Medieval Work, Worship, and Power

Persuasive and Silenced Voices

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Chapter 20
Philippe de Mézières' Visualizations of Gender, Crusade, and Community

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20 Philippe de Mézières' Visualizations of Gender, Crusade, and Community*

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How does one inhabit a society that is built upon a crusading ideal and yet mostly unsuccessful in crusading? This was a question that plagued late medieval European thinkers as they wrote treatise after treatise explaining how Latin Christians could recover from the major military losses they had suffered in South West Asia between the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin in 1187 and the capture of Acre by the Mamluks in 1291.[1] One such thinker was Philippe de Mézières (1327–1405), an ardent crusade advocate, advisor to King Charles V of France (d. 1380), and tutor to the troubled future King Charles VI (d. 1422). Philippe's pro-crusade writings blend allegorical pilgrimage, mirror for princes, and crusade recovery treatise genres. In the process, they bring practical questions of crusading, reimagined gender norms, and community definition into striking conjunctions.[2] Inspired by Sharon Farmer's work on the complexity of gendered discourses of power, clerical understandings of female persuasion, and the effects of crusading contacts and ideas on medieval Christian Europe, this chapter explores these conjunctions in Philippe de Mézières works.[3] The chapter pays particular attention to how Philippe employs regulations for crusader wives, the figure of Griselda, and evocative female personifications for the sake of promoting gendered and hierarchical understandings of individual and communal virtue which he considered central to the creation of a successful crusading society.

Regulating Crusader Wives

As a former mercenary, crusader, advisor to the King of Cyprus, diplomat to all points in Europe, and recipient of what he understood to be a divinely inspired vision, Philippe de Mézières believed he understood the military,

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political, and spiritual challenges that Europe would have to overcome in order to mount a successful crusade, namely, a crusade which would reclaim Jerusalem for Christian Europeans.[4] Philippe lists these challenges in *Songe du viel pelerin* (*The Dream of the Old Pilgrim*), which he published just after Charles VI of France assumed his majority in 1389 amidst prophecies that his reign would lead to peace within Europe and a successful crusade to Jerusalem.[5] In this allegorical dream vision, the personification Queen Truth identifies a long list of tasks Charles VI must complete in preparation for a successful crusade. A short selection of the topics addressed in this list provides a window into the scope and detail of Philippe's' concerns, which include making peace with England, eliminating throughout the realm all overly sumptuous celebrations and idle pasttimes, inviting all Christian kings and princes to participate in the crusade, recovering the Byzantines to the obedience of Rome, outfitting the military with the proper ships and equipment, departing in June and arriving in winter to allow the northern European Christians to acclimate to the regional heat slowly, appointing a regent to rule in the king's absence, and healing the papal schism. It is worth noting that in listing these concerns, Philippe moves fluidly from tasks requiring complicated diplomatic negotiations, rigorous reforms of aristocratic culture, and basic military preparation, as he believed all these concerns impinged upon Europe's ability to pursue a successful crusade.[6]

Significantly, as Queen Truth enumerates to King Charles VI the practical obstacles to mounting a successful crusade, she observes that past crusades had failed because the crusaders committed the sin of lust and, as a result, had caused Christ to withhold victory from the Christian host. Queen Truth then indicates that those past sins, which had resulted in such tragic military losses, were "the fault of the noble women who remained in their own country" rather than joining the crusade.[7] For this reason, Philippe argues, the wives of the crusade leaders would be required to accompany their husbands on future crusades. Moreover, he adds, to be sure that they inspire virtue rather than sin, the clothing, behavior, and motivations of these wives must be carefully regulated. In addition to dressing both modestly and simply for the purpose of avoiding both sinful looks and sumptuary excess, Philippe admonished the crusaders' wives to "be more devout than the men on the holy passage," to join the crusade only "out of love for sweet Jesus" and "to serve their lords and the knights of God," as valiant ladies had done in the past, rather than "to display their status and cheerfulness."[8] In order to successfully inspire their husbands to virtue, the crusaders' wives would need to act in a manner that demonstrated their virtuous independence from the practice of asserting status through the practice of competitive consumption that (in Philippe's framing) undermined their husbands' ability to come together in peace for the sake of mounting a successful crusade. At the same time, by contrasting their display of cheerfulness with a more admirable display of the love of Jesus, Philippe critiqued an important aspect of the mediating role which his other works acknowledged that elite women occupied as married women, namely, to foster a cheerful

peace among their male relations, especially as participants in the celebration of royal authority at the French royal court.[9]

Philippe de Mézières was not alone in imagining how carefully regulated virtuous wives would contribute to the success of the crusade and the crusader colonies that such a crusade would produce. As Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski argues, theorists deemed crusaders' wives necessary participants who would protect their husbands from adultery and persuade non-Christians to convert. According to Blumenfeld-Kosinski, the roles these theorists imagined for women as agents of conversion and peace reflected at least in part the roles played by elite women in both medieval politics and literature. Acutely aware of the persuasive role ascribed to women, crusade theorists sought to enhance and direct the mediating activities of the women who joined the crusade by providing elaborate instructions for their education, supervision, comportment, and appearance. Some theorists even expected that these specially trained European women would play an important role in converting Muslims to Christianity as well as ensuring the virtuous behavior of the Christian host. Within this context, Blumenfeld-Kosinski finds the instructions Philippe prescribes for the women of his new military order, *l'Ordre de la chevalerie de la Passion de Jésus-Christ*, to be particularly strict, noting that the regulations Philippe wrote for the wives of the members of his crusading order attempted "to control every aspect of women's lives, from breastfeeding to the color of their hair ribbons."[10]

As Blumenfeld-Kosinski suggests, Philippe de Mézières' acute focus on the regulation of women's dress, comportment, and internal motivations reflects in part an established courtly and clerical preoccupation with these issues. Significantly, this preoccupation encompassed widespread expectations that the lived court would mirror its idealistic portrayals in courtly and didactic literature. As Helen Solterer has argued and Philippe's critique of the women of the French royal court demonstrates, this preoccupation could trap aristocratic women, especially the women in the queen's household, in an impossible situation as their obligation to uphold the status, glory, and cheerfulness of the court often ran counter to how they were addressed in moralizing discourse.[11]

Patient Griselda

Philippe de Mézières simultaneously recognized and exacerbated this predicament as he applied his prescriptions for idealized devout female behavior. Philippe's fear of the disruptive nature of female sin, combined with his use of the relationship between an obedient wife and her husband as a model for the relationship between the reasonable soul and God, encouraged him to value unquestioning obedience as the most important wifely virtue. At the same time, his goal of reforming all members of Christian society encouraged him to offer wives the motivation and assistance they would need to overcome any challenges that might undermine their quest for perfect obedient love toward both God and their earthly spouse.

Philippe de Mézières' *Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage* (*The Book of the Virtue of the Sacrament of Marriage*), written between 1385 and 1389, employed an intense spiritualization of widely available female conduct literature as a means for reimagining Christian European elite society as a tightly ordered and unified religious community which would be able to do its duty toward the Christian communities besieged by enemies on western European Christianity's frontiers in the East (d'Orient), Languedoc (Midi), and the North (Septentrion).[12] Opening his prologue with Christ's command that his followers "love each other as I have loved you," Philippe encourages wives to pursue their own spiritual peace through careful reflection upon the contrast between Christ's bitter suffering in his passion, which Philippe identifies as the wedding feast between Christ and the church, and the sumptuous finery, food, and celebrations associated with the royal weddings of worldly kings, which Philippe condemns as socially irresponsible displays of prideful gluttony.[13] At the same time that Philippe seems to be encouraging wives in particular to reject the luxuries of court life, which were enjoyed by men and women alike, he also reminds wives of the great gifts they have received from their creator and the extensive suffering Christ endured on behalf of unworthy sinners. In light of these gifts and Christ's sacrifice, Philippe suggests that no amount of marital suffering should cause a devout wife to be so ungrateful toward her heavenly spouse and redeemer that she allows herself to be unhappy in her earthly marriage to her husband.[14]

Indeed, Philippe attributes the unhappiness of wives to the inordinate desire for honor, pretty robes, beautiful jewels, gluttonous meals, and slothful and luxurious days.[15] According to Philippe de Mézières, wives risk physical disease as a result of the humoral imbalances caused by these misplaced desires. By mapping particular illnesses suffered by women onto specific vices, as Marc Moreau observes, Phillipe draws upon the medical knowledge circulating in the French royal court in a manner that reinforces a long-standing misogynist tradition of mapping social excesses onto women.[16] Philippe engages this topic, however, as a concerned spiritual physician rather than a judge. He invites discontented wives to purge their sins with tears and confession and to strengthen their souls with the sacraments, works of mercy, meditations upon Christ's passion, and the help of the Virgin Mary.[17] More significantly, perhaps, the aim of the purgation of the vices Philippe prescribes is the soul's perfect love of God and the wife's perfect love of her earthly spouse.[18]

Moreover, by explicitly comparing the discontented wife's struggle to cultivate the virtues in the context of a difficult marriage with the pilgrim's journey as described in the widely circulated fourteenth-century poem, *Le pèlerinage de vie humaine* (*The Pilgrimage of Human Life*), Philippe de Mézières placed the wife's struggle in an epic context, explicitly outfitting her with the pilgrim's gambeson of patience.[19] Similarly, although he prescribed as a mirror for married women the literary example of Griselda, a perfectly obedient poor girl whose aristocratic husband wickedly oppressed her by pretending to murder her children, Philippe did admit that "if a married woman living today suffered

as much from her husband and for the love of God, it would be possible to say that she was a true martyr."[20] Given the credit Philippe assigns to wives for their spiritual efforts, it is entirely possible that as wives read the prayer Philippe offered to the Virgin Mary at the conclusion of *Le livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage*, they could imagine their place within the universal Christian community along with Philippe as he asked Mary to protect Christianity's frontiers, the Church, Christian kings, the French king, the queens and ladies of the court, great lords and officers, the kingdom of France as a whole, the poor, peace, friends and relatives, and the soul in its struggles against the deadly sins. Through this act of imagining, each wife, as well as every other Christian soul, could believe that her own effort to remain patient, loving, obedient, and grateful mattered to the health of the wider Christian community for which Philippe prayed, as well as for her own salvation.[21] Public performances of the Griselda play, political treatises circulating at the French royal court, and the fact that Philippe likely modeled his prayer to the virgin after the communal prayer priests said in the vernacular during the mass all suggest that this prayer encouraged its reader to consider her place within a wider Christian community that sought internal peace through the mutual self-sacrifice of its members so that it could defend its frontiers from its enemies.[22]

Even within a political context in which reformers encouraged all parties to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the common good, Griselda offers an uncomfortable example. This is because before her marriage she promised her husband she would so fully accept his will in all things that if he killed her, she would suffer willingly.[23] In part, Griselda's extreme obedience reflects the fact that she offers a model of the soul's relationship with God as much as a model for Christian wives, as Philippe repeatedly states and also emphasizes by preceding his account of Griselda with a summary of Hugh of St. Victor's reflections on the spiritual marriage between God and the soul.[24] Griselda's extreme wifely obedience, however, also appeals to Philippe de Mézières' deep concern with women's potential to provoke disorder through their sins, which he expressed through the voice of Queen Truth in *Songe du viel pelerin*. In *Le livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage*, two instances of this concern and its polemic effects may be found among the 15 rules Philippe offers for "the instruction of married women and also husbands and every good Christian." The seventh rule stresses the need for married women to be sober in their ornaments lest knights, squires, and other men "without number" are "tempted by the sin of lust" through "her attire and cheerfulness" and "many are damned."[25] The eleventh rule is more alarming. It warns married women to guard themselves against sorcery, divinations, invocations, and superstitions. This rule is immediately followed by rule 12, which warns wives against contradicting their husbands unless they say something manifestly against God, the church, or the public good of the household.[26] Taken together, these rules question the disobedient wife's place within the wider Christian community, which Philippe imagines in his concluding prayer, suggesting that perhaps she belongs with the "schismatics, heretics, rebels and infidels," which Philippe asks the Virgin to bring to the faith.[27]

At the same time that Philippe de Mézières worried himself over wifely obedience, he did allow wives to correct their husbands when their husbands' behavior opposed the teachings of the church or the public good, providing space for wives to enact the type of prudence widely associated with good wives, celebrated by Christine de Pizan, and emphasized in Philippe's telling of the Griselda tale, which noted Griselda's ability to manage her husband's territory when he was away and celebrated her superior self-control. Contemporary Griselda plays also cast Griselda's prudent meekness as an implicit rebuke of her husband's domineering nature.[28] In addition to celebrating the self-control which allowed Griselda, cast as the model wife, to avoid the enticements of vice that surrounded her and also to love her spouse as her partner in spiritual marriage no matter how much suffering he caused her, Philippe also lauds the saintly women, both ancient and recent, who were able to persuade their husbands to live chaste lives, including the Countess Delphine de Puimichel (d. 1360).[29] Like other contemporary authors, Philippe de Mézières relied upon the example of the suffering, self-sacrificing, and obedient wife as a model for male spirituality, a caution against male political aggression, and a plea to powerful men to act for the good of the community.

Queen Lamentation

After the disastrous crusade to Nicopolis, Philippe de Mézières relied upon the personification of the church as Queen Lamentation as a means of encouraging Europe's leading aristocrats to reform their realms and armies for the sake of internal peace and renewed crusade.[30] During this crusading disaster, the Duke of Burgundy's son, John the Fearless, was taken hostage. A letter Philippe wrote to the duke in the aftermath (*Une epistre lamentable et consolatoire*) consoles the duke by outlining a plan first to reform Christian polities and heal the schism for the purpose of regaining divine favor, second to explore the possibility of paying a fair ransom to liberate the Christian captives, which Philippe supposes is unlikely, and third to avenge the shame suffered by Christian armies at Nicopolis by leading a European-wide army against the Turks. The success of this army would be ensured, Philippe promises, if it were to adopt Philippe de Mézières' proposed regulations for a new military order, *l'Ordre de la chevalerie de la Passion de Jésus-Christ*.[31]

In this letter, Philippe de Mézières explains that God has allowed Christian kingdoms to be grievously wounded by their Turkish opponents because the deadly sin pride, and his two queens, covetousness and lust, had undermined the Christian host's ability to observe the four military virtues of a well-established military: rule, discipline, obedience, and justice. It is only after reflecting upon the universality of lust, who is welcomed warmly into the chambers of kings and the tents of foot-soldiers, and a series of historical examples demonstrating how the three sins of pride, covetousness, and lust have caused every known military loss, that Philippe details how his new military order will overcome these weaknesses.[32]

Philippe prescribes that every morning, each member of his military order visits in his imagination a beautiful church occupied by a *tableaux vivant* of sorts comprised of the Virgin Mary, the crucified Christ, Saint Peter, and a large cast of female personifications representing as individuals the virtues. Each of these personifications represented one of the virtues, the doctrines of the church, or the works of mercy.[33] On the great altar of this church, which Philippe invites his audience to imagine, sits the Virgin Mary, who is called Queen Compassion and holds the crucified Christ on her lap.[34] And to the left of the great altar, sitting on the pavement, Philippe situates Queen Lamentation, who figures for the church divided by schism.

Philippe describes Queen Lamentation as "completely disheveled, with her ruined robe torn in two halves, and each portion falling to pieces and completely divided into one hundred parts, and her crown fallen to her feet and completely trampled." Moreover, she "holds in her hand a large but completely rusted chalice that is very full of tears from the said queen in such great abundance that from the said tears all the pavement of the church is wet, all the way to the door." Indeed, her state is so pitiful that Philippe observes that "anyone who lacks compassion for her" is well-reputed to have "a heart that is harder than a stone." Finally, he describes the queen as articulating four lamentations among her tears: the first for the church that is now torn up and divided; the second for "her own children, which she nursed from her own breasts, who have abandoned her"; the third for "the great negligence of the Christian princes," which has left her to "suffer without remedy"; and the fourth for the victories of the enemies of the faith over her catholic children, which are caused by the failure of the great princes.[35]

As Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Daisy Delogu have argued, late medieval personifications of institutions or kingdoms as embattled noblewomen in need of defense sought to inspire their male audiences to embrace their responsibility to defend the institutions represented as they would defend the honor of a flesh and blood woman under their protection.[36] In this sense, Queen Lamentation's endless tears evoke a responsive community. Moreover, Philippe de Mézières's particularly emotional portrayal of the wrongful and damaging neglect of this personification of a highborn woman by her own children, namely, the great Christian princes, unites Mary's reflection upon her son's sacrificed blood with church politics, European infighting, and apocalyptically charged language about the imminent victory or destruction of Christianity in a holy battle with its putative archenemies. Such juxtapositions call into being an imagined community which will revere Mary and defend the church by resolving the schism and embodying Philipp 's ideal crusading army.[37]

Philippe de Mézières prescribes specifically that his new military order will be strengthened daily through its members' regular contemplation of the Virgin Mary and Queen Lamentation and each member of an exhaustive parade of female personifications of Christian institutions and virtues. These flanking personifications are barely described and yet Philippe grants them life by attributing to each the same action of offering a chalice to the contemplative crusader

and associating them with more developed personifications, like Queen Lamentation, and biblical figures, like the Virgin Mary and Saint Peter. As a result of Philippe's casting, one could argue that this assembly of female personifications evokes a full court in which the more abstract personifications serve as ladies of honor for the two Queens: The Virgin Mary and Queen Lamentation.[38] As Helen Solterer has observed, the aristocratic women who served as a queen's ladies of honor were expected to appear to be uniform, anonymous, and homogeneous. They served to reflect and amplify the queen's status in much the same way that Philippe de Mézières' list of personifications calls attention to the significance of the Virgin Mary and Queen Lamentation.[39]

Philippe de Mézières' prescription that the members of his new crusading order contemplate daily upon a full court of virtuous female personifications, which mirrored in composition the court of flesh and blood queens and their ladies of honor, provokes inquiry into the relationship between his reliance upon such personifications for calling forth a new community of virtuous knights, which he calls a "new race" and a "new Israel," and his understanding of the role played by flesh and blood women within a crusading society.[40] Daisy Delogu has observed that the contemporary use of female personifications to call into action male protectors of the besieged French kingdom structurally gendered the citizen-defenders of that imagined polity male.[41] Crusade theorists, however, could not afford to foster such an exclusion. Women were required as active participants both on crusade and as guarantors through their marriages of the peace treaties necessary for European-wide collaboration to reconquer Jerusalem. Moreover, Philippe was well aware that women influenced the politics and morals of court life through their participation in marriage alliances, competitive consumption, royal theater, and pious practices. Writing within this wider context, Philippe emphasized the inspirational role female personifications played in the cultivation of male virtue. At the same time, his writings suggest he sought to transform flesh and blood women into living personifications of the virtues who, through their loving obedience, would also inspire the good behavior of their husbands.

Conclusion

Indeed, Philippe de Mézières' works suggest considerable symbolic overlap between the political roles and restrictions that circumstances imposed on the women of the French court and Philippe's portrayal of virtuous female personifications, which served as mirror opposites to elite women who were embedded in networks of courtly expectations and family alliances. Philippe imagined that his proposed military order, which he refers to as a "new city of God," would transcend all the vices that had prevented military victory in all previous human armies. Its members would do so in part by meditating on the faceless personifications of the Church and the virtues and relying upon the help of the Virgin Mary, as they sought to reconstitute themselves as a

supernaturally harmonious and well-ordered host. By invoking such a practice, Philippe harnessed for himself and his knights a powerfully internalized understanding of the perfect feminine, which he identifies in *Songe du viel pelerin*, when he recounts how the Virgin Mary grants him an allegorical sister named Good Hope as a companion who will support him on his quest to bring Queen Truth from her retreat in the desert to France so she can initiate political reform and crusade.[42]

These perfected female personifications had the power to both simultaneously erase and inspire living women who were confronted with their example. Clearly, the female personification of Philippe's sister Good Hope functions figuratively only, and thus by association, Queen Truth and her court of virtues might be interpreted similarly. However, as Kristen Bourassa has observed, the introduction appended to an early modern edition of Philippe de Mézières' *Songe*, whose most active female figures are Queen Truth and her traveling court of virtues, advertises that "Ladies will find it pleasing because of its large cast of female characters."[43] Indeed, although they were not encouraged to do so by Philippe, royal and aristocratic women did find models and justification for their engagement in politics in similar personifications, which Christine de Pizan had urged them to emulate.[44]

Such ambiguity speaks to the important role that allegorical figures played in the visualization of communal truths in late medieval France. In *The Place of Thought*, Sarah Kay argues that French didactic poets writing during the long fourteenth century, recognizing the subjective nature of individual perspective, employed "spatial images" for the purpose of gathering personified abstractions and historical figures in a "common place" as a means of eliciting a "community of outlook" or "unity of thought" among readers. For this reason, allegories and their personifications played an important role in the creation of political consensus, inspiring community, and to the extent that the personifications were female, simultaneously justifying and undermining the authority of aristocratic women to govern.[45] These constructions were so fluid because they existed in an imaginative space where poets conspired to recreate their society.

In light of this context, rather than seeing Philippe de Mézières' attempt to carefully prescribe the behavior of wives and to encourage them to adopt a Griselda-like submissive patience in response to their imperfect earthly spouses as evidence of a particularly misogynistic concern with the behavior of women, it might make more sense to see his suggestions as reflecting the scale of his attempt to inspire his own society to achieve an entirely new mode of relations among Christians for the sake of internal peace among Europeans and successful crusading in the eastern Mediterranean. While Philippe adopts, perpetuates, and intensifies misogynist ideas in his pro-crusade and spiritual conduct works, his attention to the reform of women's behavior in his pro-crusade works reflects his understanding of the crucial role that royal and aristocratic women played in cementing political alliances and inspiring courtly conduct in their society. Moreover, Philippe's fascination with female behavior recognizes

that women, who were the subject of endless critique and conduct literature, were the most likely to respond to calls to reform their behavior in part because they were so vulnerable to critique and in part because the project of reforming women as a means of reforming society had already been embraced by his society.

Philippe de Mézières' valorization of female virtue and vilification of female vice allowed the reform of women to form a central role in the reform of society he undertook for the sake of pursuing crusade. As such, Philippe's ' interweaving of the language of gender and crusade, while it drew upon a widespread focus on reforming female behavior as a means of reforming society, reinforced an otherworldly understanding of female virtue, placed the burden of Europe's political challenges on the shoulders of elite women, and identified the virtue of women as an important measuring tool for determining the spiritual health of Europe's Christian society and its relative virtue in comparison with contemporary and ancient communities.

Notes

1 For an overview of crusading after the fall of Acre, see Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, 122–132. For the ongoing expectation that late medieval French kings would engage in crusading, see Tyerman, "Philip VI and the recovery of the Holy Land," 25–52; and Hong, "Le projet de croisade," 239–274.
2 For an excellent introduction to Philippe de Mézières' career and context, see the essays collected in Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Petkov, eds., *Philippe de Mézières and his Age*. For an examination of Philippe's *Dream* as a mirror for princes, see Naegle, "Resveillier ceulx qui dorment en pechié," 625–643.
3 For instance, see Farmer, "Persuasive Voices," 517–543; *Surviving Poverty*; and "Low Country Ascetics and Oriental Luxury."
4 Philippe de Mézières states these qualifications repeatedly. For an allegorical description of his diplomatic experience and a detailed description of his visionary experience, see de Mézières, *Songe du viel pelerin*, I: 8–13. For a detailed description of de Mézières' career offered to authenticate his advice, see *Une epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, 102–103.
5 For a survey of the crusading fantasies circulating in the court of Charles VI, see Magee, "Crusading at the Court of Charles VI," 367–383.
6 *Songe*, II: 1267–1281.
7 De Mézières, *Songe* II: 1278: "tu doies mener en ta compaignie par tout audit passage la royne…et les autres princes, barons et chevalerie aussi, chascun sa femme, c'est assavoir pour retrenchier l'occasion et la mater de toute vaillaine luxure, par laquelle luxure es passages passés par deffaute des preude femmes, qui estoient demourees en leurs païs, mon Pere Jhesucrist a esté maintefois grandement offendu, pour laquelle offence il a retrait aus Crestiens mainte belle victoire…."
8 De Mézières, *Songe*, II: 1279: "car les dames qui communalement sont ou doivent estre plus devotes que les hommes au saint passage, pour l'amour du doulx Jhesu … doyvent aler non pas pour moustrer leurs estas ne leur joliveté, mais pour servir leurs seigneurs et la chevalerie de Dieu…."
9 For the mediating role of medieval queens, see Adams, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria*, 73–112. For the role that the women of the French royal court played in reflecting and enhancing the queen's authority, see Solterer, "Making Names, Breaking Lives," 207–210.

10 Blumenfeld-Kosinski, "Roles for Women," 247–281, esp. 268.
11 Solterer, "Making Names," 203–217.
12 For the composition date and manuscript tradition and the reference to western Christianity's duty to protect its frontiers, see de Mézières, *Le livre de la vertu*, 7–20, and 395. For the argument that de Mézières' *Livre* spiritualized the popular female conduct literature of his time, see Loba, "'Bon Jhesu,'" 186–196; and Moureau, "La femme tel un diamant marial," 14.
13 De Mézières, *Livre*, 43, 84, and 89.
14 De Mézières, *Livre*, 76, 225–229.
15 De Mézières, *Livre*, 229.
16 Moureau, "La femme tel un diamant marial," 6–9.
17 De Mézières, *Livre*, 255.
18 For an examination of de Mézières use of the passion as a mirror for married women within the context of theological writings on spiritual marriage, as well as contemporary meditations on the passion in books of hours and mystical writings, see Loba, "Contempler le miroir de la passion," 255–267.
19 De Mézières, *Livre*, 258–263, 332. Deguileville, *Le pèlerinage de vie humaine*. For the popularity and influence of Deguileville's text and de Mézières's knowledge of this text, see Nievergelt, *Allegorical Quests*, 32–40, and Nievergelt and Kamath, eds., *The Pèlerinage*, 1–21.
20 De Mézières, *Livre*, 356.
21 De Mézières, *Livre*, 394–401.
22 For the widespread concern with how individuals fit into wider polities and the importance of self-sacrifice for the sake of the common good, see Collette, *Performing Polity*, 41–78. For an excellent overview of how the contents of de Mézières' book feed into its concluding prayer to the virgin for the communal well-being of all of Christendom and its enemies, see Sinclair, "Un élément datable de la piété," 156–176.
23 De Mézières, Livre, 356: "si une dame mariee au jourd'ui souffroit autant de son mari et pour l'amour de Dieu, il se porroit dire qu'ell seroit vray martire…".
24 For examples of devout women offering their children to God so that they could pursue a religious life, see Newman, *From Virile Woman to WomanChrist*, 76–107. For the ambiguity in the Griselda text regarding its application to the soul or to actual wives, see Collette, *Performing Polity*, 60. Also see Walters, "The Vieil Solitaire," 132–144.
25 De Mézières, *Livre*, 333: "des chevaliers sans nombre et escuiers et autres hommes qui par son atour et joliveté ont esté fort temptéz du pechié de luxure et par aventure pluseurs dampnéz."
26 De Mézières, *Livre*, 337.
27 De Mézières, *Livre*, 397.
28 For the celebration of the persuasive abilities of virtuous women in the writings of late ancient pagan and Christian moralists, the monastic and urban reformers of medieval Europe, and late medieval reflections on aristocratic women's public power with special reference to Griselda, see Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride*; Farmer, "Persuasive Voices"; and Collette, *Performing Polity*.
29 De Mézières asserts that he was present for the canonization of Delphine's husband. See *Livre*, 222–224. For a discussion of these examples, see Loba, "Exemple au service de la spiritualité conjugale," 87–91.
30 For a concise account de Mézières' role in the political preparation for and processing of the crusading disaster at Nicopolis, see Palmer, *England, France and Christendom, 1377–99*, 180–210.
31 For the critical edition of this text, see de Mézières, *Une epistre lamentable et consolatoire*.
32 De Mézières, *Une epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, 105–144.

33 De *Une epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, 153–166.
34 De *Une epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, 153.
35 De Mézières, *Une epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, 155–156: "… toute deschevelee et sa peneuse robe en deux moitiez dessiree, et chascune partie en cent parties derompue et toute divisee, de laquelle roine <la couronne>lui sera cheüe a ses piez et des trespassans toute foulee. Ceste piteuse roine tendra en sa main un grant galice tout enruillié, rampli des larmes de ladicte roine a si grant habondance que desdictes larmes tout le pavement de l'eglise jusques a la porte en sera tout arrousé…. qui de lui n'aura compassion il pourra bien dire qui'il aura le cuer plus dur que une pierre…. ses propres enfans qu'elle a alaitié de ses propres mamelles, qui l'ont abandonnee. …. la grant negligence des princes crestiens qui tant l'ont souffert sans y metre remede."
36 Delogu, *Allegorical Bodies*; and Blumenfeld-Kosinski, "Dramatic Troubles of Ecclesia," 181–193.
37 In de Mézières' understanding, imagining virtuous personifications had a power similar to that attributed to print culture by Anderson. See *Imagined Communities*.
38 For a similar but much more detailed court of personifications, see Book I of Deguileville's *Le pèlerinage de vie humaine*.
39 Solterer, "Making Names," 206–208.
40 De Mézières, *Une epistre*, 144–147. For de Mézières understanding of the connection between crusade and communal renewal, see Buc, "L'epistre lamentable," 205–230.
41 Delogu, *Allegorical Bodies*, 177–178.
42 De Mézières, *Songe*, 14.
43 Bourassa, "Reconfiguring Queen Truth," 98.
44 For examples, see Collette, *Performing Polity* and Broomhall, ed., *Women and Power at the French Court*.
45 Kay, "Introduction: Another and More Perfect World," 1–18.

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