops from/with the material aspect. The scopophilic focus on Emaré means that when she wears the robe made of the cloth, her identity is mediated through it. The cloth thus permits a reading of Emaré, given her hybridity and connections with the Emir's daughter (she wears her cloth, shares her skills, and might provide the continuation of her love story), as a fabricated projection of the Saracen woman. Assemblage theory supports this idea of projected identity. DeLanda writes that:

> An ensemble in which components have been correctly matched together possesses properties that its components do not have. It also has its own tendencies and capacities. The latter are real but not necessarily actual if they are not currently manifested or exercised. The term for something that is real but not actual is *virtual*.[44]

So the material components of the cloth (the stories, the result of the Emir's daughter's weaving) combine (or assemble) to convey additional, new properties which are real but not actual – they are virtual. Emaré's association with the cloth-assemblage thus allows her to be read in the cloth's cultural terms as a fabricated or virtual Saracen.

Indeed, the "olde qwene['s] […] wordus unhende" (445) support reading Emaré as a fabricated Saracen. She tells the king of Galys:

---

[43] DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society*, 11.

[44] DeLanda, *Assemblage Theory*, 5, emphasis in original.

> Sone, thys ys a fende,
>
> In thys wordy wede!
>
> As thou lovest my blessynge,
>
> Make thou nevur thys weddynge,
>
> Cryst hyt de forbade! (446-450).

Amanda Hopkins has cautioned against reading too much into the mother-in-law's words here, claiming that the text is clear that her doubts are rooted in malice, not in her reaction to Emaré's appearance.[45] Yet we would not so easily deny any potential double meanings here. "Fende" is widely used in romance to indicate Saracens and, revealingly, the queen specifically identifies Emaré as a "fende" when dressed in the robe made of the cloth: she is "a fende / *In thys wordy wede*" (our italics). Emaré is more usually described as separated from the cloth: "godely unthur gare" (198; 938); "wordy unthur wede" (250; 366; 612); "comely unthur kelle" (303); and "semely unthur serke" (501).[46] It is only when she is part of the cloth-assemblage that Emaré is read as a "fende" or otherworldly. We argue that Emaré is here visually positioned as a Saracen woman by her soon-to-be mother-in-law: she appears to be a Saracen "fende" when she wears the cloth. So through its assemblage, the cloth has imbued Emaré with new, *virtual*, capacities. We are not suggesting that the reader, or even any of the characters of the romance *think* that Emaré *is* a Saracen. The relationship between Emaré and the Emir's daughter is one of

---

[45] Hopkins, 'Veiling the Text', 77.

[46] Lydia Yaitsky Kertz, ""Worthy unthur wede": Cloth as Skin and Fluid Borders in *Emaré*", forthcoming.

exteriority: they are connected but not permanently or immutably. The cloth-assemblage is merely a representation of the corporeal reality of the Emir's daughter, expressed in virtual and symbolic terms. Emaré does not *become* a Saracen when she wears the cloth, though she incurs some of the negative attitudes elicited from Christian distrust of foreign luxury goods.[47]

The separateness of Emaré and the cloth can profitably be considered through the concept of deterritorialisation. Assemblages can become more homogenised and strictly bound through what has been called 'coding'; inversely, through decoding, assemblages can still be complete, but the rules become a little less rigid.[48] One articulation of this de/coding is what Deleuze and Guattari call territorialization: "a parameter measuring the degree to which the components of the assemblage have been subjected to a process of homogenisation, and the extent to which its defining boundaries have been delineated and made impermeable."[49] Thus, the various gems and stones, gathered from far and wide, can be gathered into a single cloth-assemblage. Similarly, romance couples from different textual traditions can be gathered together, temporarily eliding their difference of textual origin and faith-based identity. The territorialization of assemblages is often related to questions of power, in particular, the ability to shift and reconfigure existing power structures. In other words, the heterogeneous components of the assemblage can, as earlier explained, be simultaneously part of other assemblages. As Jervis

---

[47] There is a suggestive connection here, beyond the scope of our argument, with other romances of the east in which a woman is replaced in the text by a luxury object (such as in *Floris and Blancheflour* where a cup replaces the heroine for large parts of the narrative).

[48] DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society*, 15-16.

[49] DeLanda, *Assemblage Theory*, 3.

puts it, "they overflow their bounds and are implicated in other assemblages".[50] Thus, "[d]eterritorialization is the way in which assemblages continually transform and/ or reproduce themselves".[51] Jervis sees this as analogous to changing power structures, arguing: "from an assemblage perspective […] we can see systems as persisting, but always having the capacity to be broken down or transformed as the relations which constitute them change".[52] As power structures within assemblages are emergent they can be changed, and the "existing power structure" can "vibrate to a new rhythm".[53] This is evident in *Emaré*, as the intimate power of the Emir's daughter's gift is transmuted first into non-intimate political power, through military and diplomatic exchange between various male rulers, then into forbidden intimate power (incest) by Emaré's father, and finally, through Emaré's own association with the cloth-assemblage, into a prop of empire.

The fact that Emaré is constantly highlighted as separate to the cloth even as she is associated with it reminds us of the properties of an assemblage – that "the parts of an assemblage do not form a seamless whole".[54] The romance repeatedly reminds us Emaré is separate from the cloth and "it is clear that when Emaré is wearing the cloth it is the cloth that is seen: "when she was theryn y-dyghth / She semed non erdly thyng" (395-396). The reader is never allowed to forget that Emaré is "in the robe of nobull ble" (270). Moreover, the virtual or fabricated change that being part of the cloth assemblage has wrought on Emaré is not

---

[50] Jervis, "Assembling the archaeology," 671.

[51] Nail, "What is assemblage," 34.

[52] Jervis, "Assembling the archaeology," 671.

[53] Jervis, "Assembling the archaeology," 671.

[54] DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society*, 4.

permanent. By the end of the romance, Emaré reclaims her name, although acknowledging its previous self-imposed changes from Emaré to Egaré (358-60, 907-09, 922-24, 1006-8), and the robe is not so relentlessly foregrounded; instead of reuniting with her estranged father "in the robe bright and shene" (933), at the moment the reader would expect this formulaic line to appear, the text substitutes "Walkyng on her fote" (1017). The cloth has not permanently altered Emaré; she is not read as a fabricated Saracen by any other character, apart from her mother-in-law, and the cloth's effect is muted as her family are reunited in one of the most holy Christian cities, Rome.

The way different characters (and, by extension, the audience of the romance) process this visual information is revealing of their intentions towards Emaré, whose association with the cloth-assemblage invites a multiplicity of intentions. Ross G. Arthur notes that Emaré's "state of wonder […] leads to different responses in the story's different characters" which he argues are indicative of their respective virtue: "[t]he good characters either are slow to interpret the cloak or else respond positively and honorably toward the virtues it represents. […] The bad characters, on the other hand, respond badly".[55] Of interest to our argument are those reactions which are implicated in Christian imperialism. Emaré's mother-in-law and husband both react towards her in colonising ways; her mother-in-law settles on exile – "lede her out of that kyth" (594) – while the king of Galys proposes to possess her through marriage: "I wyll have that fayr may / And wedde her to my quene" (431-2). These ultimately contradictory colonial actions seek to expunge the abject through banishment, or to make the unknowable intimately knowable through marriage. . As the visual 'wonder' of this romance, Emaré in the cloth asks the reader to wonder – to think – about the colonising impulses of her crusader husband and his mother.

---

[55] Ross G. Arthur, "Emaré's Cloak and Audience Response," 90).

Nicola McDonald posits that 'wonders' "as repositories of hidden meaning" that "demand […] probing or scrutinizing […] that is most often expressed, in the romances, as a question": what does this mean?[56] For the king of Galys and his mother, Emaré is the question that they answer in colonial terms.

Furthermore, we argue, the text is interested in how Emaré internalises the colonising impulses applied to her while she is associated with the cloth and reformulates these into her own imperial agenda through which she shifts from victim to agent. This is achieved through 'deterritorialization' of the cloth-woman assemblage. The romance is clearly at pains to point out the separateness of Emaré and the cloth: to indicate that the heterogeneous parts of the assemblage can be isolated. Amanda Hopkins agrees:

> The basic premise of the epithets ["wordy unthur wede'; "semely unthur serke']
> highlights the distinction between clothing and person, between outward appearance and
> inner nature […] reminders of the disparity between interior and exterior, undermining
> any identification of the robe as a symbol of the heroine. […] Thus the cloth is defined by
> its exteriority, by its separateness from Emaré.[57]

Hopkins' use of the word "exteriority" here is suggestive – as we have argued, the cloth is assembled through relations of exteriority which bind together Emaré, the Emir's daughter, and

---

[56] Nicola McDonald, "The Wonder of Middle English Romance", in *Thinking Medieval Romance,* ed. by Katherine C. Little and Nicola McDonald (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 18-19.

[57] Hopkins, 'Veiling', 80-81.

the elements that make up the cloth. Yet, these same relations can be reconfigured. Here, the repetition of "worthy under wede" and its variants echo the repetition required to solidify assemblages, except in this case it is solidifying the deterritorialization of the cloth-assemblage. Deterritorialization can result in the emergence of more democratic, less hierarchical structures, as in the horizontal alliance of Emaré and the Emir's daughter through the cloth-assemblage. Yet, in some cases deterritorialization, the breaking apart of the assemblage, leads to a *re*territorialization, where the assemblage is re-formed in a way that emphasises imperial or state power. Deleuze and Guattari acknowledge that "[y]ou may make a rupture, draw a line of flight, yet there is still a danger that you will reencounter organizations that restratify everything, formations that restore power to a signifier, attributions that reconstitute a subject".[58] They characterise this as *negative* -- relative negative deterritorialization -- or "the process that changes an assemblage in order to maintain and reproduce an established assemblage".[59]

Reading the cloth as assemblage certainly indicates how the "boundaries between East and West [are] interpenetrable".[60] Yet, an assemblage's ability to de- and reterritorialize, actually serves to strengthen the text's rigid "Euro-Christian ethos" (to borrow Sklar's phrase) through Emaré's privileged position as a white Christian heroine.[61] The process by which Emaré is detached from the cloth-assemblage (deterritorialization) is mirrored in the romance's impulse towards the strengthening of Christian Empire (reterritorialization). In other words, Emaré

---

[58] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 9.

[59] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 508-510; Nail, "What is assemblage," 34.

[60] Sklar, 155.

[61] Sklar, 155.

breaks away from the assemblage of the cloth in order to realign or reterritorialize its elements in support of another assemblage: that of Christian imperialism.

Emaré as agent of Christian Empire

The cloth-assemblage, constructed from components drawn from Saracen and Christian cultures, foregrounds the interplay of faith-based political units, between cultures often framed as existing in relations of enmity. The horizontal relations inherent in the cloth function to emphasise the connection between Emaré and the Emir's daughter who created the cloth. However, the text's emphasis on Emaré's separateness from the cloth at key and repeated moments is a reminder that Emaré is always already part of another assemblage: the hierarchical assemblage of Christian Empire, to which she belongs, given her role as the Emperor's daughter and a crusader's wife. The delineation of power in *Emaré* is complex. The intersection of gender and religion shapes the relations between characters and nuances typical power dynamics. As an approach which emphasises the way components can shift and change the structure of an assemblage through cycles of de- and reterritorialization, assemblage theory is a type of systems analysis that makes visible the working of Christian imperialism in a text like *Emaré*. We argue that Emaré's actions in the text resignify and reterritorialize the cloth-assemblage to create a Christocentric assemblage that upholds the project of empire even as it elides Emaré's own feminine agency and influence. *Emaré* directly addresses contemporary anxieties about a deterritorialised Christian Empire, imagining a homogenous and complete assemblage of Christians arising from the fragmentation of the Saracen cloth-assemblage. What becomes apparent, when reading the cloth as assemblage, is the movement from micro (cloth) to macro

(empire) and the way white women in *Emaré* are complicit in support of Christian imperial power.

Emaré as a white Christian woman dressed in a cloth woven and decorated by a Saracen princess, safely navigates open waters and foreign lands because even at her lowest points—at points of banishment and physical exile—she remains a part of the larger Christian Empire. Her journeys not only trace Christian geography, but they bring her from the periphery in Northern Europe or Britain to the centre in Rome. Without identifying her precise port of origin—all we know is that Emaré's father, Sir Artyus, is a Christian emperor somewhere in Northern Europe or possibly in the British Isles – the multiple expulsions and sea voyages propel Emaré to new Christian lands. She first arrives on the shores of Galys, most likely Galicia in the northwestern corner of the Iberian Peninsula, and the second time in Rome, the center of papal authority and the heart of Latin Christendom. Emaré's linguistic, national, or geography-based markers of identity do not signify in the romance. Instead, her markers of identity are her performative Christian piety, her white skin, her skills at clothwork, and the dazzling robe.[62] Her excessive piety interpolates her into this transnational Christian community, guaranteeing her safety, and acts as a tool for recoding and reterritorializing the cloth-assemblage. Her piety is also her pathway from victim to agent of her own destiny as well as of Christian imperial politics.[63]

---

[62] For a discussion of faith-based and epidermal race in *Emaré*, see Lydia Yaitsky Kertz,

"'Worthy unthur wede': Cloth as Skin and Fluid Borders in *Emaré*," forthcoming.

[63] David Wallace refers to this theological Christian phenomenon as "competitive abjection," explaining that "Since the condition of being more-sinful-than-thou, and thus more-abject-than-thou, signals the potentiating likelihood of being more-saved-than-thou, and ascending to greater heights of ultimate grace", in Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages*, 42.

     Emaré is a text concerned with themes of empire and faith and the precarity of Christian imperialism. As Geraldine Heng reminds us, the pan-territorial Christian identity to which Emaré lays claim harkens back to the Crusading era, a distant yet remembered and frequently reinvented past.[64] *Emaré*, centering on the peregrinations of a pious Christian female protagonist, whose origins are purposefully obscure, taps into the same transnational Christian collective identity that had been weaponized as a means of organizing expeditions to the Holy Land. From the time of the First Crusade until the final losses of Christian colonial holdings in present-day Palestine, Israel, and Syria, the rhetoric of Christian unification attempted to bridge the schismatic divisions between Catholic and Orthodox followers of Christ as well as between various ethnic identities that fell under these umbrella terms. Yet, from the start, the assemblage of Christian imperialism known as the Crusades was ripe for deterritorialization.

     In the various accounts of Pope Urban II's call for Crusade at the Council of Clermont in March of 1095, the rhetoric of Christian solidarity is defined in its antagonistic relation to a peoples deemed as interlopers in the Holy Land, frequently envisioned as Saracens or even the Antichrist. Fulcher of Chartres records Urban's rhetoric as a call to Western Christians to aid their Eastern brethren. The peoples whose spiritual leaders had recently excommunicated each other were now reimagined as Christians again and as friends: "I [Pope Urban II], or rather the Lord, beseech you as Christ's heralds to publish this everywhere and persuade all people of whatever rank, footsoldiers and knights, poor and rich, to carry aid promptly to those [Eastern] Christians and to destroy that vile race [of Arab Muslims and Seljuk Turks] from the lands of our

---

[64] Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages*, 118.

friends".[65] Independently, Robert the Monk and Boldric of Dol record that Urban's speech urged

an immediate cession of intra-Christian strife, redirecting all acts of war and aggression toward

those who unjustly hold the Holy Land.[66] In Gilbert of Nugent's account of Urban's speech, the

multiethnic adherents of Islam are homogenized as "Saracens" and simultaneously demonized as

the manifestation of Antichrist, who has come to do battle with the Christians. He records the

conclusion of the speech as an investiture ceremony: "He [Urban II] instituted a sign well suited

to so honorable a profession by making the figure of the cross, the stigma of the Lord's passion,

the emblem of the soldiery, or rather, of what was to be the soldiery of God".[67] Pope Urban's II

preaching of the First Crusade thus reterritorializes the fractured political landscape by

envisioning a unified Christendom that would obliterate non-Christian foes. The resultant

military assemblage is imagined as a force backed by religion and righteousness and physically

manifested through a sewn image of the cross. In historical reality, the Christian assemblage was

---

[65] Fulcher of Chartres, trans. O. J. Thatcher and E. H. McNeal, in *A Source Book for Medieval History: Selected Documents Illustrating the History of Europe in the Middle Ages* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 514, 516-21, reprinted in *The Crusades: A Reader*, 2nd edition, ed. S. J. Allen and Emilie Amt (New York: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 34-5.

[66] Robert the Monk, trans. O. J. Thatcher and E. H. McNeal, in *A Source Book for Medieval History*, reprinted in *The Crusades: A Reader*, 36); Baldric of Dol, trans. A. C. Krey, in *The First Crusade: Accounts of Eye-witnesses and Participants* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1921), 33-40, reprinted in *The Crusades: A Reader*, 39.

[67] Guilbert of Nogent, trans. A. C. Krey, in *The First Crusade*, reprinted in *The Crusades: A Reader*, 41-2.

never a stable one, with these pan-Christian alliances always on the brink of collapse due to internal strife.

All pretense of Christian unity ended in 1204, when an army of Western European Crusaders turned on their Eastern Christian allies and sacked their capital at Constantinople.[68] In fact, by the end of the fourteenth, beginning of the fifteenth century, Christian imperial holdings in the Outremer had long since collapsed. But imaginative literature – including, we argue, *Emaré* – continued the project of this unified faith-based identity that had propelled Crusading ambitions as if that devastating defeat had not occurred. These literary texts collectively attest to a willing and purposeful cultural forgetting and reinscription, replacing history with a reterritorializing imaginative pan-Christian landscape. This imaginative crusading assemblage is directly activated in *Emaré* and given as the primary reason why her husband departs from their marital home for a duration of seven years, leaving his pregnant wife vulnerable to the effects of slander and evil machinations of the wicked mother-in-law. As the King of Galys, he responds to the call from the King of France to join forces in battle against a monolithic Saracen enemy:

> The kyng of France yn that tyme
>
> Was besette wyth many a Sarezyne,

---

[68] Megan Moore makes an argument for the centrality of women in the political and economic project of "refashioning empire" following the sack of Constantinople. In describing the looting that occurred, Moore establishes an economic equivalency between the high-value objects plundered from city treasuries, churches, and homes, and the Byzantine aristocratic women, whose value as brides would forge cross-cultural alliances. Megan Moore, *Exchanges in Exoticism: Cross-Cultural Marriage and the Making of the Mediterranean in Old French Romance* (New York: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 4, 6.

> And cumbered all in tene;
>
> And sente aftur the kyng of Galys,
>
> And othur lordys of myche prys,
>
> That semely were to sene. (481-486)

This gathering of Christian allies from across various Christian polities under the leadership of Frankish rulers against a common enemy, deliberately misrepresented and homogenized as "Sarezyne" or Saracen, is in itself a crusading assemblage, harkening back to the First Crusade and visually and symbolically represented in individual knights who take up the cross. Quite tellingly, Muslim chroniclers of the Crusades homogenize the multi-ethnic Christian invading forces as "the Franks" or "Ifranj/ Firanj" in Arabic, thus demonstrating that reterritorialisation was happening on both sides of the conflict. [69]

Working in tandem with the militant Christians who sew crosses on their garments, Emaré's female Christian identity is expressed verbally and corporeally, serving to reterritorialize through the sartorial: the reworking of the symbolic meaning of the cloth-assemblage. On her two journeys in the rudderless boat, Emaré prays to God for protection, and her prayers are answered both times. The text explicitly tells us that she survives only through God's grace and providence. On her first journey, her prayers are directed to God and the Virgin Mary: "To God of heven she made her mone,/ And to Hys modyr also" (314-5). She assumes the

---

[69] "The name Franks (in Arabic, Ifranj or Firanj) was quickly adopted as a blanket term for all the Christian peoples of continental Europe and the British Isles, much in the same way that medieval Christian observers referred to Muslims of many different backgrounds simply as Saracens." Paul M. Cobb, *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 16.

posture of a penitent sinner, lying prostrate on the bottom of her small boat, leaving her fate entirely to God's will:

> Wyth carefull herte and sykyng sore,
>
> Such sorow was here yarked yore,
>
>   And ever lay she styll.
>
> She was dryven ynto a lond,
>
> Thorow the grace of Goddes sond,
>
>   That all thyng may fulfylle. (328-333)

Her bodily suffering and physical gestures serve as performative aspects of corporeal prayer, following the conventions of late-fourteenth and early-fifteenth century affective piety. Her Christian prayer brings her to the shores of Galys, the site of the shrine of Santiago de Compostela, and to an eventual marital union with a crusading king. In her second journey, Emaré assumes the posture of Virgin Mary with the Christ Child. Like the Virgin in Annunciation, she unquestioningly accepts her lot. Emaré steps into the rudderless boat, this time with a nursing infant in her arms, reminiscent of Christian iconography of *virgo lactans* (or the Nursing Madonna):

> The lady that was meke and mylde,
>
> In her arme she bar her chylde
>
> […] And when the chyld gan to wepe,
>
> Wyth sory herte she songe hyt aslepe,
>
>   And putte the pappe yn hys mowth (640-641, 661-663).

Lying down on the bottom of the boat, with her baby at her breast, she comforts her child and prays to God and Mary for their safekeeping:

Then she made her prayer

To Jhesu and Hys modur dere,

In all that she kowthe. (670-72)

Performing once again her piety through bodily prostration and full submission (676-79), Emaré is saved yet again, and through God's will the young mother and her newborn son are brought to Rome, the political center of Western Christianity. Yet, while Emaré's piety appears feminised and submissive, her expression of Christianity is implicated in the very same rhetorical strategy of the crusading assemblage. In reaffirming her Christian belief while wearing the Saracen cloth, Emaré deterritorializes and then reterritorializes it, thereby changing its meaning in support of the Christian imperial project; her very survival at sea serves as a testament to the efficacy of Christian prayer. Christian imperial reterritorialization is the process through which Emaré moves from victim to agent.

This point can be illuminated through the work of Reina Lewis. Working within the context of nineteenth-century British colonial expansion, Lewis brings to the surface "the contribution [white] women made to the negotiation and naturalization of … colonialist norms."[70] Although Lewis does not make use of assemblage theory, she nevertheless explores similar cultural processes. Her methodology teases apart the various systems of power within which female subjects participate and to which they are subjected. Lewis argues that:

"We need a theory of subjectivity and agency that acknowledges the contradictions, gaps

and internal splits that structure the paradoxical but necessary notion of a collective

---

[70] Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation* (New York: Routledge, 1996) 27.

identity as women; that is not divorced from the racialized, classed and gendered experience of the social but that can recognize the "impermanence" of all those various social collective identities."[71]

Reading this call to action through the lens of assemblage theory, we recognize that white Christian women as medieval cultural producers operate within systems of race, gender, and class relations, and as such they contribute as active agents to the reproduction and perpetuation of racial and colonial systems from which they benefit. As we read Emaré, both the character and the text, Reina Lewis reminds us that "we cannot read a text without allowing for its productive role in the encoding of social difference".[72] In revealing how the cloth-assemblage is deterritorialised by Emaré and recoded to, ultimately, concretise difference between Emaré as an active agent and the Emir's daughter as a nameless and silent image, we recognize the complicity of the heroine as a white female Christian colonial subject.

As we noted earlier, throughout her peregrinations within the bounds of Christendom Emaré is praised for her exceptional skills at silkwork, linking her with the Saracen cloth that she wears. Echoing the praise of the cloth as "So ryche a jwell ys ther non / In all Crystyanté" (107-8), Emaré is likewise praised for her singular, or unparalleled, talents. Sir Kadore describes her as the cleverest, most skillful, woman in all Christendom:

She ys the konnyngest wommon,

I trowe, that be yn Crystendom,

Of werke that y have sene. (427-429)

---

[71] Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism*, 27.

[72] Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism*, 28.

This is a skill that Emaré is invited to disseminate. Recognizing her skills, Sir Kadore hires Emaré to teach his daughters "to sewe and marke / All maner of sylky[n] werke" (376-377). In teaching others to sew, Emaré reconstitutes the idea of clothwork, which to this point in the narrative has been associated with Saracen material culture, as a worthy occupation for pious Christian women. Ultimately, Emaré is engaged in negative deterritorialization, resignifying the Saracen skill as part of an established Christian practice. In taking up the active role of teaching, Emaré becomes a cultural producer, who not only creates new textile works of art but also reproduces her skills through her female apprentices. Thus, the heroine who has been framed as the most abject – twice calumniated and twice expelled – is more than just a tacit victim of the licentious and jealous gazes of powerful people. Robson agrees, arguing that "Emaré can be read *not* as the passive plaything of the tale (and of men), but as its prime mover: events are shaped to her desired end, and that is shaped by her desires, which are projected on to the other characters in the story".[73] In reconstituting a new assemblage of Christian women, practicing a skill they have collectively appropriated from the Islamic world, Emaré deterritorializes the cloth and reterritorializes it as a new faith-based totality that excludes the Emir's daughter. Emaré is thus an active agent in the project of Christian imperial expansion.

However, Lewis also notes that imperialism positioned European women as simultaneously agencied and powerless.[74] Emaré's recoding of the cloth-assemblage might position her as an active agent, but the romance's focus on her son, Segramour, similarly shaped and recoded by Emaré, emphasises her simultaneous lack of agency. In a similar confirmation of how patriarchal forces underpin the project of empire-building, Emaré's ultimate contribution to

---

[73] Robson, "Cloaking Desire," 66, emphasis added.

[74] Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism*, 4-5.

Christian imperialism is the production of a male heir, indicating how the imagined assemblage

of Christian completeness is structured hierarchically, or vertically. This is a notable shift from

the horizontal alliance between Emaré and the Emir's daughter evident in the cloth-assemblage.

Segramour is also readable in the same material terms as the cloth-assemblage. He is presented

as a singular offspring of Christian blood:

> Grete well my lord fro me,
>
> So gentyll of blode yn Cristyanté,
>
> Gete he nevur more! (634-636)

Through such hyperbolic and superlative epithets, Emaré's son is presented in similar terms to

both Emaré and the cloth as uniquely singular wonders in all of Christendom. Just as Emaré's

labour recodes the cloth in support of Christian Empire, so too does she recode her son,

nourishing and protecting her child in his infancy during their joint expulsion and while in exile.

She undertakes his courtly education to prepare him for his eventual role as king and emperor

(841-61), thus grooming him in the same Christian imperial contexts as the reterritorialized

cloth-assemblage. Amy Vines addresses this form of female labour in her reading of the romance

within the context of late medieval conduct literature. Vines reminds us that Emaré is single-

handedly responsible for shaping this young man: "the narrative's eponymous heroine is a

mother raising her child alone; all the lessons in courtesy and patience, which ultimately lead to

her own and her child's reinstatement, are taught by her".[75] Emaré's son's ability to perform this

courtliness in front of his estranged father becomes the key to their eventual reintegration into

the royal household of Galys and a reconstitution of the fragmented family assemblage.

Moreover, Emaré's father's covetousness in this scene – his exclamation of "Syr, yf hyt be thy

---

[75] Vines, "'Who-so wylle of nurtur lere'", 82-101, 84.

wyll, / Yyf me thys lytyll body!" (896-7) – echoes his initial greedy response to the cloth-assemblage. This moment is also implicated in the romance's imperial project as Emaré's son facilitates the reconciliation between Emaré and her repentant father, and in doing so the boy assumes a new role as the heir-apparent to the title of Christian emperor. Emaré's son, like the cloth-assemblage, carries the ability to reconstitute social relations: to reterritorialize. Thus, lines of succession in the patriarchal society make use of female labour, while recognizing sons and grandsons as rightful claimants to power. In this Christian imperial assemblage, which Emaré actively upholds through demonstrations of piety, skill, parenting, and teaching, Emaré herself is nevertheless elided and denied any real political power. While the romance itself as a project of empire building is very much concerned with lines of descent and maintaining hereditary transition of power, that very project skips Emaré, transferring imperial title from grandfather to grandson. In that sense, Emaré as a significant but nevertheless missing link finds a horizontal alliance once again with the Emir's daughter through the cloth-assemblage, whose physical presence is elided as well.

Conclusion

This article has argued that assemblage theory, as defined by Deleuze, Guattari, and DeLanda, can be a productive way to think about the religious and cultural politics of the romance of *Emaré*. Considering the cloth as an assemblage makes visible the ways in which the heterogeneous elements that constitute it, materially and expressively, are connected and can combine to form a whole. This way of reading the cloth simultaneously offers a perspective from which to observe the virtual effect of the cloth-assemblage as well as the way in which Emaré can recode its material and expressive qualities in support of a separate assemblage of imperial, crusader culture. Bringing together, for the first time, research on medieval articulations of

empire with critical work on nineteenth-century imperialism strengthens the conviction that the Middle Ages are key to a full understanding of western imperial and colonial culture in later centuries. Furthermore, it points to the importance of studying women's material culture as part of such a project.

On the political level, Emaré as a wife of a Crusader king and the mother of a future emperor facilitates the project of Christian imperialism. On the level of cultural production, Emaré as a white Christian silkworker participates in the appropriation and dissemination of the skill, thereby becoming an active agent in imperial expansion. Using materials imported from an undefined East, Emaré capitalizes on the skills she shares with the Saracen princess, silenced like the subaltern. These skills generate new relationships of hospitality, a lucrative form of employment, and eventual marriage to a Christian crusader king. Sir Kadore employs Emaré to teach his daughters to work silk, thus interpolating a new generation of white Christian women into a cultural production that is based on appropriative techniques and materials. While the cloth she wears is a testament to the skills of another—a silenced Saracen princess – Emaré is the one who receives praise and remuneration for the performance, practice, and teaching of that same skill. In teaching a new generation of Christian women to work silk, Emaré reconfigures the assemblage that once sealed the powers of an emir and a sultan into a new Christian assemblage.

References

Akbari, Suzanne Conklin. *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100-1450*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009.

Arthur, Ross G. "Emaré's Cloak and Audience Response," in *Sign, Sentence, Discourse: Language in Medieval Thought and Literature*, ed. Julian N. Wasserman and Lois Roney (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1989), 80-92.

"Baldric of Dol." In *The First Crusade: Accounts of Eye-witnesses and Participants*, trans. A. C. Krey. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1921, 33-40, reprinted in *The Crusades: A Reader*, 2nd edition, ed. S. J. Allen and Emilie Amt (New York: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 39.

Burge, Amy. *Representing Difference in the Medieval and Modern Orientalist Romance*. New York: Palgrave, 2016.

Burger, Glenn and Steven F. Kruger, eds. *Queering the Middle Ages*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2003.

Calkin, Siobhain Bly. *Saracens and the Making of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Carns, Paula Mae. "*Compilatio* in Ivory: The Composite Casket in the Metropolitan Museum," *Gesta*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (2005), 69-88.

Chism, Christine. "Romance." In *Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Literature 1100-1500*, ed. Larry Scanlon. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009, 57-70.

Cobb, Paul M. *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome. *Medieval Identity Machines*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2003.

Cohen, Jeffrey J. and Todd R. Ramlow. "Pink Vectors of Deleuze: Queer Theory and Inhumanism." *Rhizomes* 11/12, (Fall 2005/Spring 2006): n.p.

Cooper, Helen. *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum* Vol. 1989: Iss. 1, Article 8, 139-167.

Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec et Enide*, Édition critique d'après le manuscrit B.N. fr. 1376, ed. Jean-Marie Fritz, Le Livre de Poche, ‹‹Lettres gothiques››. Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1992.

DeLanda, Manuel. *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity*. London: Bloomsbury, 2006.

DeLanda, Manuel. *Assemblage Theory*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.

> Translated by Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *What is philosophy?* Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and

> Graham Burchell. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Emaré, in *The Middle English Breton Lays*, ed. Anne Laskaya and Eve Salisbury, TEAMS

> Middle English Text Series (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2001),
>
> 145-99, also available online at http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/laskaya-and-
>
> salisbury-middle-english-breton-lays-Emaré

"Fulcher of Chartres", trans. O. J. Thatcher and E. H. McNeal. In *A Source Book for Medieval*

> *History: Selected Documents Illustrating the History of Europe in the Middle Ages*. New
>
> York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905, 514, 516-21, reprinted in *The Crusades: A Reader*,
>
> 2nd edition, ed. S. J. Allen and Emilie Amt. New York: University of Toronto Press,
>
> 2014, 34-5.

"Guilbert of Nogent." In *The First Crusade*, trans. A. C. Krey, reprinted in *The Crusades: A*

> *Reader*, 2nd edition, ed. S. J. Allen and Emilie Amt (New York: University of Toronto
>
> Press, 2014), 41-2.

Heng, Geraldine. *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages*. New York: Cambridge

> University Press, 2018.

Hopkins, Amanda. "Veiling the Text: The True Role of the Cloth in *Emaré*," in *Medieval Insular*

> *Romance: Translation and Innovation*, ed. Judith Weiss, Jennifer Fellows, and Morgan
>
> Dickson. Rochester, NY: D. S. Brewer, 2000, 71-82.

Hopkins, Andrea. "Female Saints and Romance Heroines: Feminine Fiction and Faith among the

    Literate Elite," in *Christianity and Romance in Medieval England*, ed. Rosalind Field,

    Phillipa Hardman, and Michelle Sweeney. Rochester, NY: D. S. Brewer, 2010, 121-38.

Jervis, Ben. "Assemblage theory and town foundation in medieval England." *Cambridge*

    Archaeological Journal 26, no. 3 (2016): 381-395.

Jervis, Ben. "Assembling the archaeology of the global Middle Ages." *World Archaeology* 49,

    no. 5 (2017): 666-680.

Kertz, Lydia Yaitsky. "Shadows and Reflections: *Tristan and Isolde* in Manuscripts and Ivory,"

    Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Inquiry 30, no.2 (2014): 131-54.

Laskaya, Anne, and Anna Roberts. "The Rhetoric of Incest in the Middle English Emaré."

    Violence against Women in Medieval Texts. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida,

    1998. 97-114.

L'Estrange, Elizabeth. "Gazing at Gawain: Reconsidering Tournaments, Courtly Love, and the

    Lady Who Looks," *Medieval Feminist Forum: A Journal of Gender and Sexuality* 44, no.

    2 (2008): 74-96.

Lewis, Reina. *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation*. New York:

    Routledge, 1996.

Maddox, Donald, and Sara Sturm-Maddox. "*Erec et Enide: The First Arthurian Romance*," in *A*

    Companion to Chrétien de Troyes, ed. Norris J. Lacy and Joan Tasker Grimbert,

    (Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 2005), 103-119.

McDonald, Nicola. "The Wonder of Middle English Romance", in *Thinking Medieval Romance,* ed. Katherine C. Little and Nicola McDonald (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 13-35.

Mehl, Dieter *Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*. New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968.

Mischke, Dennis. "Assembled Togetherness: New Materialism and the Aporias of Cosmopolitanism." *Rhizomes* 21 (Winter 2010): n.p.

Moore, Megan. *Exchanges in Exoticism: Cross-Cultural Marriage and the Making of the Mediterranean in Old French Romance*. New York: University of Toronto Press, 2014.

Nail, Thomas. "What is an Assemblage?" *SubStance* 46, no. 1 (2017): 21-37.

Perkins, Nicholas. "Ekphrasis and Narrative in Emaré and Sir Eglamour of Artois," in *Medieval Romance, Medieval Contexts*, ed. Rhiannon Purdie and Michael Cichon. Rochester, NY: D. S. Brewer, 2011, 47-60.

Putter, Ad. "The Narrative Logic of Emaré," in *The Spirit of Medieval English Popular Romance*, ed. Ad Putter and Jane Gilbert. New York: Longman, 2000, 157-180.

Rickert, Edith. *The Romance of Emaré*, EETS e.s. 99. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner: 1908.

"Robert the Monk." In *A Source Book for Medieval History*, trans. O. J. Thatcher and E. H.

    McNeal, reprinted in *The Crusades: A Reader*, 2nd edition, ed. S. J. Allen and Emilie

    Amt (New York: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 36.

Robson, Margaret. "Cloaking Desire: Re-reading Emaré" in *Romance Reading on the Book:*

    Essays on Medieval Narrative Presented to Maldwyn Mills, ed. Jennifer Fellows

    Rosalind Field Gillian Rogers Judith Weiss. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996,

    64-76.

Savage, Anne. "Clothing Paternal Incest in *The Clerk's Tale*, *Emaré*, and the *Life of St Dympna*."

    In *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain: Essays for Felicity*

    Riddy, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne et al. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2000, 345-362.

Scala, Elizabeth. "The Texture of Emaré," *Philological Quarterly* 85 (2006): 223-246.

Sklar, Elizabeth. "'Stuffed wyth Ymagerye': Emaré's Robe and the Construction of Desire,"

    Medieval Perspectives 22 (2007): 145-159.

Smith, Daniel and Protevi, John. "Gilles Deleuze." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*,

    edited by Edward N. Zalta. Spring 2018.

    https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/deleuze.

Amy Vines, "'Who-so wylle of nurtur lere': Domestic Foundations for Social Success in the

    Middle English *Emaré*," *The Chaucer Review* 53, no.1 (2018), 82-101.

White, Tom. "Textile Logics of Late Medieval Romance," Exemplaria 28, no.4 (2016), 297-318.

Wicher, Andrzej. "The Fairy Needlewoman Emaré: A Study of the Middle English Romance

    Emaré in the Context of the Tale of Magic," in *Evur happie & glorious, ffor I hafe at will*

    grete riches, ed. Liliana Sikorska and Marcin Krygier (New York: Peter Lang, 2013),

    145-53.

Wright, Monica. *Weaving Narrative: Clothing in Twelfth-Century French Romance*. University

    Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009.