

## **Authorship and First-Person Allegory in Late Medieval France and England (Gallica)**

Stephanie A. Viereck Gibbs Kamath



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The emergence of vernacular allegories in the middle ages, recounted by a first-person narrator-protagonist, invites both abstract and specific interpretations of the author's role, since the protagonist who claims to compose the narrative also directs the reader to interpret such claims. Moreover, the specific attributes of the narrator-protagonist bring greater attention to individual identity. But as the actual authors of the allegories also adapted elements found in each other's works, their shared literary tradition unites differing perspectives: the most celebrated French first-person allegory, the erotic -Roman de la Rose-, quickly inspired an allegorical trilogy of spiritual pilgrimage narratives by Guillaume de Deguileville. English authors sought recognition for their own literary activity through adaptation and translation from a tradition inspired by both allegories. This account examines Deguileville's underexplored allegory before tracing the tradition's importance to the English authors Geoffrey Chaucer, Thomas Hoccleve, and John Lydgate, with particular attention to the mediating influence of French authors, including Christine de Pizan and Laurent de Premierfait. Through comparative analysis of the late medieval authors who shaped French and English literary canons, it reveals the seminal, communal model of vernacular authorship established by the tradition of first-person allegory.

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