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Francesc Eiximenis on Women: Complimentary or Conflicting Views

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Catalan Review, Vol. XVII, number 2, (2003), p. 193-204

FRANCESC EIXIMENIS ON WOMEN: COMPLIMENTARY OR CONFLICTING VIEWS*

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ABSTRACT

The medieval Franciscan author, Francesc Eiximenis, wrote on the subject of woman in several treatises. In his early works, especially the *Segon* and *Terç del Crestià*, he underlined negative attitudes towards women, often recalling classical, patristic, and medieval authors. From the late 1380s to the end of the century, he began to describe women in a positive light and to emphasize Mary's role in the Church not only as the mother of Jesus, but also as a sacred person free of sin from the time of her conception.

This study contrasts Eiximenis' view of woman from his early works (*Segon* and *Terç del Crestià*) to the *Dotzè*, *Llibre de les dones*, and *Llibre dels àngels*. In the early works, more specifically the "Tractat de luxúria," which is contained in the *Terç*, Eiximenis discussed mundane topics such as rape, marriage, jealousy, infidelity, separation, divorce, widowhood, literacy among women, menstruation, and prostitution, among the realities of the time.

Despite repetitious discussions of these topics previously contained in the "Tractat de luxúria," the *Llibre de les dones* conveys a more positive perception of woman, especially its social context, by going beyond the strictly moral theology and moral-didactic content of the "Tractat de luxúria."

Francesc Eiximenis (1330-1409) was one of the most prolific European writers of the late Middle Ages and the compiler of one of the last multi-volume medieval encyclopedias, *Lo Crestià*.¹ His original plan was to compose thirteen volumes of this work, but only four volumes, the first three and the twelfth, are extant. The project must have seemed enormous when one considers that he included 1060 chapters in the *Terç* and 907 chapters in the *Dotzè*.² Therefore, in

* This study was presented during the Sewanee Medieval Colloquium at the University of the South, 16-17 April 2004.

1. Eiximenis, *Lo libre de les Dones (Dones)* xi-xvi). For biographical details on Eiximenis, consult Martí de Barcelona (Barcelona 437-47), and Riquer, 2:133-41.

2. Segments of the *Terç* have been published. Chapters 1-352 of the *Terç*, based on a manuscript at the Universitat de Barcelona, were published in Barcelona between 1929 and 1932 (see bibliography). We await Xavier Renedo's publication of "Tractat de luxúria," which is being prepared for publication in Barcelona by the Editorial Quaderns Crema. Therefore, we will refer to chapter numbers and pages in Renedo's doctoral dissertation. As for the remaining unedited sections of the *Terç*, I cite *MS 1792*

the mid-1390s, Eiximenis began to rethink this huge undertaking. He abandoned his project but continued to pen lengthy treatises on thematic and instructional works as well as prayers. More specifically, he wrote on women, angels, and the life of Christ in the vernacular and composed guides to pastoral care and the art of sermon presentation in Latin.

Each volume of *Lo Crestià* has a specific topic; for example, the *Terç*, which deals with sin in general, is composed of several treatises, as is the *Dotzè*, a medieval *regimen principum*. Chapters 524-647 of the *Terç*, titled a "Tractat de luxúria" (hereafter "Luxúria"), further deal with concupiscence, which Eiximenis placed in the more general category of covetousness. In the *Terç*, Eiximenis concentrated on temptation and the causes of sins of the flesh, often signaling out women and referring the reader to a hypothetical seventh book on the role of divine law and the commandments in salvation, and a tenth book on the virtues and sacraments, indicating that he had not abandoned the remaining books of this series. However, when he did depart from his lengthy project, he instead placed much information intended for *Lo Crestià* into thematic works such as *Dones*.

My purpose here is to show that Eiximenis modified, in a more positive way, his perception of women between the time he wrote the *Terç* and subsequent works such as the *Dotzè* and especially *Dones*. While writing "Luxúria," Eiximenis also had in mind a more positive treatise on woman, most probably in his hypothetical seventh or tenth book of *Lo Crestià*, but instead he included its content in *Dones*. Furthermore, *Dones* is more structured not only because it deals specifically on women, but because Eiximenis was more selective in choosing his sources (i.e., the experience of writing selected sections on woman in the *Terç* and *Dotzè* led him to more precise sources).

The most obvious difference between the *Terç* and *Dones* is their structure: the *Terç* addresses the male reader on lust and its causes while *Dones* evolves into a more diverse, structured, and lengthy work on the topic of woman. Furthermore, Eiximenis divided *Dones* into a general section (ch. 1-13), and five sections, one for each state of womanhood: childhood, adolescence, married life, widowhood, and sisterhood. In the treatise on lust, Eiximenis treated women more negatively than he did in *Dones*, partly because its subject matter was

of the Biblioteca Nacional (Madrid). Also *Dotzè*, pages 1-466, exists as an incunabulum in this Biblioteca Nacional, 1/1103. The remaining chapters (467-907) were prepared by Curt J. Wittlin, et al., and printed at Girona (1986-1987).

sin. Others have argued that when Eiximenis wrote *Dones*, he envisioned writing a more positive treatise vis-à-vis the *Terç*. Albert Hauf (98-99), a leading authority on Eiximenis, insists that the dedication of *Dones* to a noblewoman caused him to place women in a more positive light, thereby adding to the esteem of the Arenós noble family.

In the *Terç*, Eiximenis chided women, especially the prostitute and the temptress, among the main sources of lust, and praised the good Christian woman. He also stressed the biblical Eve, the virtuous woman, and Christ's salvation of womankind. The second and more lengthy part of *Dones* became a moral-didactic set of treatises intended for both sexes (Brandenberger 93-97, 104-06), which includes a fifth book, whose style and content became more varied, general, doctrinal, and ascetic.³ This structure therefore reflects the stages of Christianity, especially in the late fourteenth century: sin and the fall, penitence, reconciliation, and the final judgment (Viera, "Sinners," 498-505). Also, the explicit motive for writing "Luxúria" was to convince Christians to avoid sin. On the other hand, *Dones* (1:23) concentrates more on salvation and implies overcoming sin as a means to that end. If we look beyond the treatise on lust, we find that the *Terç* also includes chapters on women (266, 270, 296-99, 921-34, 937-57, 703-5, 938-50, 980-95), as well as the *Dotzè*, more precisely the king's treatment of women: 2.1, 534-46, 2.2, 780-89, 843-58.

Eiximenis often treated the same topics and material in the *Terç* and *Dones* in similar ways, including material on the subordination of a wife to her husband: her modesty and mutability (*Terç*, ed. M. de Barcelona 2, 148; "Luxúria," ch. 536, p. 26; *Dones* 1:19-20, 69; MS *Terç*, ch., 949; Eve's role in the fall (*Terç*, 3:279; *Dones*, 1: 16-17, 19-20, 23-24, 242), attraction to the latest styles of clothing and cosmetics (*Terç*, chs. 137, 431, 703, 709, 714-15, 721, 993; "Luxúria," ch. 630, p. 184-85; *Dones* 1: 42-45, 86-92; *Dotzè*, 2.2, 851, and the need to keep her occupied to avoid sin ("Luxúria," ch. 642, p. 204; *Dones*, 1: 19-23, 33-35). In addition, Eiximenis had much to say about the good Christian woman whom he eulogized along with the exemplary women of the Bible, including Esther ("Luxúria" 23, *Dones* 1:41, 144-45); Judith (*Dones*, 1:144-45, 166); Ana ("Luxúria" 562, p. 71, *Dones*, 1:144-45, 147); Rachel ("Luxúria" ch. 562, p. 71), *Dones*, 1:122); Susana ("Luxúria," ch. 543, 562), *Dones*, 1:106); Sarra (*Dones*, 1: 106, *Dotzè*, 2.2, 423; Rebecca (*Primer*, ch. 352, "Luxúria" 536, p. 24); Debora (*Dotzè*, 2.2, 9, 408). She is a spiritual gift

3. Much of the material in the fifth book formed a later work by Eiximenis, the *Scala Dei*, which survives as an inculabulum and, in part, as a modern edition: *Scala Dei. Devocionari de la reina Maria*. ed. Curt J. Wittlin. Barcelona: PAM, 1985. Also see Wittlin's "De lo libre de les dones."

to her husband by keeping him from sinful lust ("Luxúria" ch. 527, p. 8-10; *Dones*, 1:76, 106, 114-16, 122), and is usually more devout than him (*Dones*, 1:122). Also, Eve was created in earthly paradise from Adam's rib, not from the slime of the earth, as was Adam (*Terç*, ch. 943; *Dones*, 1:24; Viera/Piqué 85-86; Healy 24-25; Ferrante 106).

One should not read these sections of *Dones* and subsequent works as simply a repetition of the *Terç* or earlier works by Eiximenis. Instead, his works in prose conform to a literary, ideological, and moral medieval system inherited from the classical world in a process called *imitatio* or *autoritatus*, upon which Eiximenis combined or superimposed canonical and Scholastic texts he had studied for many years. This process is further laden with secondary sources (commentaries and glosses), basic sources of Eiximenis' prose, to form complex intertextual writing that medieval scholars, such as Eiximenis, skillfully compiled and synthesized into their texts.

Eiximenis also preferred that women wait to marry until their eighteenth birthday, not the minimal age of fourteen, because of the number of fourteen-year-old adolescents who had died in childbirth (*Dotzè*, 2.1, p. 156; Renedo, "La vida conjugal" 9-10; Herily 62-63). In addition, he also defended the adulteress by first rejecting the Jewish law, the "repudium" or "Bill of Divorce:" "havién llicència de rebugar les muyllers, axí que appar lo dit manament." ("Luxúria", ch. 574, p. 91.

Dirà açí algú: Si yo he desalt de ma muller per qualche feditat o dolentia sua, per què no li pux donar comiat paguant-li son exovar, e que se'n vaga onsevuylla, con Moysès faés e donàs aquesta ley al poble de Isreal, e lavors no viuríem en tantes misèries ab elles, axí con ara fem? (*Dones* 1:81)

Eiximenis applied the example of Jesus as well as solutions common to the civil and canonical law that prohibited any harm or shame to be placed upon women. By all means she should be treated with compassion:

...deus pensar que la fembra, qui veurà e conexerà tan gran benefici teu e tan gran gràcia, te amarà e't servirà mils de millor cor que jamés. ("Luxúria" ch. 589, p. 116)

In the case of rape, Eiximenis became even more compassionate toward women and advocated severe punishments for the rapist, a topic not taken up in *Dones*.

... l'estrupador deu ésser punit si és hom de honor axí, ço és que perda la meytat de sos béns... Si lo peccat aquest se fa ab força vol aquí la ley que l'hom sia escapat. ("Luxúria" ch. 577, p. 96)

Eiximenis continued in *Dones* (1:100-105) his discourse from "Luxúria," on the topic of homicide against women who committed adultery or who were suspected of doing so (Viera/Piqué 93-96; *Regiment* 26). Above all he condemned the husband who takes the life of his spouse for this motive and offers instead a conciliatory approach. His defense of woman here takes on a more social character. The "lig de rebull" leads Eiximenis to sections of "Luxúria" and *Dones* (Viera, "Francesc Eiximenis y el homicidio," 7-20); *Terç* ch. 1052), in which he urges the male spouse to

love his wife, despite her shortcomings or lack of beauty. In the sections on adultery, Eiximenis showed mercy on women and underlined the problem of killing a wife for committing adultery or merely on the suspicion of doing so. A comparison of lust in chapters 580-589 of "Luxúria" and *Dones* (chs. 47-63) leads to several conclusions. Both works condemn the murder of an adulterous wife and reject divorce and the "lig de rebull." Furthermore, "Luxúria" begins with the topic of adultery in different situations, whereas in *Dones*, Eiximenis prefaces the topic of adultery by specifying its causes and offering solutions. He also addresses deceit among couples, separation for false pretenses, and condemnation of clergymen who approve of divorce, calling them "wolves among sheep." In short, *Dones* presents a fuller discourse on adultery.

In *Dones*, Eiximenis approved of women reading, but limited their reading to the *Book of Hours*:

...jamés a ta muyller no vets que no sàpia legir e scriure per les rahons següents. La primera és car, fembra qui açò sap és de molt major valor que si no u sabia... ("Luxúria" ch. 625, p. 175)

... la dita santa regina [Costança] fort conseylava e aprovava que tota dona sabés letra, car deys que havia major occasió de ésser devota e de ocupar si metexa, e de informar-se en tot bé, e de estar més en casa e de consolar-se en ses tribulacions. (*Dones* 1:91).

In *Dones*, Eiximenis advocated the social advantage of reading for women so that they could learn from religious works such as prayers at Mass, as well as letters from their husbands, especially in merchant families in which the husband had to travel (Renedo, "Llegir" 213-17; Renedo "Resenya" 561-64; *De vita Christi*, fol. 288) He wrote:

... lo car saber letres fa a la dona los dits béns. E ultra açò que lo marit se pot mills secretejar ab ella que no si ella no.n sab. Car si no.n sab e lo marit li escriu, per força ho ha a saber altre. (*Dones* 1: 91)

Eiximenis, however, chastised male readers far more than he did women and often held the male responsible for sin. In the section on

adultery, he underlined the cruelty of husbands, stating that because of their jealousy, they make their wives experience shame, beatings, and even death of others:

...és contra la pietat cristiana e contra la severitat judayca, car no contrastant que la lig judayca fo lig de temor e de terror, emperò anch jamés per aytal crim no donà tan lega pena. ("Luxúria" ch. 582, p. 104)

Ítem si la dona fa gelós son marit, jamés no aurà pau ab ell, e li posarà tal sospita de si metexa en lo cor, que jamés per ventura no la amarà, e n'avorrirà sos infans. Ítem si la dona fa gelós son marit, d'açò se porà seguir infinit mal, ço és, mort d'aquell de qui és gelós... (*Dones* 1:131)

In both works fornication brings out the negative views Eiximenis held toward women. Copulation among married persons was necessary to fulfill the order to increase and multiply ("*Luxúria*" ch. 535, p. 22; Brundage 89). Otherwise, sexual intercourse was prohibited as well as other forms of sexuality. On this topic we find that both works under scrutiny diverge. The beginning chapters on "*Luxúria*" seem misogynistic given their subject matter, sin. Women uncontrolled, especially "carnal" women, are the source of sins of the flesh:

Ffembra és axí vil
que pus que un l'a enganada,
si's farien mil.
("Luxúria" ch. 540) p. 32)

Here Eiximenis singles out the prostitute whom he refers to as "pregona plena de tots mals" as a major cause of fornication and even adultery:⁴

No't penses ço que molts se cuyden, ço és que cometre fornicació ab fembra pública sia poch e menor peccat que tot altre carnal, car ell és fort gran... ("Luxúria" ch. 570, p. 82)

Augustine had written that, given the strong passion among men toward sex, prostitution needed to be allowed by the Church and in the public law.⁵ Otherwise, rape, abortion, among other more serious

4. The author wrote about the prostitute in "*Luxúria*" ch. 570-73, p. 82-89, emphasizing sin; in contrast, he briefly mentioned her once in an indirect way in *Dones* (1: 47): "Mala fembra ... porta lo senyal de putana, e tot hom diu que aquells són los senyals."

5. He goes on to say that both Aristotle (*Ethichorum*) and Augustine's *De bono conjugali* approved this mandate: "*Luxúria*" ch. 560, pp. 64-65). The Catalan king Peter IV of Aragon, also authorized centers of prostitution in his kingdom (*Women of the Medieval World* 141-42).

social problems would increase ("Luxúria" ch. 574. p. 90, 260; Augustine 12:70; Ivars, 308-10. Eiximenis, however, seemed to have reservations about Augustine's exception, although he did not challenge a respected writer he often cited. He may have found Augustine's reasoning to be contradictory or may have held two opinions, one for the benefit of "cosa pública" and another as a prohibition in moral theology:

...Per tal diu sent Augustí, *primo De libero arbitrio* ... que la ley humana raonablement lexa e u permet fer als cuns vicis los quals la ley divinal ponex en son loch e temps. ... Si tu tols a la cosa pública que no y haja vils fembres e públiques, vet que tota la comunitat és tornada e plena de vils obres... Ne ay tampoch per tu sien favorades en lur peccat, car basta que les dissimuls e que les permetes estar, jatsia que axí matex no deus permetre que lus sea feta injúria, car no deuen per negú ésser maltractades, pus que stan en guàrdia del senyor o dels regidors de la comunitat... ("Luxúria" ch. 574, p. 89-90).

In both works, Eiximenis brought forth the concept of "debitum conjugali," the right of both marriage partners to demand sexual gratification, a right which he stated originated from Paul, 1 Cor. 7, 3-4:

...axí com lo menjar és a conservació de l'hom, axí jaure carnalment ab fembra és ordenat a conservació de natura humana. ("Luxúria" ch. 560, p. 65)

...lo marit ret lo deute carnal a la muller e la muller al marit per aquella fi per la qual Déus ha instituit lo matrimony, ço és per haver infants, llavors cascun fa obra de justícia, car ret a l'altre ço que seu és. ... Si u fa per tal cant la carn lo y mou e no u fa per entenció d'engenrar ne per retre deute a la muller, certa cosa és que alcuna superfluitat desordenada regna en ell. ("Luxúria" ch. 535, p. 23)

...con donchs l'om conexent sa muyller complescha lo manament de Déu, donchs l'om, conexent sa muyller, o la dona retent lo deute a l'hom conjugal, fa la obra virtuosa e meritòria... (*Dones* 1:104)

Furthermore, Eiximenis suggested a passive role for women in foreplay, "tocaments carnals," perhaps due to his insistence on modesty for women:

La primera cant la muyller vees que per massa sovinegar ay tals coses en la se sentis notablement inflamar a viltat on perdes de tots punts, o quax, sa bona devoció cordial e acostumada. (*Terç*, BMN ch. 991)

A major difference between the *Terç* and *Dones* is the information on the position of marriage partners in copulation, included in "Luxúria," ch. 607, 148-49. Eiximenis omitted it in *Dones* probably because he was uncomfortable with the subject or perhaps, since he aimed his moral theology to both sexes, he might have thought it better that his female reader not read it.

Unlike animals, humans stood on two feet and thereby could raise their eyes to heaven, according to medieval Christian writers. For this and other reasons, Augustine, 12:70) condemned all forms of sexual intercourse except the face-to-face position; other forms of coitus were considered those common to brute animals and an abomination against nature (McCary 238-41; Brundage 286, 367, 566). Eiximenis recalled, Paul, a doctor Alexander, and Augustine to point out the gravity he associated with these positions:

... en aytal cas no és legut a l'hom de conèixer sa muyller, car conex-la per manera brutal e no per de manera de creatura racional. ... com diu sent Augustí in libro *De bono coniugali*, pus leja cosa és conexer la muller per via contra natura que no és una fembra pública. ("Luxúria" ch. 607, p. 148-49)⁶

In *Dones*, Eiximenis also played down the role of the "alcavota", a procuress or go-between, who became one of the major causes of lust, especially for women. The friar called upon Seneca to warn young women to avoid these "alcavotes" at all cost:

"no hagen familiars aquestes fembrotes veyles qui van pertot, e qui són pertot, e qui són diffamades de alcavoteria, car sol lo parlar ab aytals fembres és gran infàmia a elles" (*Dones* 1:54).

In "Luxúria," by comparison, Eiximenis dedicated several chapters to underline this cause of lust (*Terç* chs. 614-15, 621-22, 625), including chapters he wrote as a diatribe on women whom he regarded as a major cause of lust. In doing so he warned parents to keep their daughters away from these women. He also referred to the "alcavota" as having "puys verí insanable pijor que aquell de les serps," ("Luxúria" ch. 622, 170).

Eiximenis seemed not to be uncomfortable with topics such as menstruation, which, in ancient and medieval times was thought to attract devils, unclean spirits, and represented a source of magic in ancient groups of people. In both works under study, Eiximenis explained menstruation as an excessive accumulation of blood that caused an odor due to women's more sedentary life and also as a result of original sin (*Terç*, chs. 947; *Dones* 1:19, 157).⁷

6. McLaughlin 228, states: By implication the sacramental character of marriage could raise the sex act from the level of mere animal to a focus on religious and personal meaning. Eiximenis included this information in the section on "sodomites."

7. Hebrew, Roman, and Christian cultures took on negative attitudes toward menstruation. Aquinas (*ST*, II, Pt 3 q2, a5) and others medieval Christian writers considered this bodily function as a result of original sin. The insistence on cultic cleanliness became the main obstacle to women's participation in liturgical services

Eiximenis often drew from biblical, antique, and medieval sources on exemplary men and women, and, in some cases, these models were not immune from human error. In the case of the Judith, Eiximenis gave us two different impressions to illustrate his teaching. In "Luxúria," the beauty of Judith becomes the source of sin for Holofernes and his downfall.

... per guardar-se de peccat de luxúria se deu hom guardar fort de fembres ... cascuna part de la fembra és laç del diable a pendre les hòmens. E pensa bé en ella del peu fins al cap e veuràs que no és sinó colteyl naffrat lo cor d'aquell qui y ferma son huyt. E per esta manera fo pres Holofernes per Judich, car ella la remirava tant que fo massa, e per cascuna part de son cors la guardava axí agudament que a la fi fo pres en ella tanta fort que no s'i podia alrre fer. ("Luxúria" ch. 618, p. 164)

On the other hand, in *Dones* (I, 145, 47, 151) and "Luxúria," (ch. 562, p. 71) Judith becomes a saintly model of widowhood:

Ligim, *Judich*, XV, dient-li que Joaquim, sobiran bisbe, can viu Judich beney-la ab tots los seus preveres dient-li: tu est glòria de Jerusalem, tu est honor del nostre poble, car per tal cant has amada castedat, e après mort de ton marit no has volgut altre, per rahó d'acó t'à fet Déus dona virtuosa e à confortat lo teu cor a ffer les altres coses que has fetes, e per tal seràs beneyta. (*Dones* 1:147)

Eiximenis also warned his Christian reader in the *Terç* (ch. 926; "Luxúria" ch. 619, p. 295) concerning the causes of lust, one of which involves an intense look into eyes of the opposite sex (*Terç*, ch. 284-85, 926; *Dotzè* 2:1, 556, 563) which moralists called "amoris porta," and which Isaiah (3:16) referred to as "wanton eyes." Examples of this cause of lust include eye contact and the eyes of men that are mortally wounded by the sight of the woman's body.

In "Luxúria" and in other pages of the *Terç*, Eiximenis wrote on this cause of lust to some length, including an exemplum to prove his point:

Per tal ligim que com lo dit filosof [Aristotle] vis una dona fort bella tramesa al emparador Alexandri el la guarda fermen la cara. E com ella lo guardas ferm axí maten en la cara e el li vis los uyls roigs e sangonoses, carneses e quax imobles, tantost conech que aquesta fembra era nodrida abuert. E conech que si l'emperador o qualsevol altra la conexia, morria, e axí era de fet. (*Terç*, MS, ch. 927)

(Henning 272-73). In addition, coitus was prohibited during menstrual periods. On the other hand, others rejected the mosaic concept of impurity and danger in favor of a purification process beginning at the head and continuing throughout the body (Bullough 45, 489-90; Ferrante 101-2; McLaughlin 229).

In conclusion, Eiximenis emphasized sin in "*Luxúria*," which deals primarily with moral theology. Although *Dones* also emphasizes moral theology, Eiximenis introduced an added dimension: a social context. This is especially true with regard to part three, the treatise on the married woman, which contains details on adultery, illegitimate children, the major intentions of marriage and the *remedium peccatum: fides, proles, sacramentum* (*Dones* 1:103-05), as well as the obligation of the *debitum conjugali*, although he treated this accord in "*Luxúria*," (ch. 560, p. 649). In *Dones* the friar set forth social and religious roles for husband and wife, their obligations to one another, the good relationship between the wife and her mother and father-in-law (*Dones* 1:177-19), and the means to avoid sin. For example, he sympathized with the woman who could not bear children (*Dones*, 1:65-66), warning her husband not to seek a concubine (*Dones* 1:66-67).

The *Terç* and *Dones*, despite their common themes, vary in intertextual material Eiximenis introduced in each work. The emphasis on sin in the *Terç*, his audience, primarily men, and a more severe moral-didactic tone bring about a more negative image of woman, although the *Terç* also contains positive chapters on woman. Given its content, womanhood, *Dones* seems more adhesive in its chronological divisions, despite the fifth treatise on the nun, which evolves into a general compendium on moral theology and distracts from the topic of womanhood. However, *Dones* is held together by two chronological schemes: the sin of Eve to asceticism and salvation as well as the stages of womanhood, from childhood to widowhood or sisterhood. Therefore, by discussing the Christian woman, rather than a expansive topic, sin, Eiximenis structured his thought into 396 chapters rather than the sporadic chapters on women in the *Terç* (1060 chapters). Time has shown the interest in these two works: far fewer manuscripts were produced of the *Terç*, whereas *Dones* has come down to us in numerous manuscripts, three Spanish translations including an incunabulum, and a modern critical edition. The length of the *Terç* has no doubt delayed its entire publication. However, fifteenth and sixteenth-century readers as well as today's readership prefer *Dones*. Nevertheless, the experience of writing the *Terç*, especially the section on women, contributed to a more structured and superior work, *Dones*.

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