The King's Two Daughters: Isabelle of France and the University of Paris, Fille du Roy

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B ORN IN 1354 AND 1363 RESPECTIVELY, products of the University of Paris and more particularly of the Collège de Navarre,[1] the royal secretary and diplomat Jean de Montreuil and his contemporary Jean Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris, emerged from the same intellectual and social milieu. They were both ardent defenders of the kingdom of France and the Valois dynasty, politically engaged public intellectuals who used their writings to meet the combined threats of external and civil war, to safeguard the authority of the king, and to shape and proclaim a distinctly French national identity. Montreuil and Gerson also situated themselves on the same side of the Armagnac-Bourguignon conflict that divided France in the years following the 1407 assassination of Louis d'Orléans. Indeed, Jean de Montreuil would be among those massacred during the Burgundian takeover of Paris in 1418, from which Jean Gerson, busy at the Council of Constance, was fortuitously absent.

Although the nature of their textual production differs, Montreuil and Gerson both employ the language and categories of gender and sexuality, particularly as they relate to real and

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[1] On the importance of colleges within the University of Paris, see Jacques Verger, *Les universités au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1973), 71–76.

figurative royal daughters, in their attempts to provide a structural and institutional response to the challenges faced by the Valois dynasty. For Jean de Montreuil, female sexuality is connected to anxiety about the susceptibility of France to English aggression. Montreuil fashions the so-called Salic law in an effort to exclude royal daughters and their offspring from succession to the kingdom of France, thus disproving the legitimacy of English claims to the French crown. Montreuil thereby regulates and represses the threatening sexuality of royal daughters in order to safeguard the integrity of the masculine body politic. Salic law will help to shape and define the French as a people, and the very basis of this self-definition is the exclusion of women from the official exercise of royal power.

During the same period, Jean Gerson casts the University of Paris in the role of *fille du roy* and in that capacity requires it to assume an important position in the governance of the kingdom and the preservation and transmission of royal authority. Like Montreuil, Jean Gerson also excludes real women from the political realm, but in a very different manner. The structures and language of kinship, understood in terms of parenting, nurture, and love, occupy an important place in the chancellor's thought. Accordingly, the strong positive connotations of kinship, and of daughterhood in particular, are deployed to establish a state-building and governing role for the university. And yet, here too, actual women are bypassed, as reproduction and kinship are recast in nonliteral terms. Daughter of the king, fecund mother of the university masters and students, what the female allegorical body of the university conceals is the exclusively male population of which this institution is composed. Effective kingship and political stability are guaranteed and upheld by men like Gerson himself, presented in rhetorical terms as the loving and dutiful—not to mention dynastically and politically nonthreatening—*fille du roy*.

Before embarking on an examination of the works of our two Jeans, it is useful to review the social and political circumstances that drove and shaped their textual production. The over-forty-year rule of Charles VI of France (1380–1422) was marked by turmoil.[2] Charles inherited a war that had begun in 1337, as well as a duty to defend the Valois dynasty against the ideological and military challenges of the English, challenges that date back to the early fourteenth century and the final decades of Capetian rule.[3] Charles VI was crowned in 1380, just shy of his twelfth birthday, and during his minority the kingdom was governed by his fractious and striving uncles, three paternal and one maternal. In 1389, at the encouragement of his younger brother Louis d'Orléans, Charles embarked upon his personal rule, but just three years later he suffered the first of what would prove to be countless attacks of insanity. Initially it was believed that the king could be cured, and many efforts were made to do so. But as the years wore on, it became clear that Charles's "absences," as they came to be called, were a permanent feature of his person and his reign.

Though Charles's absences varied in severity, duration, and frequency, they effectively precluded his governing during these times. Unlike his ancestor Louis IX (r. 1226–70), whose mother, Blanche of Castile, officially governed as regent of the realm both during the king's

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[2] On the reign of Charles VI, see Françoise Autrand, *Charles VI: La folie du roi* (Paris: Fayard, 1986); R. C. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue: Crisis at the Court of Charles VI (1392–1420)* (New York: AMS Press, 1986); and Bernard Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société: L'assassinat du duc d'Orléans 23 novembre 1407* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992).

[3] On the problematic series of successions that marked the end of the Capetian dynasty, see A. W. Lewis, *Royal Succession in Capetian France: Studies on Familial Order and the State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981); and Charles Wood, "Queens, Queans, and Kingship: An Inquiry into Theories of Royal Legitimacy in Late Medieval England and France," in *Order and Innovation in the Middle Ages*, ed. William Jordan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 385–400.

minority and while he was on crusade, Charles VI did not entrust the kingdom to his queen, Isabeau de Bavière.[4] Instead, in imitation of his father, who had sought to balance the power of his brothers, Charles VI stipulated that a council, composed of the princes of the blood—initially his brother and uncles—and the wise advisors of the realm, would rule.[5] The alternation between the oligarchic rule of the council and periods of personal rule by the king meant that royal directives were constantly subject to change. Moreover, like Charles V's brothers, the members of the king's council did not govern harmoniously.

In 1404 Philippe de Bourgogne, the most influential of Charles VI's uncles, died. His son, Jean sans Peur, competent and ambitious, sought to control the royal council and the kingdom. The tension between Jean sans Peur and Louis d'Orléans mounted, culminating in the assassination of the latter in November 1407. The unrepentant Jean sans Peur defended his actions on the basis that he had rid the kingdom of a tyrant. This stance created an impossible situation. The king could not forgive someone who refused to acknowledge his crime, and the widow and children of Louis d'Orléans, as well as their allies, demanded justice. The kingdom broke into two factions, one of which, the Burgundians, eventually made common cause with the English. For the remainder of Charles VI's reign and for many years afterward, civil war compounded the troubles already engendered by the war with England.

In addition to these internal tensions, the accession of Henry V to the English throne in 1413, and his commitment to pursuing the English claims to the kingdom of France, gave renewed urgency to the French responses to English challenges. As we shall see, the conflicts that arose from the contested exercise of power came to be articulated through discourses that focused on gender. This is in part because the dynastic crises of the fourteenth century, and the English challenges to Valois legitimacy, raised questions concerning the rights of women to rule or to transmit such a right to their male offspring. But in addition, gender provided a ready-made and apparently natural hierarchy that allowed French writers to draw boundaries, establish or proclaim legitimacy, and conceptualize the relationship between self and society.

I shall first focus on the fabrication of a myth of national identity. The principles concerning female exclusion from royal rule that were developed over the course of the fourteenth century were brought together in the fifteenth century by Jean de Montreuil under the rubric of Salic law.[6] Although Salic law was—and still is—often discussed in connection to the fitness of women to

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4 Though not named regent, this is not to say that Isabeau played no role in governing. On her involvement in the royal council, see Tracy Adams, "Christine de Pizan, Isabeau of Bavaria, and Female Regency," *French Historical Studies* 32, no. 1 (2009): 1–32; Rachel Gibbons, "Isabeau of Bavaria, Queen of France (1385–1422): The Creation of an Historical Villainess," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 6 (1996): 51–73; and Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société*.

5 On the emergence of the concept of princes of the blood, see Charles de Miramon, "Aux origines de la noblesse et des princes du sang: France et Angleterre au XIVe siècle," in *L'hérédité entre Moyen Âge et époque moderne: Perspectives historiques*, ed. Maaike van der Lugt and Charles de Miramon (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2008), 157–210.

6 On fourteenth-century references to female exclusion from royal rule, see, among others, Colette Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), the chapter entitled "La loi salique"; Philippe Contamine, "'Le royaume de France ne peut tomber en fille': Fondement, formulation et implication d'une théorie politique à la fin du Moyen-Âge," *Perspectives médiévales*, June 1987, 67–81; Ralph Giesey, *Le rôle méconnu de la loi salique: La succession royale XIVe–XVIe siècles* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2007); Jacques Krynen, *L'empire du roi, idées et croyances politiques en France XIIIe–XVe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1993); and Craig Taylor, "The Salic Law and the Valois Succession to the French Crown," *French History* 15, no. 4 (2001): 358–77. Taylor notes that actually it was the English who first cited Salic law in relation to the Valois succession, in 1389.

occupy certain social and political roles, it was resurrected and refashioned in the fifteenth century not for the exclusive or primary purpose of condemning women (though it did!) but rather as a post facto justification for a series of contested royal successions.[7] Jean de Montreuil was the first explicitly to employ the term "Salic law" as part of his argument that women could neither succeed to the throne of France nor serve as *pont et planche* on behalf of their male issue, thereby demonstrating that the claims of the English kings to the kingdom of France—claims based upon Edward III of England's descent from Isabelle of France—were unfounded.[8] Salic law, in the works of Montreuil, functions as a kind of shorthand for a complex set of ideas about French collective identity that were then deployed by subsequent writers with great regularity. By examining the works of Montreuil I shall show how Salic law was used to define, proclaim, and diffuse a nationalistic agenda and how institutionalized or structural misogyny became part of the basis of French collective identity.

JEAN DE MONTREUIL AND SALIC LAW

Jean de Montreuil has sometimes been credited with "inventing" Salic law, but the idea that women ought be excluded from royal rule existed long before he began composing his treatises in the early fifteenth century. The exclusion of women from royal rule began to be clearly and explicitly articulated in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, during the final years of Capetian rule.[9] In 1314 King Philippe IV le Bel (r. 1285–1314) died and his eldest son ascended the throne as Louis X. However, Louis X died in 1316, leaving a young daughter and a pregnant wife. During the queen's pregnancy Louis's younger brother Philippe served as regent, and when the queen's newborn son died, Philippe succeeded in excluding Louis's daughter from the throne on the basis that the "customs" of France did not allow women to rule.[10] These supposed customs were founded more on the serendipitous fact that for over three hundred years the Capetian kings had consistently produced sons capable of succeeding their fathers than on the existence of any established laws related to succession. Thus, Louis X's death without a male heir raised questions that had not previously been considered, and as Paul Viollet demonstrated in his seminal article on the exclusion of women from royal rule, Philippe V's victory was the product of political cunning, bribery, and intimidation and was not at all a foregone conclusion, nor certainly one based upon any clear-cut legal founda-

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7   On the contested successions of 1316 and 1328, see Contamine, "'Le royaume de France ne peut tomber en fille'"; Craig Taylor, "Edward III and the Plantagenet Claim to the French Throne," in *The Age of Edward III*, ed. James Bothwell (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell and Brewer, 2001), 155–69; and Paul Viollet, "Comment les femmes ont été exclues, en France, de la succession à la couronne," *Mémoires de l'Institut national de France, Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 34, pt. 2 (1895): 125–78.

8   The expression "*pont et planche*," which will be picked up by a number of subsequent authors, is Montreuil's. See Jean de Montreuil, *Opera*, vol. 2, *L'œuvre historique et polémique*, ed. Nicole Grévy, Ezio Ornato, and Gilbert Ouy (Turin: Giappichelli, 1975), e.g., at 169, 211, 276. All references are to this edition, and page numbers will be provided in parentheses in the text; translations are mine.

9   Eliane Viennot, *La France, les femmes, et le pouvoir*, vol. 1, *L'invention de la loi salique (Ve–XVIe siècle)* (Paris: Perrin, 2006). Viennot takes a feminist perspective that situates female exclusion from rule and the emergence of Salic law within a long-standing and complex tradition of misogyny. Her work helps to explain why the discourse of gender provided a useful means for articulating ideas about hierarchy and about inclusion and exclusion.

10 The fact that Louis's first wife, Marguerite de Bourgogne, was found guilty of adultery did not help the cause of their young daughter. Louis's posthumous son, Jean, was born of the king's second wife, Clemence of Hungary. On the implications of the queen's sexual conduct, see Peggy McCracken, *The Romance of Adultery: Queenship and Sexual Transgression in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998); and Wood, "Queens, Queans, and Kingship."

tion.[11] Over a century later Jean Juvénal des Ursins affirmed that at the time of Louis X's death, "il fut dit, jugié, sentencié et prononcié par maniere d'arrest que fille ne devoit point succeder ne ne succederoit ou royaulme" (it was said, judged, concluded, and proclaimed in the form of a decree that a maiden ought not to succeed nor would succeed to the kingdom).[12] If only this were true, the events of the fourteenth century might have unfolded quite differently than they did. Unfortunately for the Valois, Philippe V did not wish to appear to be breaking new legal ground, and while it is true that various assemblies of notables and of the university masters approved, first, Philippe's regency and, later, his succession to the throne, these meetings produced no proclamations or ordinances governing royal succession. Indeed, it is precisely this documentary void that the Valois supporters found themselves still seeking to overcome a century later, and in the context of which Salic law proved so useful.

When Philippe V died in 1322 leaving only daughters, his contemporaries seemed to have no doubts that his brother Charles de la Marche would succeed him. Charles IV, the last son of Philippe IV, died in 1328 leaving daughters and a pregnant wife. Charles IV's death presented a new problem, for he was the last son of Philippe le Bel, and so there were no more brothers to serve as regent for a pregnant queen or to whom the throne might pass. The regency was entrusted to Philippe de Valois. He was the son of Philippe le Bel's brother Charles and therefore the first cousin of the last three Capetian kings and a direct descendant of Saint Louis through a cadet line. When Charles IV's wife gave birth to a daughter, there was no question of her inheriting, for by this time the custom of female exclusion from rule had been firmly established. Philippe de Valois was of course a clear candidate for the throne, but there was another claimant, Edward III of England (r. 1327–77), the son of Philippe IV's daughter Isabelle and nephew of the last three Capetian kings. Edward was the closest male heir to Charles IV, but his claim passed through a cognate line. Could a woman transmit a right that she could not herself exercise or possess? Given the overlapping and sometimes-conflicting legal authorities that might be invoked, and the lack of any royal ordinance or directive on this subject, both sides were able to marshal plausible arguments in favor of their candidate. In the end, an assembly of barons decided in favor of Philippe de Valois on the basis that, just as women could not rule in France, neither could they transmit the right to rule to their male issue.

All this legal to-and-fro-ing obscures one of the most important questions at issue in the Valois succession, which, for Paul Viollet, could be summed up in clear and simple terms: "La France devait rester aux Valois parce que les Valois étaient français" (France ought to remain with the Valois because the Valois were French).[13] While one might argue that Viollet overstated the role played by identity politics with respect to the Valois succession of 1328, I contend that nationalistic concerns were very much at the heart of the fifteenth-century resurrection and refashioning of Salic law. In 1413, the central issue was not whether women were fit to rule but how to ensure that only French might rule the kingdom of France. As we shall see, the perception of fundamental difference from the English and the anxiety about the vulnerability of France to foreign elements—both far more pronounced in Jean de Montreuil's works than in the decisions

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[11] Viollet, "Comment les femmes ont été exclues, en France, de la succession à la couronne." See also Giesey, *Le rôle méconnu de la loi salique*; and Lewis, *Royal Succession in Capetian France*.

[12] Jean Juvénal des Ursins, *Écrits politiques de Jean Juvénal des Ursins*, vol. 2, *Tres crestien, tres hault, tres puissant roy*, ed. P. S. Lewis (Paris: Klincksieck, 1992), 46.

[13] Viollet, "Comment les femmes ont été exclues, en France, de la succession à la couronne," 149.

of 1316 and 1328—are conceptualized through discourses that focus on gender and, in particular, through discussions of the Salic law.

Though initially he accepted the kingship of Philippe VI, Edward III eventually asserted his claim to the French throne, resulting in the ongoing series of conflicts that we know as the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453).[14] In the Treaty of Brétigny (1360) Edward renounced his claims to the throne in exchange for greatly expanded Continental possessions that he was to hold in full sovereignty, that is, not as a fief from the king of France. These are more or less the claims that the English would continue to press until Henry V once again asserted—though on an entirely new basis—his right to the kingdom of France.

Jean de Montreuil's "invention" of Salic law, as I have discussed elsewhere in more detail, must be understood in relation to his humanist spirit of philological inquiry, reliance upon documentary evidence, and faith in the capacity of the written word to effect cultural and political change. Salic law provides an important example of how Montreuil relied upon historical documents as proof of French rights.

In his treatise *A toute la chevalerie*, Montreuil explains that Edward III's claims are based on his descent from Isabelle of France, the daughter of Philippe le Bel. But, Montreuil says, "par constitucion et ordonnance bien fondee et approuvee par tout le royaume, femme ne masle qui ne vient que de par femme ne succedent point au royaume ne a la couronne de France" (131; by a law and ordinance well founded and approved throughout the kingdom, a woman, or a man who is descended only from a woman, does not succeed to the kingdom or to the crown of France). This is essentially what the assemblies of 1328 had indeed said, though their deliberations pertained specifically to the problem at hand, and they did not frame their conclusions more broadly in the guise of an ordinance or legal precedent. As Montreuil's use of the passive voice makes clear, he is not able to say precisely who "founded and approved" what, nor in what context. According to Montreuil the custom of female exclusion is founded on reason, and therefore, "il appert que ladite ordonnance pouoit et devoit estre faicte en tous temps" (132; it is clear that the aforesaid ordinance could and should have been made for all times). Since, as Montreuil also observes, French history offers no example of a queen ruling the kingdom in her own right, the principle of female exclusion must be very old, as old as the kingdom itself. It would seem that Montreuil did not so much invent Salic law as go looking for something that he believed from the outset must exist somewhere among the French archives and histories: a written legal basis for the exclusion of women from royal power. What he found, of course, was the *Lex Salica*.

What came to be referred to simply as the Salic law in France is in fact but one clause of one article from the *Lex Salica*, the law code of the Salian Franks. This code was first compiled c. 507–11 and consisted originally of sixty-five articles, most of which specify the price to be paid for various injuries and harms inflicted upon others. It was updated during the reign of Pepin the Short, c. 763–64, and expanded to about one hundred articles. During the reign of Charlemagne a new version of the code was promulgated, with seventy articles. The article that so interested Jean de Montreuil and others is called "De alode" or "De alodis," that is to say, "Concerning Immovable Goods" (*alleux* in Old French). This article lists, in order of preference, who should inherit the goods of individuals who die without leaving living children, and the final clause states, in one of the most ancient versions: "De terra vero nulla in muliere hereditas non

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14 For an overview of the Hundred Years' War, see Jean Favier, *La guerre de cent ans* (Paris: Fayard, 1980); and
    Jonathan Sumption, *The Hundred Years' War*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991–2009).

pertinebit, sed ad virilem sexum qui fratres fuerint tota terra perteneunt" (As for the land, none of the inheritance will belong to the woman, but to the viril sex who were brothers all of the land belongs).[15] In its original context, the article says nothing about transmission of the crown, nor does it identify the *terra* as the kingdom of France.[16]

In *A toute la chevalerie* Montreuil describes how "j'ay oy dire au chantre et croniqueur de Saint Denis, personne de grant religion et reverence, qu'il a trouvé par tres anciens livres que ladicte coustume et ordonnance, qu'il appelle la loy Salica, fu faicte et constituee devant qu'il eust oncques roy chrestien en France. Et je mesmes l'ay veu, et leu ycelle loy en un ancient livre, renouvelee et confermee par Charlemaingne" (132). (I heard it said by the chanter and chronicler of Saint Denis, a person of great devotion and piety, that he had found in a very ancient book that the aforesaid custom and ordinance, which he called the Salic law, was made and constituted before there ever was a Christian king in France. And I myself saw it, and read this law in an ancient book, updated and confirmed by Charlemagne.) This passage contains many elements intended to demonstrate the authenticity and inviolability of the law in question, as well as its applicability to the kingdom and the crown of France: Montreuil's information comes from a reliable individual; the text is associated with the Abbey of Saint Denis, the source and repository of the official history of the kingdom; the manuscript in question is very ancient, which Montreuil had supposed it must be, given the timeless quality he attributes to the principle of female exclusion; the law code was crafted by the original founders of the kingdom of France and predates even the conversion of the kingdom; finally, the code was revised and reaffirmed by none other than the emperor Charlemagne.[17] Montreuil then quotes the relevant passage.[18] This genealogy of Salic law, always with the repetition of the most important elements—pre-Christian establishment of the law, reaffirmation by Charlemagne—is included in Montreuil's subsequent treatises; indeed, it often appears more than once in the same text. Montreuil's version of Salic law counters the English assertion that the law of female exclusion was unearthed or formulated specifically in order to deny the claims of Edward III. More importantly, his history of Salic law endows the French with a law that is particular to them and identifies France as a kingdom that

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[15] Later versions of the clause add the word *salica* after *terra*.

[16] On the early history of Salic law, I have followed Viennot, *La France, les femmes, et le pouvoir*, vol. 1, esp. pt. 1, *Les fondations (Ve–IXe siècles)*. Viennot shows how this article was modified over time to gradually privilege inheritance by men and paternal relatives.

[17] In the *Traité du sacre* written during the reign of Charles V, Jean Golein affirmed that Charlemagne ordained "que le royaume de France fust tenu par succession de hoir masle le plus prochain de la lignie" (that the kingdom of France be held by succession of the closest male heir), thereby demonstrating an even earlier link between Charlemagne and the eventual Salic law of the French. See Jean Golein, *Le racional des divins offices de Guillaume Durand*, bk. 4, ed. Charles Brucker and Pierre Demarolle (Geneva: Droz, 2010).

[18] In fact, as numerous scholars have noted, he misquotes it—whether intentionally or in error we shall never know with certainty—by adding the phrase "*in regno*," a mistake that he corrects in subsequent citations of the law. See Giesey, *Le rôle méconnu de la loi salique*, chap. 5. Montreuil's interpolation has been called a "forgery"; see Sarah Hanley, "The Politics of Identity and Monarchic Government in France: The Debate over Female Exclusion," in *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition*, ed. Hilda Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 295. I find that such strong and negative terms overstate the case. What were called translations in the Middle Ages were in fact works of linguistic and cultural adaptation that were often unfaithful, in a literal sense, to their originals. I contend that Montreuil provided what he believed to be the intent of the clause. Indeed, in his later citations of the Salic law Montreuil omits the words "*in regno*" and simply explains the meaning of the passage as he understood it (or wanted it to be understood), that is, "absolument que femme n'ait quelconque portion ou royaume, c'est a entendre a la couronne de France" (168; absolutely that woman might not have any part in the kingdom, that is to say, in the crown of France).

is distinct from all others. In this way, the emergent categories France and French are defined, in part, as an effect of the law.

The interest of Montreuil's Salic law is not the exclusion of women from rule per se or its place within misogynistic discourses.[19] Indeed, there would have been little point in searching for and promoting a law that affirmed the inferiority of women, since authorities from the church fathers to Aristotle had already furnished a range of frameworks within which to discuss women's many physical, moral, and intellectual failings. Rather, the force of Salic law, as Montreuil presents it, resides in the law's capacity to shape and define the French as a people.

In *A toute la chevalerie* Montreuil stages an allegory of the crown of France, who rhetorically asks the English king, "ne sces tu pas que femmes, par qui cause le roy Edouart prenoit le tiltre, ne succedent point en ce royaume? et—la merci Dieu—oncques n'ot en ce royaume ne ja n'aura—se Dieu plaist—creature du plus grant au plus petit qui voulsist souffrir ou consentist jusques a la mort que Angloiz en chief ou comme roy seignorist en France" (108; do you not know that women, by whom King Edward took the title, do not succeed in this kingdom? and—thank God—there never has been in this kingdom, nor will there ever be—may it please God—a creature from the most important to the most humble who would suffer or consent, under pain of death, that an Englishman rule as head or as king in France). In this passage Montreuil moves rhetorically from female exclusion to the French refusal of an English king as though the two were causally connected. The idea that consent of the subjects is a prerequisite to legitimate rule is one of Montreuil's most important theoretical bases for the exclusion of Edward III, and one that he repeats throughout his treatises. In this passage the juxtaposition of female exclusion and consent of the ruled suggests an association between the two, though the nature of the relationship between these ideas is not explained or developed here. We shall see that gendered language will be used elsewhere to explore the idea of consent.

In Montreuil's multiple iterations of what we might call his legal and theoretical talking points, a set of ideas is consistently presented in sequence. First, Montreuil affirms that "selon la diversité des pays sont diverses constitutions et loys" (166, also 272; according to the diversity of countries there are different constitutions and laws). The uniqueness of Salic law is inscribed in its history, which, as we have seen, associates the law with recognized icons of French national identity, such as the Abbey of Saint Denis and Charlemagne. The possession of a unique French law renders Roman or other law codes inapplicable, and it also constitutes yet another way in which the French monarchy is original and superior to those of other kingdoms.

Second, the law of female exclusion is "tres raisonnablement fondee" (131; very reasonably founded). All legal arguments aside, Montreuil invites us to imagine that a king of France died,

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[19] On this point I disagree with Sarah Hanley, who has argued in a series of articles that Jean de Montreuil invented Salic law as a direct response to what she perceives as Christine de Pizan's humiliating defeat of Montreuil in the quarrel of the *Roman de la rose*. See Sarah Hanley, *Les droits des femmes et la loi salique* (Paris: Indigo et côté-femmes éditions, 1994), 7–20; Sarah Hanley, "Mapping Rulership in the French Body Politic: Political Identity, Public Law, and the King's One Body," *Historical Reflections* 23 (1997): 1–21; Sarah Hanley, "Identity Politics and Rulership in France: Female Political Place and the Fraudulent Salic Law in Christine de Pizan and Jean de Montreuil," in *Changing Identities in Early Modern France*, ed. M. Wolfe (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 78–94; Hanley, "The Politics of Identity and Monarchic Government in France." Given the historical scholarship that traces the development of the principle of female exclusion from rule over the course of the fourteenth century (see n. 6, above), I find this argument unconvincing. See also Craig Taylor's refutation of Hanley's argument in "The Salic Law, French Queenship, and the Defense of Women in the Late Middle Ages," *French Historical Studies* 29 (2006): 543–64.

leaving but a single daughter, married to the king of Constantinople. "Ne seroit ce pas mieulx raison … que un autre masle du sang royal—et fust encores tres loingtain de la couronne—fust roy de France, que tel empereur estrangier venist a tout ses Grez gouverner un tel royaume comme cely de France, qui est le plus noble des chrestiens?" (131; Would it not be more reasonable … that another male of royal blood—be he even far removed from the crown—become king of France than that such a foreign emperor come with all his Greeks to govern such a kingdom as is that of France, which is the most noble among all Christians?).[20] It is important to note that the reason alleged first and foremost for female exclusion has nothing to do with the aptitude of women to rule but rather with anxiety about the penetration of the French body politic by foreign elements, specifically foreign men. Royal women, who marry foreign men and bear their children, are the means by which France is rendered vulnerable to domination, contamination, and miscegenation, and it is their marital and sexual associations with non-French partners that make possible this transgressive crossing or blurring of boundaries. To render the body politic impermeable, to preclude the disturbing potential for foreign control, royal women—and their offspring—must be completely excluded from rule. Whereas in the discourse of the allegorical crown, cited above, the exclusion of women from royal rule was only implicitly connected to consent of the governed, here Montreuil shows explicitly how women introduce threatening foreign elements.

The third idea in the sequence also centers on consent of the governed and the integrity of the body politic. In the first version of his *Traité contre les anglais* Montreuil asserts that the English "facent que folz de se efforcier d'avoir terres ne seigneuries en ce royaume contre la voulenté du souverain et des subgiéz" (178; behave quite outrageously in striving by force to possess lands or lordship in this kingdom against the will of the sovereign and the subjects). The word *efforcier*, unlike the closely related term *forçoier*, can be used to denote rape.[21] This linguistic choice and the precision of the statement that the English are acting "contre la voulenté" of the French suggest a sexualized violence perpetrated against the French by the English, the rape of the kingdom by the English king. We find a similar formulation in the third *Traité contre les anglais*. Here, Montreuil denounces the English failure to respect the French law of female exclusion and their efforts to impose other laws upon the French monarchy: "estoit grant oultrage et temerité aux Anglois d'entreprendre et eulx efforcer de mectre sus telles nouvelletéz, et que si noble et puissant royaume comme celluy de France, contre ses loiz et ses coustumes, se gouvernast et feust limitéz et rieugléz a l'ordonnance de gens d'estranges païs et diverse langue" (276; it was a great outrage and imprudence on the part of the English to undertake and to impose such novelties, and that so noble and powerful a kingdom as is that of France, against its laws and customs, be governed and delimited and ruled according to the disposition of people of a foreign land and a different tongue). The effort to impose foreign laws is conveyed using the word *efforcer*, once again imagining the imposition of foreign rule as gendered, sexual violence perpetrated against a feminized body politic. Moreover, linguistic difference is introduced as the element that signals the fundamental foreignness of the English and, therefore, their unsuitability to

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20 The Greek emperor in fact visited Paris in the early fifteenth century.

21 See Frédéric Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IXe au XVe siècle*, 10 vols. (Paris: Librairies des sciences et des arts, 1938). Among the many meanings and connotations of *forçoier*, rape is not included, whereas the terms *esforcement*, *esforceor*, and *esforcier* all include rape or sexual violence among their meanings. Indeed, it is one of the principal meanings of *esforcier*, as Godefroy lists it third of over a dozen possible meanings.

rule over the French. In attempting to violently force himself and his customs upon the French, Edward infringes upon not only French laws but also natural law, because there is no legitimate rule without the consent of the subjects: "Et comme il ne soit droicte ne seure seigneurie … que celle qui vient de bonne amour et vraie obeissance des subgectz, ainsi qu'il a esté de *tous les natiz du royaume de France*, qui tousjours ont exposé corps et chevance jusques a la mort pour le droit du roy Phelipe … et pour ses successeurs roys de France, s'ensuit … que Edoart, qui contre la voulenté des François et par violence vouloit regner sur eulx, faisoit incivilement et contre droit naturel" (279; And since there is no legitimate or sure lordship … but that which comes from good love and true obedience of the subjects, as has been the case with *those born of the kingdom of France*, who always have exposed their persons and their goods unto death for the rights of King Philip … and for his successors, kings of France, it follows … that Edward, who, against the will of the French and by violence wanted to reign over them, acted uncivilly and against natural law [emphasis added]). The word *natiz* distinguishes between native and foreign and aligns political loyalty with the facts of one's birth. It is on the basis of their birth that the French exhibit the "good love and true obedience" that is the foundation for legitimate rule. Positive or enacted law aside, natural law says that the French could never consent to English rule, and Edward's efforts to impose himself are again conveyed using the language of sexualized violence.

Jean de Montreuil's fabrication and repetition of the content, history, and significance of Salic law allows us to observe the construction of a legend of French collective identity. His works were employed and diffused by later authors, and despite the subsequent recognition that Salic law did not hold up from a juridical standpoint, nevertheless it remained meaningful because, I would argue, it had become one of the constitutive elements of French national identity.[22] Just as the French monarchs had thaumaturgic powers, a holy balm, and arms sent by God, so too the French people had a special law that governed the succession of their kings. As Montreuil and his followers would have it, Salic law was ancient, unique to the kingdom of France, confirmed by Charlemagne, and ensured that the "very Christian king" would never be a queen.

On one level, conversations about Salic law are, of course, about actual women. After all, Salic law excludes women from royal rule, and the undesirability of female governance for this or that reason was a usual component of explanations and justifications of Salic law. However, it is equally true that *ideas* about women and discourses of gender also provided a language and a conceptual framework by means of which to think through other sorts of issues, in particular the profound fear and anxiety on the part of the French about domination of the kingdom by foreign kings, specifically by the English. The threat of foreign invasion is articulated in gendered terms. Queens are imagined as the means by which foreign elements insinuate themselves into the kingdom, as in the specter of the emperor and his Greeks. At the same time, the vulnerability of the kingdom is conveyed using the language of sexual violence in which the English attempt to force their king, their laws, their language, and their rule upon the unwilling French. The kingdom of

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22 Montreuil's original misquotation of Salic law was discovered, as well as the ways in which he had framed the text to suggest an application not present in the original document. On the later influence and applications of Salic law, see the second half of Giesey, *Le rôle méconnu de la loi salique*; Craig Taylor, ed., *Debating the Hundred Years War: "Pour ce que plusieurs (La loy salicque)" and "A Declaracion of the trew and dewe title of Henry VIII"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1–49; Craig Taylor, "Sir John Fortescue and the French Polemical Treatises of the Hundred Years War," *English Historical Review* (February 1999): 112–29; and Eliane Viennot, *La France, les femmes, et le pouvoir*, vol. 2, *Les résistances de la société (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècle)* (Paris: Perrin, 2008).

France is feminized in this scenario, and it is this fragility—coded as female—that Salic law seeks to oppose by erasing women from royal rule, imagining a transmission of authority in which men succeed one another in a fantasy of generation from which women are entirely absent. Salic law thus provided for a manly kingdom, one able to resist and oppose the violence of the English and to ensure that "France seroit tousjours aux Françoiz, et aux Angloiz Angleterre" (179; France will belong always to the French, and to the English, England).

THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS, *FILLE DU ROY*

Jean de Montreuil's contemporary, the celebrated theologian and university chancellor Jean Gerson, was also focused on the relationship of royal daughters to the king and to political legitimacy and authority. In his many vernacular sermons preached before both noble and popular audiences, Gerson characterized the University of Paris as the light of knowledge, the mother of learning, the *deffenseresse* of the faith, the light of the holy church, and, more importantly for our present purposes, the *fille du roy*.[23] Gerson refers to the university as the *fille du roy* from the time of his earliest sermons. In *Adorabunt eum* (1391) he cites the king's solicitude for his "tres humble et tres devote fille, l'Universite de Paris" (7.2.530; very humble and very devout daughter, the University of Paris), while in *Ecce rex tuus* (1395) Gerson prays for those responsible for bringing peace and unity to the church, including "la fille du roy, l'Universite de Paris" (7.2.621; the daughter of the king, the University of Paris). In turn, the university acts out of "amour filiale et loyale au roy mon pere" (7.1.330; filial and loyal love for the king my father).

The expression *fille du roy* is more than a simple epithet. In his sermons Gerson stages a complex allegory of the university, endowing her with voice and body, intellect and affect, and often making her, rather than himself, the interlocutor of king and nobility.[24] Gerson uses his artful allegorical representation of the university to promote this institution as one that can and ought to perform critical state-building and governing functions. In particular, the university provides a structural and institutional means to cope with the "absences" of Charles VI, the moral dissipation and political unruliness of the nobility, and the tension and eventual civil war between factions led by the king's brother and his cousin.[25]

As Gerson would have it, the university's loyalty to the king and dedication to the *chose publique* are both effect and evidence of the genealogical connection that unites king and university. Gerson invokes conventional notions of filial duty in order to define the university's role as one that requires her to act as a royal counselor and to serve the kingdom's interests by revealing

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[23] See *Diligite justiciam*, 7.2.599, for the first two expressions, and *Pax hominibus*, 7.2.763, for the second two. Unless otherwise noted, all citations from Gerson come from Jean Gerson, *Œuvres completes*, vol. 7*, *L'œuvre française*, ed. M. Glorieux (Paris: Desclée, 1960–). Volume, book, and page numbers will be provided in parentheses in the text for all references; translations are mine.

[24] On the context and chronology of Gerson's French sermons, see Louis Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français* (Bruges: Rijksuniversiteit te Gent, 1952).

[25] Scholars such as Daniel Hobbins and Nancy McLoughlin have considered the ways in which Gerson established his personal authority, but the place that the chancellor carved out for the university itself has received less critical attention. See Daniel Hobbins, "The Schoolman as Public Intellectual: Jean Gerson and the Late Medieval Tract," *American Historical Review* 108, no. 5 (2003): 1308–37; and the related monograph, Daniel Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity before Print: Jean Gerson and the Transformation of Late Medieval Learning* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); as well as Nancy McLoughlin, "Gerson as a Preacher in the Conflict between Mendicants and Secular Priests," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 248–91.

injustice and misconduct. At the same time this imaginary lineage, modeled on the adoption of Jesus by Joseph, displaces the actual bonds of contemporary royal kinship that have failed to ensure political harmony. To examine the precise nature and consequences of the imagined filiation between the university and the king that Gerson establishes in his sermons and exploits on behalf of the kingdom, it is useful to situate Gerson's fashioning of the allegorical "*fille du roy*" within the broader context of medieval ideas about genealogical and kinship structures.

Gabrielle Spiegel has argued that genealogy constitutes a "perceptual grid" by means of which medieval historians represent and shape the past.[26] Similarly, I would argue, lineage and kinship—whether real or imagined—provide the means to understand, articulate, and define relationships between individuals and groups. Networks of kinship shaped the medieval world, from the configuration of society itself to an individual's place within it. Medieval kinship structures were carefully assembled and maintained, and highly complex. They encompassed not only biological but also spiritual and legal family members and could be (re)formed and modified in response to changing needs.[27] Consanguinity formed a point of departure for the constitution of one's family, but one's closest kin were also, potentially, one's most ardent rivals.[28] This observation is amply illustrated by the conduct of Charles VI's brother, uncles, and cousins, many of whom were at least as interested in extending their own influence as they were in supporting the king and protecting the kingdom.

Bonds of kinship were supple. Among one's extensive network of biological kin, a restricted subset of family members were routinely recognized as friends—chosen as godparents or as witnesses to charters or donations—while others were not. As Xavier Hélary aptly quips with respect to the family-influenced politics of Philippe III le Hardi, "certains cousins l'étaient plus que d'autres."[29] An individual supplemented his network of biological kin with spiritual kinship, created when a person stood as godmother or -father to the child of another or through marriage, which joined the families of husband and wife through bonds of affinity.[30] The resulting relationships could serve to broadcast or fortify an existing bond of friendship or alliance or to forge a new one. As Zrinka Stahuljak has observed, even consanguinity required confirmation. Indeed, it was the mutual recognition of a bond of kinship ("linguistic alliance"), rather than blood, that constituted the operative link between two individuals.[31]

Kinship networks furnish a sensitive and revealing model for, and reflection of, social relationships. By defining and delimiting one's family, a person is also defining himself or herself

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[26] Gabrielle Spiegel, "Genealogy: Form and Function in Medieval Historiography," in her *The Past as Text* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 99–110.

[27] On medieval kinship structures, see Anita Guerreau-Jalabert, "Sur les structures de parenté dans l'Europe médiévale," *Annales ESC* 36 (1981): 1028–49; and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *L'ombre des ancêtres: Essai sur l'imaginaire médiéval de la parenté* (Paris: Fayard, 2000).

[28] Constance Brittain Bouchard, *"Those of My Blood": Constructing Noble Families in Medieval Francia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001).

[29] Xavier Hélary, "La place des questions de succession dans la politique extérieure de Philippe III le Hardi," in *Making and Breaking the Rules: Succession in Medieval Europe, c. 1000–1600*, ed. Frédérique Lachaud and Michael Penman (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 127.

[30] On spiritual kinship, see Anita Guerreau-Jalabert, "*Spiritus et caritas*: Le baptême dans la société médiévale," in *La parenté spirituelle*, ed. Françoise Héritier-Augé and Elisabeth Copet-Rougier (Paris: Editions des Archives contemporaines, 1995), 133–203.

[31] Zrinka Stahuljak, *Bloodless Genealogies of the French Middle Ages:* Translatio, *Kinship, and Metaphor* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), esp. the introduction, where she lays out her understanding of the parameters of medieval kinship.

and his or her place in the world. Given the power of kin networks to shape individual and group identity, it is not surprising that social bonds and structures of all sorts—including guilds, confraternities, the church, and the polity itself—were modeled upon, and employed the vocabulary of, kinship in order to articulate the relationship between their various members. Kinship may be viewed in a broad sense as "an ongoing metaphor for social life," as Paul Hyams has proposed.[32] Since the language of kinship provides an ordering paradigm or structuring principle for systems of thought as well, and an optic through which to view and understand the relationship of concepts to one another, we may likewise consider it an ongoing metaphor for moral and intellectual life.

Gerson uses the language of kinship to explore questions of relationality and to situate people and groups within structures of power. In the *Poenitemini* sermon on conjugal chastity (January 1403) Gerson stages a question-and-answer on the advantages and obligations associated with various sorts of love and kinship.[33] Whom should a man love more, Gerson asks his public, his wife or his mother? Though he should honor his mother, he should love his wife more. Similarly, he should love his wife more than his children, and the wife likewise. Who loves more, the mother or the father? The mother more ardently, Gerson replies, and the father more constantly. Moreover, the child loves his mother more in his youth, and his father when he is grown. Who loves more, children or parents? Parents, Gerson affirms. This passage highlights the degree to which kinship was about power and hierarchy. Gerson's ordering of family members in terms of who loves more and whom they love depicts kinship as a contest, one subject to a continual renegotiation of roles and ranks. From this perspective the wrangling going on at the royal court, where kinship and politics were so closely imbricated, may be seen as comparable to and a projection of the struggles being enacted on the level of the family.

In the sermon *Poenitemini, pour la fête de St. Antoine* (January 17, 1396) Gerson defines two kinds of birth, the first of which is physical.[34] The connections created by biological kinship come with expectations of friendship, love, and loyalty, often conveyed by the use of the words "natural" or "naturally," as in "icelle amour naturelle qui doit estre entre freres et seurs tout d'un sang, d'une char" (7.2.549; that natural love which should exist between brothers and sisters of one lineage, of one flesh). Claude Gauvard has shown that an alleged bond of *amour naturel* constituted a legitimate justification for an individual's intervention in a conflict that did not, a priori, concern them.[35] Natural love likewise provides the foundation for the closest possible affective relationships.[36] In *Beati qui lugent* (November 2, 1401) Gerson imagines a mother in purgatory begging her still-living child to pray for her, for if he does not remember and help her, she asks rhetorically, from whom might she expect comfort (7.2.553)? Because the love between parent and child is imagined to be so profound, no sacrifice can be envisioned that is greater than God's sacrifice of his only son (7.2.640). Like filiation, brotherhood is also envisioned as a bond that ensures friendship and loyalty, as evidenced by the proliferation of ritual brotherhood in the later

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[32] Paul Hyams, *Rancor and Reconciliation in Medieval England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 23.

[33] The sermon is found at 7.2.862–68, and the questions to which I refer at 7.2.864.

[34] In fact, there is also a third kind of birth, which occurs when a soul is born into glory and permitted to sit with God in heaven, but I shall not focus on this third birth here.

[35] Claude Gauvard, *Violence et ordre public au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Picard, 2005), 235.

[36] On natural love in literary contexts, see Michel Zink, "L'amour naturel: De Guillaume de Saint-Thierry aux derniers troubadours," *Journal des savants*, July–December 2001, 321–49.

Middle Ages.[37] Accordingly, Gerson affirms that he who is helped by his brother is like a strong tower (7.2.441). Gerson is well aware, however, that the perfect friendship ensured by brotherhood, like the perfect solicitude produced by filiation, represents ideals rather than reality. Yet these ideals are so powerful that the language of physical kinship is used also to conceptualize and define the relationship of the individual soul to God. Paradoxically, physical kinship is at once an archetype for, but a degraded version of, spiritual kinship.

The second type of birth in this world, as defined by Gerson, is gracious or spiritual. This second birth is sacramental, brought about through baptism and penitence, and it makes possible the spiritual (re)birth of an individual and their inclusion in God's family.[38] Thanks to this second birth each person becomes a child of God and of the Virgin, brothers and sisters of Christ and of one another, and Gerson frequently reminds the king and nobles of their kinship with the humblest of the kingdom's subjects so that they will be just and charitable toward them. Gerson stresses the profound connection between all Christians, as well as the divinity's likeness to all people, in order to promote Christian unity and each soul's intimacy with God. In the sermon *Puer natus est* (before 1389), for instance, the holy family provides figures with whom any type of person could identify. Men are encouraged to turn to Christ as to a brother. The Virgin provides a model for young girls, Mary as mother for wives, Christ as sovereign doctor for clerics, and Christ as king of kings for earthly princes and kings (7.2.965). It is important to recognize that for Gerson spiritual birth and the relationships constituted thereby are not metaphorical. On the contrary, they are every bit as real as the facts of physical birth; they are simply operative in a different realm.

Spiritual birth, unconstrained by the facts of human physiology, is able to create kin relationships that are not possible within a physical framework, as illustrated by Mary, daughter of her son, mother of her father and brother. Spiritual kinship also allows men to occupy places that are most often thought of as quintessentially and uniquely female.[39] In the sermon *Nimis honorati sunt* (before 1394) Gerson evokes the humility, pity, and kindness of Saint Paul. Moreover, Paul, he says, "se nommoit mere et nourice qui enfantoit et allaictoit tous ceulz qui se convertissoyent" (7.2.735; was called the mother and nurse who gave birth to and nursed all those who converted). We could interpret this statement metaphorically. Paul was *like* a mother because he was so kind and merciful. However, while this statement functions in part as a comparison between Paul and the presumed characteristics of biological mothers, it is also an expression of the relationship between Paul and those he converted. Paul was the means of the spiritual birth, through conversion and baptism, of other individual souls and therefore stood in the relationship of mother to those souls. The image of Paul as mother helps us to imagine the maternal and paternal functions or relationships independently of human reproduction. This separation is useful when thinking about the university, a mystical body that represents a collective composed entirely of men, one that is allegorized in Gerson's sermons as both a daughter and a mother.

Since clearly the university is not the literal daughter of the king, nor is she a spiritual child in the same sense as a baptized soul, it is important to consider how she is constituted as

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37 See Elizabeth A. R. Brown, "Ritual Brotherhood in Western Medieval Europe," in "Ritual Brotherhood in Ancient and Medieval Europe: A Symposium," special issue, *Traditio* 52 (1997): 357–81.

38 On baptism, see Guerreau-Jalabert, "*Spiritus et caritas*: Le baptême dans la société médiévale."

39 On spiritual kinship, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982).

a daughter. The figure of the university herself provides the response to this question when she affirms that the king is like "son vray pere, par benigne, civile et dignative adopcion" (7.2.1138; her true father, by benevolent, civil, and worthy adoption). Thus, the relationship that the university posits is both a legal and an affective one.

The idea of adoption, and consequently the university's "adoption" by the king, is modeled upon Gerson's understanding of the relationship between Joseph and Jesus. Gerson was dedicated to the rehabilitation of the figure of Joseph, who throughout much of the Middle Ages was depicted either as a doddering cuckold or a wizened church father.[40] In his *Considérations sur saint Joseph*, Gerson discusses the relationship between the members of the holy family and demonstrates why Joseph should be considered the father of Christ, including the idea that "Jhesus estoit filz de Joseph par legale ou civile adopcion" (7.1.70; Jesus was the son of Joseph by legal or civil adoption). Gerson acknowledges that this understanding of Jesus's and Joseph's relationship "ne plaist mie a aucuns, car selond leur advis ce eust esté presumption que Joseph eust fait du Filz de Dieu tele adoption qui sonne en subiection" (7.1.70; is not pleasing to some, for according to their opinion it would have been presumptuous that Joseph might make, of the Son of God, such an adoption that suggests subjection"). The very idea that Jesus might be subjected to a mere human being offends such critics. Gerson does not adhere to this view but affirms that the child's obedience to his parent does not constitute subjection, and that Jesus's adoption by Joseph provided another manifestation of the former's sublime humility. Moreover, from a functional perspective Joseph "accompli toute la cure que bon et loyal et saige pere peut et doit faire a son vray fils" (7.1.66; accomplished all the care that a good and loyal and wise father can and should perform for his true son), and in turn Jesus "honora Joseph comme son pere, son nutriteur, son conduiseur et deffenseur, son docteur et instructeur" (7.1.66; honored Joseph as his father, his provider, his guide and protector, his professor and instructor). Gerson posits a similar relationship between the figure of the university and the king, one in which the duties associated with the father-daughter relationship are incumbent upon both parties. The *fille du roy* is bound to honor and serve her father, while the king is obliged to protect and care for his "daughter."

Throughout his sermons Gerson insists upon the genealogical bond that unites university and king. He affirms that loyalty and filial gratitude prompt and justify the university's intervention in public affairs, for the university "considere et scet bien … que son bien, son avenement, son honneur, sa garde et sa protection despend du roy" (7.2.1138; considers and knows well … that her well-being, her propriety, her honor, her safekeeping, and her protection depend upon the king). This metaphor suggests a parallel between the king as father and the subject as child that reflects an established tradition in late-medieval political thought. In Nicole Oresme's translation and commentary of Aristotle's *Politics*, carried out during the reign of Charles V, Oresme affirms that "le pere est comme roy, et le roy comme pere" (the father is like a king, the king like

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40 See Rosemary Drage Hale, "Joseph as Mother: Adaptation and Appropriation in the Construction of Male Virtue," in *Medieval Mothering*, ed. John Carmi Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler (New York: Garland, 1996), 102. Gerson wrote two vernacular sermons entitled *Considérations sur Saint Joseph* (c. 1413–14) and preached the sermon *Jacob autem genuit* in an effort to have a new feast day honoring the marriage of Joseph and Mary recognized by the church. During the years of the Council of Constance and his later exile, Gerson worked on his epic poem of salvation, the *Josephina*. On Gerson's dedication to Joseph, see Brian Patrick McGuire, "Patterns of Male Affectivity in the Late Middle Ages," in *Varieties of Devotion in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Susan Karant-Nunn (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 163–78.

a father).[41] Accordingly, the university speaks "comme fille tres obeissant au pere et du pere, comme subiecte loyalle de son souverain et droicturier seigneur" (7.2.1137; as a very obedient daughter to her father and about her father, like a loyal subject of her sovereign and rightful lord). In her recognition of and subservience to royal authority, the king's imagined daughter furnishes a model of conduct that the king's actual kin would do well to observe.

From a political perspective, the relative power of the king's kin was measured largely in terms of their proximity in degrees of kinship to the king.[42] For one thing, close kinship to the king determined the membership of the royal council that advised the queen during the absences of Charles VI. After the death of Philippe de Bourgogne, the king's most powerful uncle, in 1404, Philippe's son Jean sans Peur sought to fill his father's place on the council. However, as the king's cousin rather than his uncle, and in the face of Louis d'Orléans's fierce opposition, Jean's membership was not a given. The late summer and fall of 1405 saw the kingdom on the brink of civil war. Jean sans Peur came to Paris in August 1405 in order to swear homage to Charles VI for the county of Flanders, but he came at the head of a considerable armed force. This provoked the flight from Paris of Louis d'Orléans, the queen, the dauphin, and the other royal children, who sought refuge in Melun. After a tense standoff lasting several months, the queen and other members of the royal family succeeded in reconciling the dukes, and *Vivat rex* was pronounced in the context of this uneasy peace. Some two months later, Jean's place on the council was secured by a royal ordinance.

The fact that the king's council was made up of members of his family should theoretically have made them especially dedicated to king and kingdom, yet it is clear that many of those in Charles's entourage were more devoted to their own advancement than to the protection of the king's authority. The multiple ordinances issued during the early years of the fifteenth century concerning the composition and powers of the council testify to the struggles being enacted over participation on the council and the responsibilities of individual members and the council as a body. Despite the political authority conferred by consanguinity, Gerson and his public were confronted with the manifest failure of biological kinship to establish or to maintain peace within the kingdom of France.[43]

I contend that it is in response to this failure that Gerson endows the king with spiritual kin more faithful, dedicated, and selfless than his own brother, uncles, or cousins—the University of Paris. By casting the university in the role of royal daughter, Gerson stresses the university's subservience to king and crown. Daughters could not usurp their fathers or compromise the purity of the royal bloodline since, as the famous Salic law declared, they were excluded from the transmission of royal power. Like Charlemagne's daughters, who, as Janet Nelson has shown, provided the emperor with information, perfect obedience, and unofficial influence over court factions, all while "offering no rivalry as potential heirs to formal power, nor producing offspring

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41 Nicole Oresme, *Commentaire de Nicole Oresme sur le livre de "Politiques" d'Aristote*, ed. A. D. Menut (Philadelphia: Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, 1970), 71. In *Vivat rex* Gerson cites Aristotle to the effect that in a monarchy the king is "comme le pere aux enfans" (7.2.1164).

42 See Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société*, 161–75.

43 Or between France and England for that matter. The Hundred Years' War was fundamentally a family conflict, born of a contested succession or inheritance and fought between cousins.

with claims to a share in rulership or patrimony," the University of Paris is the perfect royal child, one who neither challenges nor rivals her father's authority.[44]

Gerson's vision of filial conduct was not limited to obedience, however. The university carried out both "internal" functions, such as collecting and preserving texts, as well as reading, interpreting, and writing them, and "external" ones, including preaching, advising the king on spiritual matters, and furnishing the royal and papal bureaucracies with educated servants.[45] Yet, Gerson's desire to effect material improvements in the lives of the French subjects moves him to attribute an even more active role to the university than these "external" functions suggest. The knowledge preserved and promulgated by the university masters, if not employed to bring about positive material and political change, is of little value. In *Vivat rex* Gerson asks rhetorically, "Que vouldroit science sans operacion? On ne aprent pas seulement pour scavoir, mais pour monstrer et ouvrer" (7.2.1145). (What good is knowledge without action? One does not learn simply to know but to enact and to work.) Gerson believes that the knowledge represented and imparted by the university must provide the foundation for actions that will improve the spiritual lives and the material conditions of the king, nobles, and subjects of France. This conviction forms the basis for his claim that the university's duty should take the shape of direct involvement in the administration of France and concrete efforts to confront the challenges facing the kingdom.

Though the university's obligation to intervene in the affairs of the king, queen, and princes of the realm was perfectly obvious to Gerson, it was not so clear to certain of his contemporaries, who might have preferred that the university masters limit their activities to theological inquiry and teaching or to charitable works. Louis d'Orléans once proclaimed that since knights do not intervene in the affairs of clerics, clerics ought not to be involved in those of nobles and knights.[46] Gerson alludes to this episode in *Vivat rex* when he imagines the demand of the university's opponents: "de quoy se veult elle [i.e., the university] entremettre et mesler; voise estudier et regarder sez livrez" (7.2.1145). (In what does she want to meddle and insert herself? Let her go study and look at her books.) With all due respect to his noble interlocutors, Gerson refuses quite firmly to stick to his books. Instead, he exploits the notion of filial duty in *Vivat rex* in order to establish a public sphere of influence for the university.

Vivat rex was preached on November 7, 1405, in the hotel of the queen (though she herself was not present), before the royal counselors and prelates, as well as the kings of Navarre and Sicily (both second cousins of the king), the royal uncles, the Dukes of Berry and Bourbon, and the king's brother and cousin, the Dukes of Orléans and Bourgogne.[47] The presence of the king's real kinsmen at this sermon provides added resonance to Gerson's many references to the "*fille du roy*."

"Vivat rex, vivat rex, vivat rex," Gerson's sermon begins, "vive corporelment, vive civilement et politiquement, vive espirituellement et pardurablement" (7.2.1137). (Long live the king! May he live physically, civilly, and politically, may he live spiritually and everlastingly.) This salutation is voiced by the chancellor Gerson, who presents himself as the spokesman for the "la fille du roy, la mere des estudez, le beau cler soleil de France voir de toute chrestiente, l'Universite de Paris pour laquelle nous sommes icy envoyez en la presence tres honnourable de vous" (7.2.1137; the daughter

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44 Janet Nelson, "Women at the Court of Charlemagne: A Case of Monstrous Regiment?," in *Medieval Queenship*, ed. John Carmi Parsons (Stroud, UK: Sutton, 1994), 59.

45 For a discussion of the university's internal and external functions, see Hobbins, "The Schoolman as Public Intellectual," 1310.

46 See Mourin, *Jean Gerson*, 171n10; and Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société*, 166–71.

47 The text of the sermon was diffused in written form as well. See Mourin, *Jean Gerson*, 169ff.

of the king, the mother of study, the fair clear sun of France, indeed of all of Christianity, the University of Paris, on whose behalf we have been sent here, into your very honorable presence). The chancellor punctuates his sermon with continual reminders that he speaks at the behest and on behalf of the university in order to insist upon the objectivity, good intentions, and utility of his speech. At one point he asks his public to "tournes s'il vous plaist ung peu les yeulx de vostre consideracion envers la fille du roy et les ostez de moy" (7.2.1144; turn a bit, if you please, the eyes of your contemplation toward the daughter of the king and remove them from me). Gerson constantly places the university at the center of his discourse, paraphrasing her words, explaining her position, and staging her repeated proclamation "*vivat rex*."

The phrase "*vivat rex*," repeated throughout the sermon, regulates its rhythm from start to finish like the tolling of a bell. Moreover its repetition, always attributed to the university, places and maintains the *fille du roy* in a relationship of harmony, rather than antagonism, with her illustrious public, who clearly cannot dispute the authority of this scriptural passage or the praiseworthiness of the sentiment *vivat rex*. On the contrary, since all power comes from God, and since the king of France is especially beloved of God, a person would be both "scismatique et sedicieux qui ne se consentiroit a ceste priere et a ce beau cry que faict tousiours la fille du roy, sa tres loialle et tres devote, vivat rex" (7.2.1140; schismatic and seditious who would not consent to this prayer and to this fair cry that the daughter of the king, his very loyal and very devout {daughter,} makes, long live the king). Gerson makes the king and his interests the focal point of the sermon, thereby allowing the university to transcend any partisan quarreling and compelling the agreement of her public.

In *Vivat rex* Gerson portrays the university as a model of obedience for his listeners. His careful definition of loyalty, and of what actions constitute the university's duties, allows him to present the forceful denunciation of disunity, profligacy, and injustice contained in this sermon as a moral imperative and a sign of the university's love for her father. The university is the clear eye and the mirror of the kingdom, able both to see into all corners of the land and to show what is to be done. If she did not speak out, "ou seroit la loyaulte de la fille subiecte au pere?" (7.2.1145; where would be the loyalty of the daughter subject to her father?). Because the university is depicted as standing outside, or above, the partisan conflicts that divide the kingdom, she is able to perceive and proclaim the truth, and this is her principal function. "Ce service singulier doit la fille du roy a lui et a tous les seigneurs: plus bel service ne pourroit elle faire que de leur monstrer constamment la verite de la foy, sainne doctrine es bonnes meurs" (7.2.1155; This unique service the daughter of the king owes to him and to all lords: she could not perform a more fair service than to constantly show them the truth of the faith, holy doctrine, and good morals). Thus, the sermon itself is evidence of the university's faithfulness and adherence to her filial duty. The university has other obligations as well. She is to discuss and combat the sins that injure the body politic, protect the king from the false and misleading speech of flatterers, and advise him on matters touching the faith. In so defining filial duty, Gerson places his detractors in a rhetorically untenable position. They must affirm either that daughters need not be loyal or that the university's obligations do not include speaking the truth and explaining the faith. Gerson's allegorical representation of the university as the daughter of the king, one who speaks precisely because she is loyal and obedient, allows Gerson to claim not just the possibility but the responsibility of the university to participate in the affairs of the kingdom. In this manner, *Vivat rex* exploits conventional ideas about filial duty in order to carve out a political role for the university. In Gerson's

sermons the university becomes an institutional body capable of advising the king and ensuring the just administration of the kingdom, especially when the king himself is "absent."

If in direct terms the university is the daughter of the king, she is also inscribed in a long and illustrious genealogy. In *Contre Charles de Savoisy* (1404) the university proclaims,

> je suis celle qui en Adam fus premierement inspiree en sa nouvelle creation; je suis celle qui depuis par successions feu fondee et renouvelee en Egypte par Abraham et autres filz de Noe, puis feus transposee a Athenes et nommee Pallas ou Minerve; puis vins a Rome quant la chevallerie y seignorisoit. Puis par Charles Magne le grand, feus plantee a grans labeurs en France en la cité de Paris.

> I am she who was first inspired in Adam at the moment of his creation; I am she who since, by succession, was founded and renewed in Egypt by Abraham and the other sons of Noah, then I was moved to Athens and named Pallas or Minerva; then I came to Rome when chivalry reigned there. Then by Charlemagne the Great I was established with great effort in France in the city of Paris. (7.1.329)[48]

In this remarkable genealogy Gerson combines the trope of *translatio studii*, used to explain the movement over space and across time of wisdom and culture (here from Greece, to Rome, to France), with a second, distinct but related tradition, concerned with the preservation and transmission of knowledge after the Flood. According to this tradition, there was some foreknowledge that God intended to punish his creatures with a fire or a flood, and so provisions were made to record knowledge in a form—most often graven on two columns of different materials—that would survive either eventuality. After the Flood the columns were recovered by one or several of Noah's sons, sometimes intact and sometimes damaged, and knowledge spread and increased. In at least some versions the columns are rediscovered in Egypt by Abraham, who is said to be the teacher of Plato, who in turn is the master of Aristotle. The nature of the knowledge preserved after the Flood varies from one text to another, with the invention of music, astronomy, metallurgy, writing, the mechanical arts, and the liberal arts attributed variously to the children of Adam, the descendants of Seth, and the descendants of one or more of the sons of Noah.[49]

As Gerson would have it, *sapientia* is represented, indeed incarnated, by an institution, the university, whose creation was virtually coterminous with that of Adam, and that integrates all human knowledge, from biblical to classical. Moreover, the important political role assigned to the university by Gerson maps onto the conjoined ideas of *translatio studii et imperii*, which place in parallel the transmission of knowledge and of political power, the reproduction and succession of royal bodies and of bodies of knowledge. Like the king who never dies, the university succeeds (to) herself from one generation to the next.[50] The filiation between king and university

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[48] A similar version of the university's origins is contained in *Vivat rex*. See 7.2.1138.

[49] On this tradition, see Jean-Marie Fritz, "*Translatio studii et déluge: La légende des colonnes de marbre et de brique,*" *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale, Xe–XIIe siècles* 47, no. 2 (2004): 127–46; A. G. Jongkees, "*Translatio studii*: Les avatars d'un theme médiéval," in *Miscellanea mediaevalia in memoriam Jan Frederik Niermeyer* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1967), 41–51; and Serge Lusignan, "L'Université de Paris comme composante de l'identité du royaume de France: Étude sur le thème de la *translatio studii*," in *Identité régionale et conscience nationale en France et en Allemagne du Moyen Âge à l'époque modern*, ed. Rainer Babel and Jean-Marie Moeglin (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1997).

[50] See Jacques Krynen, "'Le mort saisit le vif': Genèse médiévale du principe d'instantanéité de la succession royale française," *Journal des savants*, July–December 1984, 187–221.

suggests that the latter is, like the dauphin, simultaneously descended from and "une mesme personne avecquez" (7.2.1147; one and the same person with) the king. The university thus serves as a potential repository of and heir to the king's political authority, but one who neither inherits nor threatens in any way the literal, biological lines of succession that ensure the transmission of political power from one generation to the next. Hers may be imagined as a procreative body, but not one that produces rivals to royal power. Unlike the threatening exogamy of real royal daughters, whose sexuality and reproductive potential, as we have seen, were anxiously curtailed by Salic law, the university's procreative powers are turned entirely inward and used to connect the king to the French subjects and to the university masters and students. What the university (re) produces and transmits is a culture of perfect loyalty to the king and a cadre of royal servants. This allegorical good daughter engenders a group of very real people, ideal royal counselors who unite learning with dedication to king and crown.

In *Vivat rex* Gerson depicts the university as a kind of bride—or at least sexual partner—of the kingdom, one whose mystical and collective body is capable of parturition. The influx of students and masters from all parts of the kingdom is likened to a "semence vertueuse deriviee de tout le corps de la chose publique" (a virtuous seed derived from the entire body of the public realm) that gestates "ou ventre de l'Universite pour naistre gens de toute perfection" (in the womb of the university to bear people of every perfection) (7.2.1146). In this remarkable image Gerson suppresses the heterogeneity of the University of Paris, its division into four nations and as many faculties, in order to suggest that the "corps de la chose publique" corresponds to the kingdom of France, itself depicted as a body whose generative force resides in its prospective or future students and masters.[51] The university, in turn, is a womb from which are born ideal royal servants, ones who combine learning with devotion to the *chose publique*. The university's fertile female body, joined in sexual union with the sperm derived from the kingdom, produces new generations of "gens de toute perfection." By producing new generations of royal servants dedicated to sustaining and reproducing the structures of royal power, the university helps to ensure the reproduction and continuity of the political authority of the kings of France.

It is important to remember that Jean de Montreuil and Jean Gerson were themselves both "sons" of the university, and indeed, their participation in the early fifteenth-century "quarrel of the *Roman de la rose*" projects a distinct aura of sibling rivalry. Jean de Montreuil, whose now-lost treatise on the *Roman de la rose* is said to have begun the quarrel, praised the work and recognized its author as a poetic genius.[52] When the poet Christine de Pizan denounced the misogyny of the *Roman de la rose*, claiming that no artistic or intellectual benefit could accrue from a text that harmed women, Montreuil and his allies replied that the work's misogyny, acknowledged or imagined, had no effect on its value as a poem. Gerson, in contrast, denounced the *Rose*'s morally subversive and dangerous use of allegory. As part of his response to the work and to the positions assumed by Jean de Montreuil and his fellows, Jean Gerson composed his own allegorical dream vision–cum–courtroom drama, in which Eloquence Theologique defended the cause of Chastete against Fol Amoureux.

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[51] On the effect of the Great Schism of the West upon the internationality of the University of Paris, see Alan Bernstein, *Pierre d'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair: University and Chancellor of Paris at the Beginning of the Great Schism* (Leiden: Brill, 1978).

[52] See Christine de Pisan, Jean Gerson, Jean de Montreuil, Gontier Col, and Pierre Col, *Le débat sur "Le Roman de la Rose,"* ed. and trans. Eric Hicks (Paris: Champion, 1977); as well as Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, "Jean Gerson and the Debate on the *Romance of the Rose*," in McGuire, *Companion to Jean Gerson*, 317–56.

It is worth rehearsing the positions assumed by our two Jeans in what might appear to be a rather-anodyne literary squabble, because their respective stances prefigure quite strikingly the approaches they would later take in their attempts to resolve the problems facing the kingdom of France. For Jean de Montreuil, women can simply be bracketed. Misogyny, as he would have it, has no bearing on poetic genius, even as the pursuit and sexual conquest of a young woman, imagined in allegorical terms, forms the basis for the *Roman de la rose*. Jean Gerson, in contrast, provides corrective rewritings of the *Rose*, complete with positive female allegories that are instrumental to his readers' moral improvement but that have little to do with actual women.

A final point of convergence between the works of these important figures may be observed (though not developed, within the confines of the present essay) in the significance that each accords the figure of Charlemagne. Touted as the individual responsible both for the confirmation of the Salic law of the French and for the establishment of the university in Paris, Charlemagne serves as an essential foundational or father figure, one whose presence lends authority to law and letters alike and, by extension, to the writings of Jean de Montreuil and Jean Gerson. As both the great emperor and these royal daughters show us, the political troubles that marked the reign of Charles VI, indeed *all* politics, are those of the family. It is thus perhaps to be expected that it is likewise within the structures of the family—be it real or allegorical—that late-medieval intellectuals sought solutions.   A