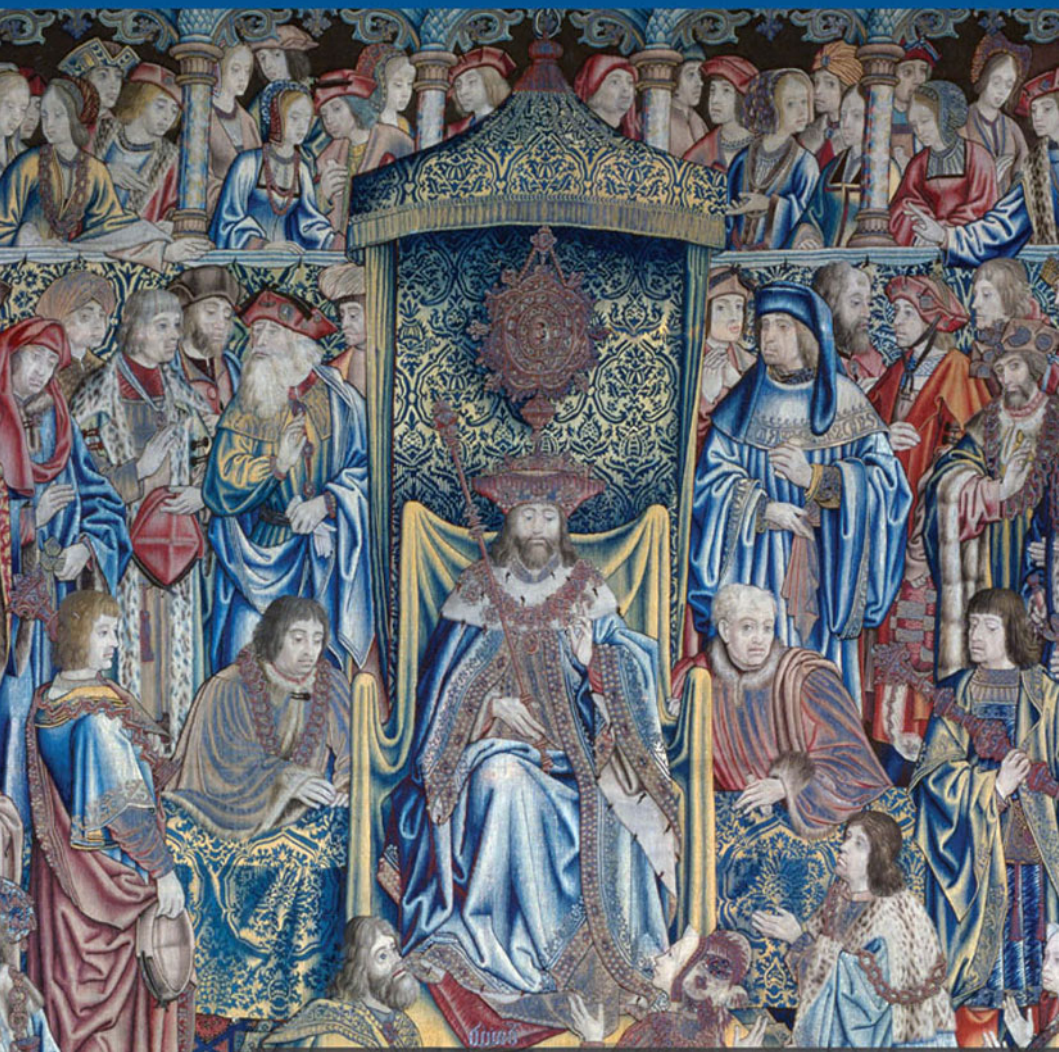
Genders and Sexualities in History



Jean Gerson and Gender

Rhetoric and Politics in Fifteenth-Century France

NANCY MCLOUGHLIN

Genders and Sexualities in History
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Jean Gerson and Gender focuses upon one of the most important and influential writers of the late Middle Ages. Jean Gerson was Chancellor of the University of Paris, a key figure in the reform movement of the fifteenth century, and a prolific author of both learned and popular tracts. McLoughlin's imaginative and original monograph traces Gerson's use of gendered imagery and language in the fraught context of fifteenth-century politics. She demonstrates not only that what has previously been seen as a personal strand of misogyny in his writing was in fact linked to wider issues of political discourse, but also how his use of gendered rhetoric shifted over time, with wider unintended consequences. Her book presents not only an important new reading of this particular figure, but provides an exemplary model for taking 'gender' seriously as a structuring principle in political discourse more widely.

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Rhetoric and Politics in Fifteenth-Century France

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For My Parents

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An abbreviated form of the argument made in Chapter 4 will appear in my article, "Silencing the Widow with a Prayer for Peace: Gerson, Valentina Visconti, and the Body of Princess Isabelle (Paris, 1404–1408)," in a forthcoming special edition of *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae*. I am grateful to the *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae* for permission to expand upon this article in the book.

Introduction: Gendering Gerson

Jean Gerson and Gender provides a crucial corrective to current treatments of one of the most influential late medieval intellectuals: the theologian, court preacher, university chancellor, and church reformer, Jean Gerson (d. 1429). Gerson left behind an impressive but somewhat enigmatic legacy that provided foundational contributions to two historical developments: the promotion of rational and just government, and the development of the European concept of the witch. By applying gender as a critical lens for understanding Gerson's political strategies, this book brings together these two strands of scholarship. I argue that Gerson relied upon gendered language and misogynist polemics as a means of authenticating his interventions into church and royal politics. For this reason, and for the central role that Gerson played in political, religious, and intellectual histories of his period, examining in detail the forces that encouraged him to employ misogynist arguments and shaped the means by which he employed them promises to shed light upon the late medieval and early modern persistent belief that intellectual and political authority were best exercised by men.[1]

Gerson, moreover, needs such attention because, with the notable exceptions of Dyan Elliott and Nancy Caciola, the majority of historians who study his work attribute his well-known misogynist polemics to either his personal feelings about women or the general misogynist attitude of the medieval clergy in a manner that suggests that Gerson's use of gendered language is only relevant to our understanding of his personal psychology or the history of women.[2] As a result, the relationship between Gerson's misogynist polemics and influential political and theological reforms remains unexamined in a manner that confirms the mistaken impression that gendered hierarchies and discourses do not inform and are not reproduced within his writings on seemingly

non-gendered topics, such as representative government and equitable justice. Such interpretations perpetuates a devaluing of women's voices, as well as any ideas, institutions, or subsets of the population that are gendered female, because they reproduce the same artificial division between the female sphere and the world of important ideas and events that Gerson himself sought to enforce. At the same time, they naturalize the relationship between misogyny and the medieval in a way that diminishes the contributions that medieval women made to their worlds. Significantly, even feminist critiques of Gerson participate in this devaluation when they portray Gerson's misogyny as relevant only to the history of women, ignoring his need to synthesize the powerful gender discourses that were shaping his environment in order to establish his institutional, political, and religious authority.

In this sense, Gerson provides a perfect case study for demonstrating the need for medievalists to adopt the most radical aspect of Joan Scott's treatment of gender as a critical lens for understanding history, namely to apply gender analysis to the study of the relationship between male institutions. Although Dyan Elliott has outlined the extremely good reasons why medievalists have generally avoided this aspect of Scott's theory, as Scott herself argues and Gerson's case demonstrates, we cannot understand what forces drive the perpetuation of misogyny and shape its effects without employing gender as a research lens for fully integrating women's history with history as it is more generally understood. Such an integration is all the more important when the misogynist polemics in question, like those employed by Gerson, seek to limit the authority enjoyed by some women by aggressively misrepresenting the status quo. Reading such polemics from a perspective that focuses only on the history of women exaggerates the extent to which such polemics may have represented lived realities.[3]

As a corrective to this misperception, in *Jean Gerson and Gender* my goal has been to explore the ways in which Gerson used gendered language within a larger rhetorical context. Gerson did not invent the misogynist polemics he employed and he did not employ them in all instances. I thus aimed to understand the decision-making process that caused him selectively to deploy misogynist discourses and other gendered language. As part of this process, I traced what I determined to be the interdependent relationship between Gerson's rhetorical strategies for promoting the authority of the University of Paris as an effective agent of political reform, and his rhetorical reliance upon misogynist discourses that undermined the authority claims of women. Rather than looking to Gerson's personality or immediate political goals to explain his misogynist arguments, therefore, I investigated Gerson's

epistemological and rhetorical context. I also read Gerson's authentication strategies in dialogue with established and well-known classical and medieval discourses about gender.

This method has been enormously fruitful. I determined that Gerson carefully and purposefully, and encouraged by contemporary rhetorical strategies and context, mirrored and co-opted the authentication strategies of pious ascetic women and royal women while simultaneously maintaining his male privilege as an institutionally supported, professional intellectual. In the process, he frequently attributed particular types of knowledge and authority traditionally associated with women to the male theologians of the University of Paris. In other words, Gerson found himself competing with authoritative women for the same rhetorical niche and acted in a manner that would allow him to win that competition. But Gerson's gendered rhetoric has yet further significance, for he wielded it in an attempt to interject the results of rational, expert consensus into the violent factional politics that governed late medieval France. And while Gerson's writings and sermons suggest that he actually preferred to authenticate the university's truth claims with reference to the learned deliberations of the scholars that produced them, his decision to employ traditionally female rhetorical strategies was a sign that such academic authority was not always respected at court. Only by mirroring and co-opting the long-accepted authority of pious female ascetics and royal women could he authenticate the university's political interventions.[4]

In this respect, my reading of Gerson's gendered language reconciles two seemingly contradictory aspects of Gerson's thought: his reputation as a defender of the oppressed and his infamous misogynist polemics. It also demonstrates how Gerson's feminization of the University of Paris and attendant professionalization of female persuasion contributed to suspicions about women exercising authority on the basis of either their aristocratic rank or their spiritual experiences. For this reason, mapping Gerson's rhetorical deployment of gender not only elucidates the evolution of particular historically significant misogynist discourses, it also provides us with an instructive perspective for understanding both the contested development of academic authority in late medieval Europe, and the political significance of royal women and religiously accomplished women.

Gerson as a means of gendering intellectual history

This study of Gerson's co-option of female persuasion makes a crucial contribution to both intellectual history and gender studies by revealing the extensive overlap between the authority exercised by royal or

pious women and the authority exercised by medieval universities. Furthermore, it argues that in his attempt to distance his own persuasive efforts from those undertaken by the women with whom he competed, Gerson masculinized and professionalized these modes of female authority. This research thus demonstrates the centrality of gender as an analytical tool for the study of intellectual history.

Gendered language runs through the core of Gerson's and other medieval authors' writings about truth, spirituality, and politics because, as Joan Scott indicated was possible in her landmark 1986 article "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," medieval intellectuals commonly used gender to discuss power relations.[5] They did so as part of their efforts to understand their relationship to an all-powerful God, to imagine alternative modes of social interaction, and to make what they knew relevant in spheres of influence that did not necessarily value intellectual knowledge.[6] They were encouraged to do so by the fact that informal and extra-hierarchical authority was widely understood to be gendered female, based upon affection rather than reason, and trustworthy to the extent that it could prove it was innocent of power.[7]

Since the exact meaning of the term gender remains the subject of much confusion and debate, I would like to emphasize that I am using this term exactly as Scott originally intended. As she explained in a recent retrospective of the complex ways the term has been interpreted since she first called for a critical approach to gender history:

> Gender provided a way of investigating the specific forms taken by the social organization of sexual difference; it did not treat them as variations on an unchanging theme of patriarchal domination. Instead it required careful reading of concrete manifestations, attention to the different meanings the same words might have. "Gender" might always refer to the ways in which relationships between men and women were conceived, but neither the relationships nor the "men" and "women" were taken to be the same in all instances. The point was to interrogate all of the terms and so to historicize them.[8]

Scott's concise definition is useful because it cautions against viewing all medieval men as equal to each other, notes that discourses about sexual difference are socially significant, and emphasizes the fact that ideas about masculinity, femininity, androgyny, and other forms of sexual difference encountered in historical sources were defined and deployed differently in each historical and cultural context. In this sense, by exploring Gerson's copious recourse to gendered language

in his political sermons and treatises on possession, I am not imposing modern feminist concerns on Gerson's arguments. Instead, I am demonstrating how anachronistic it is to ignore the complex gendered hierarchies Gerson had to negotiate in order to win the right to address kings and church councils. If gender had not been central to medieval understandings of truth and power, the clergy would not have been celibate and the meaning of that celibacy would not have been so hotly contested.[9] In this sense, this book is as much about the translation of academic authority to political contexts as it is about the role played by gender discourses in the construction of academic authority.

Despite the multiple ways in which the systematic study of Gerson's use of gendered language promises to enrich our understanding of medieval thought, politics, and gender, such a study has not been undertaken until now. The reasons for this are twofold.

Firstly, as Dyan Elliott explains in her recent review essay on the state of gender studies among specialists in medieval Europe, medievalists have been reluctant to use Scott's theory of gender to examine the relationships between male institutions. This is in part because the history of women is still in a crucial building phase, with so much work necessary to uncover the lives of medieval women – who remain largely invisible in the historical record. The application of gender analysis to the European Middle Ages has produced some crucial studies in medieval masculinity, but these studies draw the attention of historians back to the history of men.[10] In this book, however, I apply gender analysis to Gerson's rhetoric for the purpose of illustrating how the activities of royal women and charismatic ascetic women were not as separated from the work done in medieval universities as has been thought. In the process, I argue that we cannot fully understand medieval thinkers or medieval ideas without looking at them through the analytical lens provided by gender. By exploring the multiple interactions among Gerson's ideas about truth, his gendered authentication strategies, the actions of royal and visionary women, and discourses critiquing women's authority, this book demonstrates the centrality of gender studies and women's history to the understanding of the histories of politics and ideas. This recognition of the interconnectedness of gender and other areas of historical study is a vital corrective at a time when programs focusing on women's histories or gendered identities are being actively marginalized and cut from university budgets.[11]

Secondly, the scholarly debate about Gerson's use of gendered language has to date advanced in a different direction. Since the pious ascetic women Gerson critiqued were some of the only non-noble

medieval women who were able to act influentially within their societies, and who were thus becoming historically visible, modern scholars have found Gerson's opposition to their authority and spirituality striking.[12] At the same time, however, there has been a flourishing interest in Gerson's contributions to academic freedom, church reform, natural rights, pastoral care, and mystical theology.[13] As a result, different groups of scholars have been building seemingly irreconcilable portrayals of Gerson simultaneously. According to one portrayal, he was one of the most compassionate, courageous, and careful reformers of late medieval Europe.[14] According to another, he was one of the most destructive medieval clerical critics of women's character, intellectual abilities, and religious devotion.[15]

Gerson's reputation as a misogynist does indeed seem to conflict with his reputation as a compassionate and forward-thinking religious and political reformer. He seems almost saintly because of the humility with which he approached the pursuit of theological knowledge and the concern he expressed for the day-to-day physical and emotional needs of the laity.[16] He appears nothing short of heroic for accusing the French king of cannibalism as a means of denouncing the unfair taxes and extortions that humble people suffered in France during the Hundred Years War. This aggressive defense of the oppressed makes him familiar to modern audiences as an individual who promoted policies that seem compatible with modern ideals of social justice. Had his reform plans regarding the payment of troops, the expenditures of princes, and the distribution of justice been enacted, many of the most lamentable cruelties of Ancien Régime France would have stopped well before the advent of the French Revolution.[17]

Furthermore, as a defender of academic freedom, deliberative consensus, natural rights, and representative government, Gerson seems almost recognizably modern.[18] As a skilled orator, whose works effortlessly wove together citations from scripture, classical literature, secular philosophy, law, medicine, and common French proverbs, he instantly wins the respect of anyone who spends enough time reading his work simply on account of the breadth and creativity of his intellect.[19] When his intellectual stature is compared to his institutional position, the publication options available in his time, and the political tensions that plagued Europe, it becomes clear that he was incredibly savvy about writing arguments that would resonate with his audience and also about making sure that those arguments reached the right audiences.[20] Certainly the intellectually rich content of Gerson's arguments explains in part why his works were so earnestly collected and translated in the

fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and why his writings were some of the first printed once the printing press was invented.[21] As Daniel Hobbins has demonstrated, Gerson also wrote quickly, in a timely manner about current events, and made sure that he brought his works to ecumenical church councils where they could be disseminated to an international audience.[22]

For all of these reasons, scholars who focus on Gerson's extensive learning, apparent commitment to defending the less powerful, and determination to disseminate his ideas tend to overlook or excuse the fact that Gerson is also known to many modern scholars as one of the most aggressive misogynists of the medieval period. Gerson's most discussed misogynist polemics criticized pious women who claimed to be recipients of divine revelation and as a result were sometimes able to influence the most pressing political decisions of their day. But Gerson implied that most of these women believed they had these encounters with God because they were insane, possessed by the devil, or desired an excuse to spend time alone with their male confessors.[23] In addition to his criticisms of ascetic women visionaries, Gerson also worked hard to subordinate the Virgin Mary to her husband Saint Joseph in the devotional practices of late medieval Europeans.[24] He also explicitly stated on more than one occasion that women were not fit to teach or rule.[25] In doing so, he expressed the misogynist prejudices that were current among university scholars.[26]

It is this juxtaposition of Gerson's formative intellectual contributions to many of the most cherished ideas of our modern world with his aggressive misogyny that creates an irreconcilable portrait of Gerson in the writings of modern scholars. This is not to say that Gerson does not make sense from the perspective of his own time and position as a medieval university theologian who attempted to influence royal politics. Rather, the seemingly enigmatic or irreconcilable nature of these two sides of Gerson represents a blind spot in modern scholarship.

This blind spot arises from the mistaken perspective that Gerson's frequent rhetorical dependence upon established discourses about gender transparently reflects his views about some or all women. This is significant because if Gerson's misogynist polemics really reflect his response to individual women, women who tried to teach, or women as a category, then they also might be read as reflecting his character as a person in such a way that would demand a revision of his reputation as a champion of the oppressed. Noting the controversial nature of the ascetic female visionaries he critiqued, his defenders have been quick to demonstrate that Gerson embraced the example of a companionate

marriage in both his treatment of the Holy Family and in his confession manuals. He also advocated forcefully for pastoral reforms that would allow parish priests to better meet the needs of their parishioners, especially their female parishioners. And perhaps most significantly, he defended women in the controversy over the *Roman de la Rose* and may have even collaborated with Christine de Pizan. Indeed, the details he provided in his advice to his pious sisters and his advice to parish priests do support the idea that his obsessive concern with the material and spiritual aspects of women's lives reflects his pastoral desire to address all of the practical problems that arose in the day-to-day life of preachers working in a time of upheaval and crisis. To the extent that his ideas empowered the clerical hierarchy and naturalized the patriarchal family, they merely reflected the cultural climate in which he operated.[27]

For Gerson specialists, these explanations, which hardly touch upon the structural forces that encourage misogynist thought or the ways in which gender functioned in medieval intellectual arguments, have closed the debate. Gerson's misogyny has been noted and contained, freeing up the conversation to return to his other more illustrious accomplishments or to the fine details of his theological arguments and reflections. And yet such a position is difficult to maintain due to the fact that scholars of women's history continue to uncover the ways in which he contributed to powerful discourses that denigrated women.[28]

One of my primary goals in *Jean Gerson and Gender* is to reopen this debate, and thus to reconcile the two scholarly Gersons and use the resulting synthesis as a means of gendering intellectual history with implications for how we evaluate the gendered authentication strategies of medieval, and indeed post-medieval, thinkers. In particular, I address three interrelated issues that will improve our understanding of Gerson as a thinker, his institutional and political situation, and the ways in which his misogyny interacted in powerful and crucial ways with the production of seemingly unrelated ideas, such as ideas about academic freedom, representative government, and natural rights. These issues are: (1) the origins and afterlife of Gerson's misogynist statements; (2) the significant role that gendered discourses played in his attempts to promote the authority of university theologians; and (3) the ways in which Gerson's misogynist discourses obscure the important roles medieval royal and visionary women played in late medieval intellectual and political developments.

The origins and afterlife of Gerson's misogynist statements

Gerson has caught the attention of feminist scholars of medieval women's spirituality because of the aggressive tenor and long afterlife of his misogynist polemics. These scholars consistently identify Gerson's works as playing a foundational role in both the demise of women's spiritual authority and the development of the early modern concept of the witch.[29] This book contributes new evidence to the argument that Gerson made a crucial contribution to the early modern concept of the witch and adds to it the assertion that Gerson's works also contributed to early modern distrust of female rulers and intellectuals.[30] For this reason, investigating how and why Gerson formulated his misogynist arguments contributes to a better understanding of the processes that work to gender intellectual authority as primarily male.

Exploring the contextual factors that shaped the development of Gerson's misogynist discourses, moreover, is all the more important because these discourses are particularly insidious. Gerson attempted to insert the theologian's expertise between contemplative women and their most private experiences, and between aristocratic women and their families. He so thoroughly discounted any intellectual, spiritual, or political ability on the part of women that to the extent that he was successful, their voices and concerns were completely silenced and demonized. Furthermore, while his critiques of women visionaries have received more attention from modern historians, my book demonstrates that the particular way Gerson attempted to co-opt the informal authority of aristocratic women implicitly associated women's authority with all that was factional, war-driven, and rapacious about medieval governments while simultaneously aligning male theological expertise with the centralization of royal power and the just application of government.

For this reason, one of the main goals of the book is to explain how Gerson's colonization of women's private space and family relations came into being by exploring the development of Gerson's gendered discourses in dialogue with the external factors that helped shape them. Mapping the development of Gerson's misogynist discourses, which evolved significantly over time and in response to particular political challenges, demonstrates both the extent to which misogynist ideas are shaped by a given society (rather than reflecting the ideas of individuals) and the fact that these ideas gain traction because they play a central role in the constitution of political, intellectual, and religious authority. Instead of asking what Gerson's misogynist polemics tell

us about his character, this book asks what the development of these polemics tells us about the forces that create and sustain misogyny. In this manner, Gerson's successful use of misogynist rhetoric provides us with a window into the gendered nature of his rhetorical and political context.[31]

Role of Gerson's gendered discourses in promoting university theologians

Connecting the development of ideas to events and institutional situations also allows us to see how opposing truth claims compete in the political sphere and the kinds of work individuals have to undergo in order to translate knowledge produced in one context into a context governed by different rules of authentication. Gerson is a prime candidate for such a study. His greatest gift seems to have been the ability to present his ideas effectively in many different contexts. In the process, he constructed an ideal of the public intellectual that perseveres to this day. Moreover, Gerson provided crucial clues to his process of translation in his rather reluctant adoption of female gendered language to characterize the all-male university as an obedient but valuable informal advisor to the French royal court and the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Thus Gerson, known for his voluntary and aggressive pronouncements critiquing female authority, nevertheless feminized the university in order to promote the authority of male university theologians and create a political voice for male academics. This active feminization of the university illustrates the extent to which Gerson's adoption of gendered language reflected the immediate rhetorical pressures he faced rather than his feelings about women. In this sense, mapping Gerson's employment of misogynist and otherwise gendered rhetoric also tells us about the relative authority of theologians and universities during the schism, as well as the range of communally accepted methods of authenticating truth claims. In this sense, a gendered reading of Gerson's self-promotion tells us as much or more about the intellectual and political challenges he faced as it does about his ideas concerning women.

How Gerson's misogynist discourses obscured women's influence

Seen from this perspective, Gerson's misogynist rhetoric did not exist in awkward opposition to his defense of the political rights of the oppressed, compassionate pastoral writings about the spiritual needs of lay women, and condemnation of the famous misogynist poem, the *Roman de la Rose*. Rather, it authenticated these more praiseworthy

interventions into political debates. In this sense, Gerson created his own authority at the expense of women. Thus, the causes motivating him might have been lofty, but the means he employed had a harmful effect. The polemical arguments he created for the purpose of proving the university's trustworthiness also worked to restrict the religious expressions open to medieval women, cast doubt on women's political capabilities, and suggest that women worked in consort with diabolical forces and religious others to sow seeds of vengeance, factionalism, sin, and spiritual confusion.

In fact, Gerson's arguments, especially when taken together with certain apolitical understandings of medieval institutions and medieval thought, make medieval women appear more marginal to political and intellectual history than they actually were. For this reason a systematic study of Gerson's use of gender as a means of negotiating institutional relationships actually helps to make women more visible. Indeed, one of the most significant claims of this book is that Gerson co-opted the subordinate, but strongly influential, position of royal women when addressing the French king because that was the most viable and useful option open to a representative of the University of Paris at the time. The irony was that while university scholars like Gerson had a lot to say about the limited nature of women's abilities as teachers and rulers, in actuality, the thinking and the arguing that university members were doing in the political sphere was not at all that different from the kind of thinking and arguing undertaken by royal or charismatic ascetic women. In this sense, exploring why and how Gerson crafted and deployed misogynist discourses reveals what these discourses attempt to hide, namely the significance of female influence within religious and political debates.

General overview of the work

In bringing these different strands into dialogue with each other in this book, I expose the gendered nature of the medieval European pursuit of communal truth and the structural forces that encouraged Gerson to deploy misogynist arguments. I do so, moreover, for the purpose of demonstrating that gender is an acceptable, indeed vital and helpful, category for analyzing the history of ideas and of accepting that some of Gerson's most aggressively misogynist statements may have been uttered for reasons that had nothing to do with his opinions about women. The rewards of this reintegration of the many facets of Gerson's thought are a better understanding of where the medieval university

fit within its political context, the challenges medieval academics faced when they attempted to translate their university-based knowledge to the political sphere, the role that women played in medieval politics, and the persistent resistance to women's claims to authority.

In this book I argue further that Gerson's misogynist polemics, as well as the seemingly non-misogynist gendered language that he used, played a foundational role in his authentication processes. Gerson thought and wrote during a time when Christian theologians in Europe were experiencing a profound epistemological crisis about the nature of truth, the kinds of truth that were appropriate for investigation, and the ways in which their discoveries could be applied to the amelioration of the political and religious chaos in which they lived.[32] For many thinkers like Gerson, this crisis encouraged a profound respect for institutional hierarchies, collective decision-making, and intellectual sincerity. It also created widespread suspicion of others.[33] For thinkers who sought to spread their ideas outside university circles, this crisis also required that they present their ideas in rhetorical forms that resonated with literary fashions, royal claims to power, and theological debates about discernment.[34]

In short, Gerson would not have become such an influential thinker had he not framed his arguments in a manner that his audience expected. His clerical audiences expected him to acknowledge the difficulties inherent in theological investigation and to praise the value of theological consensus. His royal audiences expected that he respect their claims to superior authority and as a result encouraged him to find other ways of authenticating his truth claims. Once he realized the extent to which the crown expected the university to behave in a subordinate manner, he engaged upon a career-long experiment with constructing a female subject position from which he could successfully utter authoritative truth claims based upon his university experience. As a result, he co-opted the authority of informal female persuasion based upon familial affection or prophetic experience for himself and other intellectuals who shared his training.

This book is divided into five chapters, each addressing a particular rhetorical, epistemological, or political issue that contributed to Gerson's co-option of female persuasion for the university-trained theologian. At the same time, the chapters progress chronologically through Gerson's career for the purpose of demonstrating how Gerson's attitudes about gendered authority changed over time. In addition to mapping the evolution of Gerson's misogynist discourses, each individual chapter also reads these discourses against the grain as a means

of understanding the limitations of his authority. Then, having illuminated the limited nature of Gerson's authority and the ways in which his deployment of gendered strategies advanced both his career and the reforming arguments for which he is so famous, the book asks two additional questions. Firstly, what does this new understanding of the limited nature of Gerson's authority tell us about the relative authority of ascetic pious women and royal women in Gerson's context? Secondly, and more importantly, in what ways do Gerson's sermons and treatises on government and church reform, to the extent that they celebrate the political innocence and reliable truth claims of the university-trained intellectual, also carry with them arguments (in the form of the gendered discourses Gerson employed in their construction) questioning the intellectual and political abilities of women?

The end result is a chronological investigation of how gendered authentication claims persistently re-create misogyny, firstly by the misogynist claims that they carry and, secondly, by the way they exaggerate the actual authority of the male individual who deploys them. As a means of further demonstrating the usefulness of gender as a tool for studying intellectual history, the book's chapters also comprise five chronological historical case studies of events or intellectual developments that have broad historiographical and historical significance. The issues addressed include: the political authority of late medieval universities, the relationship between female penitents and learned theologians, the relationship between female personifications and real women, Gerson's conscious co-option of aristocratic women's authority, and Gerson's contribution to the rise of the European witch hunt. As a result, the book seeks to demonstrate the centrality of gender to the production of intellectual authority, the history of the development of a particularly virulent misogynist discourse, a clearer knowledge of how and why misogynist discourses are reproduced and circulated, and the ways in which Gerson's formulations influenced later thought.

This chronological investigation begins with the ascendency of Gerson as an authoritative voice in the theological and political debates of the 1390s as a means of answering the broader historiographical question: how much political authority did universities and university-trained intellectuals have in late medieval France? Chapter 1 argues that Gerson's efforts to promote himself and the University of Paris participated in the university's efforts to shape royal solutions to the papal schism and defend its political and theological expertise. The chapter first demonstrates that Gerson's belief that the consensus of learned experts provided the most reliable form of political and theological

truth reflected an opinion shared widely throughout the university. The chapter then demonstrates that Gerson, recognizing the limited value that members of the French royal court and ecclesiastical hierarchy attributed to the university's reliance upon expert consensus, personified and then progressively allegorized and feminized his depiction of the University of Paris in the political sermons he delivered before the French royal court in 1391, 1392, and 1405. The historical import of this decision to shape university authority in dialogue with aristocratic values is demonstrated first by Gerson's success in securing the patronage of powerful individuals between 1393 and 1395. He established himself as a court preacher, secured the patronage of the most powerful magnate in the realm, Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and earned the appointment as chancellor of the University of Paris and Diocese of Notre Dame in 1395 by Pope Benedict XIII. Gerson's pragmatic intellectual concessions also exercised a tremendous influence over his later thought, namely it pushed him towards an apocalyptic and feminized understanding of theological truth.

At the same time, forces within the university were also pushing Gerson towards embracing a feminine rhetorical position and complementing that rhetorical position with a contemplative epistemology modeled after that which was most closely associated with pious lay women. Chapter 2 explores how Gerson recovered from the challenge to his theological and official authority posed by the university's support of the royal decision to withdraw French obedience from the Avignon-based papal claimant, Benedict XIII in 1398. It does so for the purpose of exploring the practical reasons why male theologians like Gerson relied upon the practices and reputation of female contemplative ascetics as a means of defining and defending their authority. In the process, it nuances the widely accepted interpretation that theologians did so for the purpose of shoring up male clerical privilege by bringing Gerson's theological and practical interest in ascetic pious women into dialogue with Ian Christopher Levy's recent observations regarding the theological uncertainty that plagued early fifteenth-century intellectuals. Gerson's arguments justifying his resignation from the chancellorship in March 1400 and the reform of the university he undertook once he resumed his post later that year both blamed the naked careerism of university scholars for the university's inability to stand up to the crown with respect to its policy towards Benedict XIII. Taken together Chapters 1 and 2 lay the groundwork for the reinterpretation of Gerson's late-life criticism of the ecstatic visionary practices of some female contemplatives, which I present in Chapter 5.

Gerson's abstract and theoretical feminization of the university began to take on a more palpable meaning as the political situation in France worsened. Chapter 3 covers the outbreak of violence between Charles of Savoisy, a prominent supporter of the Duke of Orléans, and members of a university procession in 1404. It was in response to this event that Gerson first fully personified the University of Paris in accordance with her royally granted title, Daughter of the King, which he elaborated upon for the sake of portraying the attack against the university as the rape of the king's pious and defenseless daughter.

The chapter explores two interrelated historiographical questions. The first section of the chapter explores the work that gendered representations of individuals and institutions did in early fifteenth-century political debates. It is able to do so by comparing Gerson's account of the incident between Savoisy's men and the university's procession with the defense Savoisy provided to the Parlement of Paris, the speech delivered before the Parlement of Paris by another defender of the university, and contemporary chronicle accounts of the event. Although all three accounts discussed employ gendered readings of the event in question, the discrepancies among them are quite telling for our understanding of how the particular political concerns of individuals and institutions shaped the character and political deployment of gender discourses.

The second section of the chapter asks how and in what way politically deployed gender discourses reflect or impinge upon the experience of real women. It does so by comparing Gerson's personification of the University of Paris as the Daughter of the King to public discussions of Princess Isabelle of France, occasioned first on the eve of her marriage to King Richard II of England in 1396 and then by her return to France in 1401, following the violent overthrow in 1399 and suspicious death of her husband in 1400. I suggest that Gerson's account of the violence the university suffered purposefully evoked the ways in which Isabelle's purity symbolized the purity and honor of France in Philippe de Mézières' *Letter to King Richard II: A Plea Made in 1395 for Peace between England and France*, and also the report by court historian Jean Froissart of Isabelle's treatment by members of the French nobility when she returned home from England after a long negotiation between King Charles VI of France and Henry of Lancaster, Richard's successor. The chapter concludes that Gerson was inspired to think through issues regarding the university's political privileges and authority by gendering the university as female at least in part because he sought to occupy the social position enjoyed by royal women. The main historical import of this chapter is that it demonstrates quite clearly the prevalence of

gendered discourses in late medieval French interpretations of political events, explores the ways in which such gendered discourses may have intersected with the lives of real women, and lays the groundwork for the following chapter, which discusses Gerson's attempt to co-opt the authority of aristocratic women.

Chapter 4 builds upon the conclusions reached in Chapter 3 for the purpose of demonstrating that Gerson consciously attempted to co-opt the informal advisory authority enjoyed by royal and aristocratic women. Firstly, he challenged and attempted to co-opt the authority granted to Queen Isabeau as a result of her husband's illness in his 1405 sermon, *Vivat rex*. Secondly, he aggressively opposed the university's prophetic authority to that claimed by Valentina Visconti in her demand that the murder of her husband, Louis of Orléans, by the Duke of Burgundy's assassins in 1407 be avenged. The chapter's exploration of Gerson's attempt to usurp the authority exercised by royal and aristocratic women makes a crucial contribution to a current historiographical debate regarding the gap between the actual powers exercised by royal women and the way that university-trained intellectuals like Gerson characterized them.

This contribution supports and builds upon the work of Theresa Earenfight and Kimberly LoPrete, which argues that royal and aristocratic women played a much larger role in politics than most historical accounts of the period suggest. Their claims are part of a growing effort by feminist historians to uncover and map the contributions aristocratic women made to medieval society. Earenfight has noted that the strongest evidence against women's involvement in politics comes from treatises on lordship written by university intellectuals like Gerson, who were, as my book demonstrates, much further from the centers of power than the women whose ruling abilities they proscribed or critiqued. Chapter 4 nuances this debate by suggesting that attempts by such intellectuals to portray royal women as unfit for power may have reflected the extent to which royal women were actually powerful. In doing so, it opens up the possibility of reading clerical proscriptions against women's authority, especially when these proscriptions are contradicted by hard archival evidence demonstrating that these women exercised power, as evidence for women's power rather than lack of power.

Gerson's contribution to an ongoing clerical challenge to the power exercised by aristocratic and royal women is particularly significant because Gerson appears to have done everything he could to equate the female influence of the university with idealized monarchical power and a rational state, while attributing all that was associated

with aristocratic factionalism to the private machinations of women and their foreign relatives. In short, he reinforced existing associations of women with irrationality, sexual licentiousness, greed, and foreign influence for the sake of demonstrating the university's trustworthiness, loyalty, and wisdom. Moreover, because Gerson employed the seven deadly sins as a framing device for his most misogynist sermons, his warnings about women's participation in politics resonated with apocalyptic and French nationalistic portrayals of women as gateways to diabolical and foreign influences. In this manner, he contributed to a discourse about witches that was already operating at the French royal court as is evidenced by the accusations of witchcraft that were levied against the Duchess of Orléans in the 1390s.

As the chapter observes, Gerson's strategy did not immediately shape gender norms at court. In fact, the Duke of Berry seems to have co-opted Gerson's argument for aristocrat use by having an elaborate manuscript copy of Gerson's *Vivat rex* made for his daughter almost immediately. This commission both recognized and rejected the association that Gerson was making between the university and royal women, and subordinated theologians politically by redefining them as authors of devotional reading for noble women. In fact, many of Gerson's spiritual works were copied for aristocratic women's libraries. *Vivat rex*, however, had not been written as a spiritual work and also circulated in royal manuscripts that collected the sermons around which I have built this book because of their near mystical defense of royal authority. *Vivat rex* was also still being reprinted as a political tract as late as 1824. It is through these two complementary venues of circulation of this text and the ways in which Gerson's competition with royal women influenced his treatises on possession that Gerson's particular gendered discourses helped shape early modern European fears of women's influence and disparagement of their intellectual abilities.[35]

Gerson's authentication strategies fostered similar fears about ascetic female visionaries. Chapter 5 reinterprets Gerson's famously misogynist treatises on spirit possession as cumulative reflections on his efforts to construct a place for university trained theologians in the policy discussions of the church and realm. The chapter reads these treatises as both an attack on Gerson's male and female competitors and an attempt to address the epistemological uncertainty caused by war and schism. In the process, it argues for a reinterpretation of Gerson's misogynist polemics that recognizes the political nature of these polemics and emphasizes the extent to which university members did compete with ascetic female visionaries for power. The chapter is divided into two

sections. The first section addresses how the ideas Gerson expressed in these treatises represented a culmination of his thinking about the university's political authority and the reliability of women as voices of political and religious reform. The second section illustrates how Gerson's struggle with the mendicant friars, which intensified in 1408, shaped his treatises on spirit possession. Taken together, these two sections reveal how the combined effects of university politics and Gerson's desire to promote a quiet form of sincere contemplative devotion among theologians, princes, and the laity in general caused him to reject the charismatic asceticism characteristic of certain female visionaries. The aggressive polemics Gerson directed against these women and their mendicant confessors, however, encouraged some mendicants to demonstrate their ability to discern true visionaries from imposters by hunting for witches. In this sense, Gerson's contribution to the discernment debate contributed to a simultaneous intensification of discernment practices applied by like-minded contemplatives and their confessors and also by those who feared women as the most visible agents in dangerous demonic conspiracies.

In conclusion, the book's five case studies explore the interdependent relationship between the late medieval construction of politically viable male academic authority and discourses that cast suspicion on women's virtue and intellectual capabilities, paying particular attention to three developments: (1) the mediating role played by the University of Paris in the crucial political and religious crises that plagued late medieval France, (2) France's experiment with female regency in the face of strong bureaucratic resistance to female rule, and (3) the creation of political discourses that associated women with sin, factionalism, and diabolical intrusion into the rational workings of the state. The book argues that all three developments permitted late medieval intellectuals, rulers, and church leaders to maintain – against overwhelming evidence to the contrary – the appearance of centralized monarchical rule, a stable ecclesiastical hierarchy, and a reliable method for constructing communally verifiable political and religious truths. That they did so at the expense of women demonstrates both the central role that royal and pious women played in late medieval thought and politics and the extent of the crisis of authority that medieval intellectuals and rulers sought to avert by resorting to misogynist polemics and supernatural explanations. In this manner, the book is both a history of gender and a history of ideas and institutions. In fact, the central goal of this book is to demonstrate that these three threads of inquiry cannot be understood in isolation from one another.

1
Gender, University Authority, and the French Royal Court

When Jean Gerson, the son of a carpenter from a village owned by the Benedictine monastery at Reims, traveled to Paris at the age of 14 in 1377, he embarked upon a career that would be built almost entirely upon his intellectual prowess. This situation differentiated him from those upon whom he would depend for his success and general good fortune, namely those whose claim to power lay in their noble blood, financial resources, military skill, and family connections. Gerson entered Paris as a scholarship student and a potential client.[1] His ability to craft a reputation that allowed him to influence the debates that coursed through that city and the wider context of the church attests to his successful negotiation of multiple social situations and institutional settings as much as it reflects his command of the scholastic tradition.[2]

Gerson's negotiation skills won him increasing professional success. He was repeatedly selected to represent the University of Paris to the French royal court, enjoyed the patronage of Philip the Bold (1342–1404) and John the Fearless of Burgundy (r. 1404–1419), the Avignon Pope Benedict XIII (r. 1394–1423), the French Kings Charles VI (r. 1380–1422) and Charles VII (r. 1422–1461). He attended the European-wide Council of Constance (1415–1418) as a member of the French delegation where he delivered his famous sermon, *Ambulate dum lucem habetis*, which encouraged the council to proceed in the absence of clear papal authority.[3] Gerson's access to these public venues, in turn, allowed him to circulate his ideas in such a way that they would influence European thinking for the subsequent two centuries. In this sense, Gerson contributed to the development of important aspects of European political and religious thought to the extent that he did at least in part because he was invited by those in power to be in the right

place at the right time and made good use of every available opportunity to publish his ideas.[4]

His success is all the more impressive because he worked under conditions that seriously challenged the authority claims of the University of Paris and its theologians. In Gerson's wider cultural context of the long fifteenth-century (1370–1520), the translation of authoritative political and religious texts from Latin into French, widespread interest in courtly and eloquent speech, and the popularity of poetic and allegorical arguments undermined the university's ability to assert itself as the crown's most authoritative religious and political advisor.[5] At the same time, widespread religious experimentation that emphasized the ultimate validity of the internal experience of the practitioner threatened to render the university's theological arguments as irrelevant to the spiritual life of the laity in a manner that Gerson feared exposed the laity to dangerous unorthodox opinions and practices.[6] Within this broader cultural context of creativity and competition, which Gerson perceived as a crisis in university authority, two political events further disturbed the university and threatened to diminish its political and religious authority within the kingdom of France and the wider church. These were the Great Schism of the Western Church (1378–1417) and the increased political instability in France that resulted from the long minority (1380–1388) and mental instability (1392–1422) of King Charles VI.[7]

Gerson was able to win the attention of the French royal court and exercise an authoritative voice in French and church politics at least in part through his conscious recognition and manipulation of the gender regimes that governed the different contexts in which he worked. He had no choice in this matter because of the extent to which medieval Europeans expressed their understandings of the multiple relationships between truth and power in such strongly gendered terms.[8] For this reason, Gerson, who sought to increase the university's political influence, attempted to revise her political gender. In short, despite favoring male expert consensus as the basis of academic, religious, and political truth, Gerson consistently personified the University of Paris as the female Daughter of the King in the political sermons he delivered before the French royal court. In doing so, he acted similarly to English poets who began personifying political counsel as female as a means of demonstrating that they did not mean to challenge the political authority of those they wished to advise.[9]

This chapter examines the complex strategies Gerson employed as he navigated the tension between the university's self-ascribed gender

identity and the gender identity imposed upon it by the French royal court.[10] It does so primarily for the purpose of demonstrating how Gerson struggled to translate his university authority into a form that was palatable to royal audiences without losing touch with the values he shared with his university audience. In the process, it highlights both the context-driven nature of Gerson's presentation of the university's gender and the professional concerns that encouraged him to partially resist the gender dynamics implicit in the university's relationship with the French royal court. At the same time, this chapter reveals the role played by gender in Gerson's rise to intellectual prominence. The significance of Gerson's efforts to renegotiate the university's gender, however, extends beyond our understanding of Gerson as a thinker and political actor. These efforts reflect his engagement with a longstanding and collectively embraced institutional narrative about the value of masculine scholarly authority.

Contested gender and authority

Gerson struggled to develop a university identity that was palatable to the French royal court because the institutionalized gender his university training instilled in him was aggressively male. Much of the scholarship addressing Gerson's views on women characterizes him as a typical representative of male clerical bias.[11] Gerson, however, experienced and negotiated his clerical identity within an institutional context that closely associated its own particular understanding of masculinity with the production of verifiable truth claims. As Ruth Mazo Karras has demonstrated, university-based masculinity was specific to its context and open to contestation by those who did not ascribe to it, especially male and female aristocrats. Karras argues, for instance, that university members experienced an uncertainty about their own masculinity that mirrored their uncertain position in the surrounding political community. In response to their desire to be seen as fully masculine in comparison to their aristocratic superiors, they sometimes rejected the behavioral codes associated with their clerical status. They dressed outrageously, kept hunting dogs, and proved their masculinity by engaging in consensual and nonconsensual sexual activities with poor women and prostitutes.[12] In this sense, they attempted to behave like knights in a manner similar to that uncovered by Jennifer Thibodeaux in her study of aristocratic members of the Norman clergy, who continued to hunt and have relations with women after they had taken clerical orders. These refusals to embrace clerical masculinity suggest that at least some

clergy believed that doing so would make them seem more vulnerable as they attempted to negotiate their daily lives and ecclesiastical careers, whether they undertook those negotiations in competition with each other or in dialogue with more freely masculine secular rulers.[13]

At the same time, Karras has demonstrated that university members throughout Europe developed an alternative understanding of their own masculinity that likened intellectual inquiry and debate to military combat and valued the work of the mind as the highest expression of masculinity. In conjunction with this understanding of their own masculinity and professional worth, university scholars went to great lengths to present the university as being free from all sinful or passionate influences that might interfere with the masculine exercise of reason. They demonstrated their freedom from the passions most pointedly by excluding women physically from university buildings and mentally from the topics they were willing to debate on a regular basis.[14]

Moreover, this exclusion of women from university life and thought created a homo-social atmosphere in which the basic day to day activities of university members reinforced the notion that women were socially, politically, and intellectually irrelevant, as well as dangerously distracting. In effect, university members sought to ignore women as much as possible in their debates and daily lives. In fact, these cultural, institutional, and intellectual practices worked together to define women as a repository for everything that university members defined themselves against, namely sin, passion, and a lack of reason. Such sentiments were then reinforced by medieval commentaries on Aristotle's characterization of women as morally and mentally deficient. In some regions these sentiments were also expressed through initiation rituals that opposed scholarly manliness to an uncultivated and bestial femininity.[15]

This emphasis on a hyper-masculine and nearly supernaturally virtuous form of rationality had deep classical roots in the struggle between monks and married clergy for the control of the church, played an important role in the Gregorian Reform, and most importantly, arose specifically as a result of the ongoing struggle between military aristocrats and their clerical counterparts regarding who was best equipped to lead a truly Christian polity.[16] University members and other clergy members were also capable of assuming feminine affective roles in other contexts, but doing so while maintaining the authority to advise kings and prelates required complex strategies that Gerson struggled to develop during the course of his career as a court preacher. The

university needed to maintain a sufficiently masculine identity for the purpose of acting within the world of communal politics as an independent agent, rather than as a subordinate member of the king's household who lacked an independent voice.[17] The Duke of Orléans emphasized this point when he rebuked a peace embassy the university sent to him with the remark that just as the university did not invite knights to councils regarding matters of the faith, that it should stay out of war. Moreover, he continued, "if the university is called the Daughter of the King, nevertheless, it is not seemly for her to insert herself into the governing of the realm."[18] In fact, Jacques Verger suggests that Charles V imposed the title "Daughter of the King" upon the university as part of his attempt to control it.[19]

Adopting a female persona also challenged Gerson's understanding of the university's identity. As the university had developed as a collective of self-governing and self-regulating experts brought together through an oath of mutual loyalty and obedience to the corporation's statutes, it secured its privileges to self-government, tax exemptions, and preferential juridical treatment through papal and royal decrees.[20] The resulting decrees, which university members repeatedly consulted, contributed to the perception that the church leadership, as well as the imagined Christian polity as a whole, depended upon well-trained male scholars working in community for their invaluable and doctrinally sound counsel.[21]

For instance, in his bull *Quanto Gallicana* (c. 1170–1172), Pope Alexander III denounced the chancellor of Notre Dame for refusing to "grant the license to teach others to ecclesiastical men without a fixed price" because such refusals damaged the integrity of the French church, which "shines by means of the learning and integrity of great persons."[22] While Alexander addressed scholars who had not yet founded a university, Pope Gregory IX expressed similar sentiments about the university in the papal bull *Parens scientiarum*, which he issued in 1231 as a means of reaffirming the university's value to the church following a long protracted strike the university had undertaken to protest the violence it had suffered at the hands of the provost of Paris.[23] *Parens scientiarum* played a foundational role in shaping the University of Paris' understanding of its own position in the late medieval church by calling it "wisdom's special workshop" in which "wise men" adorn "the Bride of Christ" with gold and precious stones while simultaneously extracting iron from the earth to make "the breastplate of the faith, the sword of the spirit, and other things, from which is made the armor of the Christian army, mighty against the aerial powers."[24]

Parens scientiarum reinforced the most central aspects of the university's identity that had grown out of the processes through which a collection of like-minded scholars convinced kings and popes to recognize their organization's independent and yet crucial role in society through their response to a particular conflict. Since *Parens scientiarum* had been granted at the end of a successful strike, it instilled in university members a deep appreciation for the value of institutional loyalty, careful professionalization, and scholarly consensus. The resulting corporate identity also reflected the cooperative manner of pursuing truth through question and debate that characterized scholastic learning. Individual participants may have engaged in scholastic debate as an agonistic activity that they described through the use of military metaphors, but the power of the scholastic boycott demonstrated that such debates only produced universally valid truth claims within the context of a well-defined debating community.[25]

Moreover, as university statutes governing dress, funeral attendance, curriculum, teaching careers, and exams all demonstrate, the university's value was derived from its ability to produce individuals who embodied an institutionally determined mode of decorum, body of knowledge, shared skills, and methodology for arriving at a professional consensus.[26] The university continued to express this collective identity up until Gerson's time through its frequent performance of solemn processions through the city of Paris.[27] In this sense, the university's corporate identity could be performed and morally evaluated through the collective and individual behavior of its members.

These reputedly well-governed members, who had conquered their passions to become intellectual men, worked collectively to defend the church and realm against heresy and direct the preaching activities of less-educated parish priests. In some of their most self-celebratory works, they compared themselves to the stars of the heavens, martyrs, and virgins, as well as describing themselves as the architects of the church who built up the faith through their clarification of doctrine.[28] Each moment of political involvement and self-reflection reinforced the university's understanding of scholarly masculinity as a rejection of feminine, bodily and worldly vice.

It is from within this context that celebrated the male collective authority of the university that Gerson contributed famously to university discourses that denounced the intellectual and moral deficiencies of women as a means of celebrating the intellectual prowess and superior virtue of academics and other male clergy members. In fact, Gerson embraced the university's emphasis on the rational man's freedom from

carnal passions to such an extent that he worried extensively about the sexual contact young boys had with each other in their dormitories, the dangerous sexual impulses female penitents could arouse in their confessors, the extent to which nocturnal emissions reflected the inner state of priests, and the insidious ways in which spiritual friendships with pious women could suddenly mutate into occasions of sexual temptation.[29]

He did not express these concerns, however, in a conceptual vacuum. As the work of Jacqueline Murray, Dyan Elliott, and Ruth Mazo Karras has amply demonstrated, Gerson's fear of women as a source of sexual temptation reflected his familiarity with a long-standing theological tradition that received ample attention in the writings of the early church fathers and was reinforced by Gerson's particular institutional concerns regarding the university's and university-trained theologians' political authority.[30] In this sense, Gerson's misogynist polemics largely reflected his institutionalized biases. It is noteworthy, however, that he deployed these misogynist polemics most frequently when he was promoting the value of learned intellectual consensus in a political context characterized by a reluctance on the part of a pope or king to grant the university an independent and masculine voice in church or royal politics. In this sense, he seems to have seen these misogynist polemics as integral to the defense of his own authority claims rather than as a means of gratuitously attacking women.

The damage of the schism

In short, Gerson's eventual rhetorical dependence upon misogynist and otherwise gendered rhetoric only makes sense if we understand him as an embattled aspiring political advisor. The university's responses to the crisis of the schism, the political confusion that characterized the reign of Charles VI, and the attendant royal and papal attempts to suppress scholarly debate shaped Gerson's early university experiences, institutional identity, later rhetorical strategies, and understanding of scholastic gender. The schism began when the majority of cardinals, who were disgruntled with the performance of the newly elected Pope Urban VI (r. 1378–1389), withdrew from Rome in secret and elected a second pope, Pope Clement VII (r. 1378–1394), and then appealed to King Charles V of France for support. Charles V accepted the cardinal's assertion that because an angry Italian mob had forced them to elect Urban, the election had been invalid. By May of 1379, King Charles had demanded that the University of Paris formally support Clement VII,

who was the king's cousin, as the true pope.[31] Scholars who refused to comply with this demand were exiled from France. The most famous of these scholars returned to their homelands, where they started new universities that challenged the pre-eminence of Paris.[32] The newly elected Pope Clement VII also empowered the bishop of Paris and the chancellor of the University of Paris to seek out Urbanists among the Parisian clergy, strip them of their benefices, deny them the teaching license, and replace them with more loyal supporters.[33]

In addition to damaging the university's reputation as the most prestigious center of learning for all of Europe, the ways in which Pope Clement VII and the French King attempted to manage the university during the course of this crisis emphasized the ephemeral nature of the university's privileges and authority. Their behavior indicated that the university had no control over its own membership or the public expression of the institution's professional opinion. Since the university's two most important protectors, namely the pope and king, colluded in demanding the university's support for Clement, there was not much the university could do to challenge this position. Even after Charles V died in 1380, papal support of the expansionist policies of the French magnates in Naples and in Flanders encouraged the 12 year-old King Charles VI and his regency council to continue to support Clement VII and to demand silence from the university.[34] They made this demand most dramatically in 1381, when the theologian John Rousse attempted to argue the university's suggestion that a general council be called to solve the schism. The following night, Rousse was dragged out of bed and thrown in jail until the university promised to remain silent on the matter. Shortly thereafter, Rousse and other outspoken scholars fled Paris.[35]

In this imposed silence, however, lay both an incredible threat to the university's worth and its only hope for gaining a political voice. Popes and kings had repeatedly noted the propaganda value of a consensus of learned theological opinion. They did so in at least three different ways: (1) each time they granted special privileges to individual scholars regarding benefices or to the university as a whole, such as occurred with the papal bulls discussed above; (2) each time they solicited the university's opinion regarding controversial issues; and (3) each time they resorted to bribery and threats in their efforts to manufacture consensus within the University of Paris.[36]

For instance, King Philip IV of France (r. 1285–1314) manufactured the appearance of a university consensus in favor of his violent actions against both Pope Boniface VIII in 1303 and his suppression of the

entire Templar order in 1308.[37] Philip then rewarded the university for its coerced cooperation by exempting it from a tax he imposed upon the French clergy, furthering the impression that he valued the university's intellectual independence and cementing its support for his policies.[38] In fact, it was because the propaganda value of the university's published consensus was so widely recognized that both popes and kings worked aggressively to control scholarly discussions and suppress scholarly consent in the wake of the papal schism of 1378, which occurred just one year after Gerson arrived at the university as a young student.

At the same time, by manipulating university opinions to suit their needs, kings and popes dangerously undermined the very expertise that consensus represented. For this reason, they had to be careful not to undermine the public appearance that university opinions were independently generated.[39] University members, moreover, resisted such manipulation. Serge Lusignan amply demonstrates that university leaders remained dissatisfied with the crown's persistent refusal to accept the university's freely given counsel in his careful study of the university's appeals before the Parlement of Paris.[40] Refusing to accept the limited propaganda role the crown offered them, Gerson and his colleagues worked to reshape royal and papal discourses about the university's authority in a manner that would afford the university a more independent voice in church and royal politics. Gerson's adoption of gendered frameworks for his political sermons must be understood as a part of this wider effort to turn the propaganda value of academic consensus into a viable and independent source of political authority that kings and popes could not afford to silence. In this sense, university members used the schism as an opportunity for extending the university's authority into royal and papal politics. Moreover, in doing so, they acted in concert with several individuals, institutions, and groups that experienced the crisis of the schism from the perspective of their own localized understandings of truth and order and responded by trying to impose their own understandings of purity and order on their leaders and communities.[41]

Male expert consensus

After being forced to recognize Pope Clement VII as the true pope in 1379, the university adopted a multifaceted strategy for reclaiming an authoritative independent voice in French ecclesiastical politics. It called for the cessation of all academic activities and preaching in response to particularly unacceptable ecclesiastical policies and engaged

in university-wide deliberations regarding controversial and even proscribed topics. Furthermore, its members authored and circulated politically aggressive anonymous tracts, preached polemical sermons about the schism, and fastened political placards in visible places throughout the city. They also carefully crafted appeals addressed to royal and papal audiences. Moreover, all of these activities undertaken to defend and forward the university as an institution provided emerging university leaders with opportunities to establish their intellectual reputations through their public speeches and written arguments, and also to become acquainted with future patrons by serving as the university's representative to royal and papal courts.[42]

This multifaceted approach to the promotion of both individual careers and the university's intellectual and political authority provokes two crucial observations about how Gerson and his colleagues operated. The first is that they seemed to have been equally concerned with elaborating upon and strengthening pre-existing discourses about university authority as they were about successfully arguing the university's particular political policy suggestions. Second, as they sought to promote the university's authority across different contexts, they were not able to remain consistent about their political positions and their characterizations of the university's authority. This inconsistency becomes particularly clear in Gerson's gradual and reluctant adoption of a female identity for the University of Paris in the sermons he delivered before the French royal court, which required him to adopt a radically different strategy for authenticating the university's truth claims.

In fact, Gerson's reluctance to feminize the university in response to political pressure indicates the extent to which he imbibed the university's institutional investment in a definitively masculine scholastic consensus as the most reliable basis of truth. He also accepted and actively promoted the university's belief that the advisory services it offered popes and kings justified the institutional privileges it enjoyed with respect to self-government, clerical immunity, and freedom of taxation.[43] Moreover, he first expressed these beliefs in 1389, in a treatise he authored as part of the university-wide effort to overcome the damage done to its authority by papal and royal attempts to control university reactions to the papal schism. It is not a coincidence that Gerson also delivered his first sermon before the French royal court in 1389.[44] Both actions announced his emergence as a leader among the university community, which likely reflected the political success of his mentor and patron, Pierre d'Ailly, who was serving as chancellor of the University of Paris at the time.

Demonstrating the fluid relationship between the university's right to govern itself and its ability to discern politically significant Christian truths, Gerson's 1389 treatise, *Gallia quae viris semper*, celebrated the university's successful censure of its own members as proof of its importance to France in particular and Christianity in general.[45] In 1386 the University of Paris convinced Pope Clement VII to remove the very university chancellor he had empowered to purge Urbanists from the university by accusing this chancellor, John Blanchard of extorting fees from candidates for the license to teach in direct violation of Pope Alexander III's foundational bull, *Quanto Gallicana*. Although Clement VII was reluctant to take action against Blanchard, who was an important client, the university forced him to transfer Blanchard to another post by bringing its case before the Parlement of Paris, using the oath of mutual loyalty sworn by all bachelors to ensure that no university-trained lawyer would defend Blanchard, and refusing to allow Blanchard to fulfill his institutional duties.[46] The university then used similar tactics in 1388 and 1389 to exclude the entire Dominican order from the university after it supported one of its members' refusal to retract statements he had made about the Virgin Mary, which the theology faculty of the university considered scandalous. Although Dominicans were independent of university oversight, the university appealed their case to the bishop, preached to the people that the Dominicans were attacking Mary's reputation, and convinced the French king that the Dominicans were preaching heresy despite the fact that the papal court refused to determine on the question and merely charged the individual in question with contempt when he fled his papal trial before its completion.[47]

Gerson glorified these small institutional victories as a means of promoting the university's authority to intervene in all questions of doctrinal significance. Without revealing any awareness that he was exaggerating, Gerson characterized his account of these successful demonstrations of the power of the university's ability to carry out successful collective actions and spread effective propaganda as a tale "more stirring than an account of military battles for the possession of towers and cities" because this victory signified "nothing less than the successful defense of true religion."[48] In doing so, he both confirmed the university's longstanding idealized understanding of its identity and also laid a solid foundation for its future interventions in politics. These incidents allowed him to address the damage done by the schism indirectly by celebrating university victories that were not threatening to the pope or king in language that specifically evoked and reinforced the

authority and autonomy that the university believed it had in its glorious founding years.[49] Moreover, he did so in such a way that carefully intertwined his affirmation of the university's privileges with crucial narratives justifying papal and royal power. In this sense, he employed the same tactics that the founders and later defenders of the university that had preceded him had used, demonstrating a strong institutionalized understanding of how university authority was continuously constructed through collective action and discursive commemoration. In the process, he also identified himself as an emerging university defender.[50]

Gallia quae viris semper pursued the task of reaffirming the university's recently challenged authority by re-casting twelfth and thirteenth-century praise of the university in a language that would appeal to the sensibilities of fourteenth century university members, ecclesiastical leaders, and royal representatives, suggesting that Gerson authored it with a wide network of university-trained clerics in mind that may or may not have been limited to France.[51] Gerson then used the resulting argument to celebrate the university's rights and process of evaluating truth claims as crucial to the prevention of heresy and the glory of French people. Gerson's argument built upon the sentiments published in previous papal bulls, such as *Quanto Gallicana* (1170–1172), which suggested that the scholars of Paris made the French church shine, and *Parens scientiarum* (1231), which called the University of Paris wisdom's workshop and asserted that the university provided the church with the armor it needed to defend itself against demonically inspired threats to the faith.[52] He explicitly framed these assertions that the university defended the church and brought glory to France with the popular tradition of *translatio studii* (the translation of learning). This tradition claimed that the very Wisdom personified in Proverbs migrated first from the mind of God to Adam in the Garden of Eden. Then Wisdom reportedly migrated to Egypt with Abraham and Joseph. From Egypt it migrated progressively to the Greeks, as evidenced by their philosophers, and to the Romans as evidenced by their philosophers, success in government, and conversion to Christianity. Following the collapse of Rome, the *translatio* tradition asserted, Wisdom migrated to Western Europe. French authors even asserted that Wisdom took up residence in France under Charlemagne.[53]

This narrative about the translation of schools resonated powerfully with late medieval European rulers' understandings of themselves as the heirs of Christian Rome. At the same time, it provided the clergy, whose knowledge of scripture identified them as the most logical brokers of

this wisdom, with an important tool in their negotiations with Europe's military elites. To the extent that the these elites wished to present themselves as good Christian rulers, they had to demonstrate their willingness to rule in accordance with the divine wisdom found in scripture.[54] In fact, the *translatio studii* tradition had developed in dialogue with an older tradition regarding the translation of imperium. This tradition asserted that the divine right to rule had shifted from Rome to Europe under the Carolingians and played an important role in the claims to authority forwarded by the rulers of both the German empire and France. The marriage of these two traditions asserted that divinely inspired wisdom followed divinely sanctioned imperium, an association that encouraged rulers to foster learning in their kingdoms as a means of demonstrating the divine sanction of their political authority.[55]

The fact that Gerson's demonstration of the connection between the university's ability to govern itself and France's glory within the wider Christian world relied upon such a longstanding and widespread tradition indicates the extent to which the university sought to play a role in the cultural competition that existed between regions and with which rulers engaged as a means of cementing their authority with respect to their neighbors. Parisian scholars, for instance, cultivated an association between the *translatio studii* tradition and the *translatio imperium* tradition as a means of identifying Paris as the contemporary seat of wisdom in a manner that justified the centralizing policies of the Capetian kings. In fact, Stephen Ferruolo has suggested that King Philip Augustus of France (r. 1180–1283) may have supported the nascent University of Paris because of the ways in which Paris' reputation as Europe's greatest center of learning reinforced his own claims to power.[56] Clerically trained chroniclers then kept the tradition alive by celebrating thirteenth century French kings as learned patrons of the university. This tradition encouraged King Philip IV of France to use the university's authority to support his controversial actions against Pope Boniface VIII and the Templars.[57] Moreover, the trope continued to play a role in justifying university privileges during Gerson's tenure at the university. As Serge Lusignan has demonstrated, the University of Paris began deploying this tradition as a means of defending its privileges in the cases it brought before the Parlement of Paris in the second half of the fourteenth century, demonstrating that it had finally gained such widespread acceptance that it was considered a viable legal defense as well as a convincing argument for why the University of Paris, as the repository of divine wisdom, should serve as an authoritative counselor to the king. This is the exact position that Gerson embraced, however,

he carefully framed his presentation of this argument to appeal to contemporary concerns.[58]

In 1389, as demonstrated by Gilbert Ouy, Gerson situated his recollection of the *translatio studii* tradition in dialogue with the royal concerns about the cultural pre-eminence the Italians had won through the rise of Renaissance Humanism. From a royal perspective, the Italian claim to cultural pre-eminence had political import. In 1366, King Charles V of France (r. 1364–1380) had sent his envoy, Anseau Choquart to Avignon for the purpose of dissuading Pope Urban V (r. 1362–1370) from relocating the papacy to Rome. Presenting the French king as a devoted son who could not understand why his father was leaving him, Choquart combined the *translatio studii* tradition with the trope of Moses leading the Hebrews out of Egypt to suggest that the papacy should remain where it was rather than returning to Rome. France, Choquart claimed, with its divinely-favored king, devout people, and relics, and masters of the sacred page, was far holier than Rome and thus a more deserving location of papal power.[59] Choquart's argument failed. The pope left for Rome two days later and Francesco Petrarch suggested that the speech demonstrated the pre-eminence of Italian oratory and poetry. Apparently Charles V found this barb a sufficient threat to his own claims to imperial authority, and thus independence from the German emperor. In order to counter this perceived threat, Charles fostered the study of the classics at the royally sponsored College of Navarre, Gerson's most immediate institutional home.[60]

Building upon this royally recognized connection between intellectual and political pre-eminence, Gerson framed *Gallia quae viris semper* as a call for the members of the University of Paris to undertake with greater determination the study of eloquence for the purpose of "beating back the lying and envious rumors" forwarded by the Italians. He did so by lamenting the fact that "because France lacked poets and historians, the "deeds of her illustrious thinkers and warriors," along with her entire tradition of greatness, would be "lost to future generations." Such a lack however, he argued, did not reflect the capabilities of the French. Rather, as he explained echoing *Parens scientarium*, France's incredibly gifted thinkers, "who made visible the hidden truths that could be seen by human eyes," had failed to distinguish themselves in the study of eloquence for many understandable reasons. The very best of France's intellectuals, he explained, "had followed the great thinkers Plato, Aristotle and Socrates" in abandoning the quest for eloquence in the pursuit of higher forms of inquiry. In other words, Gerson implied

that although the best scholars in France had been occupied with more important issues, French scholars would be able master the arts of classical eloquence just as well or better than the Italians as soon as they were sufficiently encouraged to do so.[61] By making this argument, he clearly associated the location of wisdom with the royal or municipal center that could boast the most theologians of the greatest reputation who served to provide it with the armor of the faith celebrated in Pope Gregory IX's foundational constitution for the University of Paris, *Parens scientiarum*.

As he elaborated upon this stirring account, Gerson emphasized the theology faculty's doctrinal authority. Theology fulfilled the role of Wisdom as Gerson defined it, namely keeping France free from heresy and as a result defending the primacy of France among Christian nations. In this manner, Gerson simultaneously highlighted the university's authority to advise royal policies regarding doctrinal matters like the schism while challenging Petrarch's claim that Italian mastery of classical eloquence proved that Wisdom had migrated to Italy. She remained, he implied, safely in France where scholars remembered that theology came first and that philosophy and eloquence were her handmaids.[62]

In fact, if Miri Rubin is right in observing that during the crisis caused by the schism "rulers and prelates" needed "professional thinkers and communicators", namely "scholars, preachers, teachers, lawyers and poets", to "conjure a vision of possible peace and remedy", Gerson successfully presented himself and his colleagues in theology as such thinkers.[63] Tellingly, Gerson made these claims while demonstrating his own eloquence and knowledge of classical sources in order to prove that the Parisian scholars had purposefully chosen to focus their efforts upon the pursuit of theological and philosophical truth because it was more important, not because they lacked the skill to study eloquence.[64] He also may have displayed his own eloquence as a means of combating the argument made by prominent courtiers that Wisdom had migrated within France from the University of Paris to the royal court.[65] This argument celebrated the vernacular literary culture fostered at court and could be defended with reference to the poetic abilities of the French princes and their famous client poets such as Christine de Pizan, Philippe de Mézières, and Eustache Deschamps. Gerson noted his competition when he demonstrated that he could manipulate allegories as well as any of these three famous literary figures in the political sermons he delivered before the French royal court.[66] In *Gallia quae viris semper*, however, the authority that Gerson claimed for the university

was unique. Only the university members possessed eloquence and theological understanding simultaneously.

Having made this defense against attempts to usurp the intellectual primacy of his home institution, Gerson reached out to his university colleagues by calling attention to the very aspect of university identity that his colleagues deemed most central to the university's authority to intervene in political affairs: the dogged defense of the university's independence and right to self-government. The University of Paris, Gerson explained, surpassed all other universities in glory – despite these universities' reputations for excellence in an abundance of sciences – because it had more privileges and disciplines than all other schools. Re-emphasizing the importance of the university's privileges to the pursuit of truth that made France famous, Gerson asked: "when was another university either more abundant in profound counsel or more free from every disease of the spirit in deliberating, or more lively in the prompt execution of deliberations than this university?" Moreover, he directly linked these lively and useful deliberations to the university's success in its defense of its privileges, by directly following his observation regarding the university's culture of deliberation with this question: "(f)inally, when in victories more numerous?"[67]

According to Gerson's argument, the university had always enjoyed the rights it had just successfully defended. Moreover, he argued that these rights had allowed the university to deliberate in the search of the truth that it used to defend the faith and glory of the French kingdom. For this reason, Gaul remained famously free from heresy from antiquity to the present time.[68] This advantage allowed the university to be run as "Plato said" republics should be, "governed by wise men" and in such a way that "one rector presides for three months, he proposes and persuades regarding what needs to be done, moreover, nothing important is done or accomplished without seeking the resolution of the masters."[69] These claims allowed Gerson to use this treatise as much to solidify the university's victory and corporate identity as to think about how and on what grounds the university could interject its voice into the political matters of civil war and schism.[70]

The university's demonstration of its ability to govern its own members also contributed to an understanding of localized authority, a particular valuing of consensus, and a celebration of theological authority that eventually allowed conciliarism to triumph as the solution to papal schism and for university theologians like Gerson to be involved in that solution.[71] All of these ideas that Gerson articulated and that played such an influential role in European political thought derived

from an all-male professional environment that aggressively policed its privileges, its membership, and its gender. Gerson and his colleagues were caught up in a struggle to prove their professional and institutional worth to the popes and kings who authenticated and protected the university. This struggle encouraged university defenders to demonstrate that the university's intellectual and political work contributed to the glory of France, provided the church with a crucial defense against heresy, taught subjects to obey their rightful rulers, and combatted sin. In short, their institutional experience and relationship to popes and kings would have reinforced the university-based characterization of masculinity as a hyper-rational immunity to the passions, especially lust, which was so easily visualized, public in its exposure, and conveniently mapped onto the bodies of women, who were then formally excluded from participating in the intellectual life of the university.[72]

Feminizing pressures

Ideas, however, do not drive politics unless they are embraced by those empowered to act. Although the university discourse Gerson helped to shape did encourage university aspirations and regulate royal behavior to the extent that kings could not afford to be seen flagrantly ignoring the public opinions expressed by the university, kings often responded to this dilemma by silencing the university with respect to particular proscribed topics. When Gerson wished to advise the crown regarding a politically sensitive topic, he was extremely careful to demonstrate the extent to which he accepted the king's superior authority by adopting a purposefully subordinate and female persona for the university based upon her royally granted title as Daughter of the King.[73] By this means, he disguised the extent of the authority claims he was making and established his reputation as an important voice in French politics.[74]

In many ways, by deciding to cast the university as a persuasive female when speaking before the French royal court, Gerson participated in a longstanding clerical tradition most clearly expressed by personifying the church, *Ecclesia*, as both the mother of all Christians and the Bride of Christ for the purpose of moving lay aristocrats to act in her defense.[75] Medieval clergy were well aware of the fact that they did not have the power to bully Europe's military aristocracy. Even Gerson's earliest court sermons demonstrate an acute awareness of the court's unwillingness to concede the university's professional expertise as a justification for its interventions into royal politics. For this reason, Gerson

explicitly apologized for his apparent presumption in all of his controversial sermons. He also cast his advice in the form of less controversial moral correction, precisely the type of speech allowed to all Christians, even women. In doing so, he behaved in a manner similar to that of late fourteenth-century English poets, who relied upon drawn out exempla of female counsel as a means of portraying their own advice as less threatening to their seigniorial audience.[76]

For instance, in his 1391 sermon denouncing the king's plans to solve the schism by force, for instance, Gerson called himself "the king's humble servant and subject," a "clerk without great knowledge of eloquence," and even urged the king to ignore "his humble stature" and only pay attention to his message. Furthermore, abandoning all claims based upon expertise and status, Gerson promised his royal audience that he only wished to speak as it was incumbent upon "all Christians without exception in matters of the faith," to do whatever "is in their power" for the sake of moving others through word or deed.[77] When critiquing the ongoing war with England in 1392, Gerson explicitly stated that "desire for peace, unity, and concord," rather than "temerity and presumption" had caused him to speak.[78] In 1405, he opened his most famous political sermon, *Vivat rex*, with the assurance that the university, personified as the Daughter of the King, spoke "not by right, expertise, or presumption...but in complete humility and devout exhortation, as a very obedient daughter (speaks) to a father and of a father."[79] Furthermore, he assured the members of his royal audience that he did not aspire to teach them anything that they did not already know, but rather sought to move them to act upon what they knew already.[80] In effect, this learned male female prophet claimed the same kind of authority attributed to devout pious women who sought through their fierce asceticism, tears, prayers, and exorcisms to move the faithful to a better life.[81]

In this sense, the university's need to acquiesce to the royal fiction that the king possessed a greater understanding of political issues than the assembled university shaped the way Gerson interacted with the university's feminine title. As others have noted, the university's title "Daughter of the King" created a fictional kinship for the university that allowed it to intervene in factional politics as a family member of the king.[82] It also reinforced the university's subordinate position by naming it a dependent and female family member.[83] For this reason, the title required an entirely different mode of authenticating the university's truth claims than was available to it based upon its institutionalized masculine identity that valued truth claims based upon expert, male, hyper-rational consensus.

The resulting tension between Gerson's identity as a university theologian and his need to acquiesce to the rhetorical demands of court preaching encouraged him to find new ways of authenticating the university's authority on the basis of its royally granted title, Daughter of the King. His first inclination was to resist the implications of this title altogether. For instance, in his 1391 sermon, *Adorabunt eum*, he mentioned the university's royal title only twice as a means of establishing an affectionate relationship between a protective king and his dependent institution. Gerson did so for the purpose of softening the king's response to his critique of royal policy on the schism. Unwilling to concede the university's authority, however, he asserted that the "singular love and affection" the king had shown the University of Paris proved the extent of the king's true Christian faith. Pushing this point further, he cited the number of "scholars of great eloquence and learning" in the kingdom, for the purpose of observing that he knew the king would have listened to his "very humble and pious daughter, the University of Paris" regarding the schism had he been aware that her advice was available.[84] A reasonable Christian king, Gerson's sermon implied, had no other choice than to accept the advice of such renowned experts. In short, although he voiced the university's subordinate position with respect to the king, his argument implied that the king's worthiness as a Christian ruler would be revealed through his treatment of the university. In effect, the authority claims he forwarded in *Adorabunt eum* were not that different from those he forwarded in *Gallia quae viris semper*, with the exception that Gerson's court sermons forwarded their political counsel in an explicitly moral and pastoral format.[85] In fact, in this sermon and most of his other political sermons, Gerson skillfully disguised his political advice as an admonishment against the deadly sins, which would have been widely familiar to his audience as the focus of mirrors for princes and also for an individual's preparation for the sacrament of confession.[86]

In 1392, Gerson pushed this association between the king's devotion to Christianity and his support of the university to the extent that he claimed prophetic authority for the university. After praying for the Holy Spirit to inhabit the king's heart so that the king would be open to the message of his sermon, Gerson reminded the king that wisdom was a necessary good for all those who wished to govern, "because without her one can no more govern the body of the state nor have a civic life than the human body without a soul, which governs and enlivens it."[87] This assertion of the necessity of wisdom for the good governance of the state then allowed Gerson to cite wisdom in Proverbs 8:15: "through

me, she says, kings reign and law makers judge justly." By citing Wisdom's self-referential words, Gerson evoked her persona, which was often represented as female in medieval art and literature, and invited his audience to imagine her standing at the city gates as she does in Proverbs.[88] At the same time, he evoked the University of Paris' identity as the seat of wisdom in accordance with the tradition that the translation of schools followed the translation of imperium. In this sense, he invited his audience to picture the University of Paris as Wisdom's likeness and representative. By 1405, Gerson would describe this female prophetic persona for the university as surveying all of France with "the eyes of her consideration," which were "more numerous than those of the Argus" and "like the beasts Ezekiel saw."[89]

According to Gerson, this far-seeing, nearly monstrously omniscient, dutiful daughter only claimed to advise the king on the basis of her affection and as one Christian was obligated to advise another, much like devout pious women claimed when they involved themselves in politics.[90] Gerson further coopted this well-established female subject position by framing all of the political advice he offered in his sermons as admonishments against the deadly sins. In this sense, he embraced a rhetorical position that was most often employed by those who held no official power in medieval European society, namely that of fraternal correction.

This association was not lost on Gerson. In another sermon he delivered in 1392, which celebrated the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, Gerson claimed that Paul's authority and miracles, which were based upon his great motherly love for all Christians, were equal to or greater than Peter's. As Gerson explained, these miracles allowed Paul, who was "without great eloquence, without arguments and persuasion based upon human wisdom, without a land-holder's power," and "without the authority to do so," and also, who was opposed by the "furious power of tyrants", the "mockery of the philosophers," and "who was often poor and naked, enchained and imprisoned," to convert the majority of the people in the powerful Roman Empire to Christianity.[91] Since Gerson and his colleagues looked to Paul as the first theologian of the Christian church, these words suggest that Gerson planned to adopt love rather than rational argument as the basis of theological authority within the church.[92]

Like both Saint Paul and powerful pious women, Gerson sought to exercise incredible power through this humble position, the acceptance of which simultaneously demonstrates the limited nature of the university's political authority and the boundless nature of Gerson's

aspirations. It seems his strategy was effective both at advancing his career and advancing his assertions regarding academic authority. Almost immediately, Gerson secured the patronage of the Duke of Burgundy in at a time when Philip the Bold of Burgundy was the most powerful magnate in the realm. Shortly thereafter, in 1395, Pope Benedict XIII raised Pierre D'Ailly to a bishopric and named Gerson chancellor of the university.[93] This victory, however, was more than personal, as his frequent sermons encouraged the French crown to value the political advice of the university.[94]

The effectiveness of Gerson's promotion of his own authority can be seen in a royal manuscript dedicated to preserving Gerson's court sermons, which was copied in the mid-fifteenth century. The compiler repeatedly identifies Gerson as an incredibly learned university theologian in his introduction to each of these sermons, all of which forward the university's authority as the Daughter of the King. These sermons promoting the university's authority also offered a powerful means of asserting the king's right to rule on the basis of his willingness to rule in accordance with the dictates of wisdom.[95] Such an argument was general enough to appeal to rulers and ruled alike. It allowed kings to claim that they ruled because they were more rational, just, and Christian than their subjects and it allowed subjects to demand that kings demonstrate their right to rule through their just behavior.[96]

In Gerson's time, however, the ability to speak the symbolic language of both the court and the university allowed a country boy who had earned his way to Paris on the basis of his intellect to stand before the most powerful men of the realm and tell them that not only were their policies wrong but that their entire mode of government was unjust. Gerson had won himself the ability to speak truth to power and he spent the rest of his political career testing how much he could say without getting into trouble. In the process, he created a formidable example for public intellectuals, forwarded the argument that reasoned truths should govern states, and voiced an energetic critique of aristocratic corruption. As subsequent chapters will demonstrate, the fact that he achieved this success by adopting the voice of a female persona had profound consequences for the evolution of his thought, particularly his thought addressing the religious and political authority of female ascetic visionaries and aristocratic women.

2
Charity, Pride, and Patronage

As the previous chapter argued, constructing an allegorical female persona for the university allowed Gerson to insert the results of academic consensus into conversations about royal policy without suffering forceful rebuke from princes who had previously proved hostile to the university's advice. To this extent, it was a successful rhetorical strategy. Gerson's repeated invitations to address the royal court and the University of Paris's repeated reliance upon him as its official representative to the king testify to the ways in which Gerson was able to craft a space for himself to speak that resonated both with the goals of his colleagues and the expectations of the crown. His success in establishing his reputation as a preacher and a leader within the university led to his appointment as the chaplain to the king's uncle, Duke Philip the Bold of Burgundy, in 1393 and his appointment as chancellor of the University of Paris by Pope Benedict XIII in 1395.

Caught between two powerful men who entertained very different visions regarding how to bring the papal schism to an end, however, Gerson eventually experienced a profound institutional, rhetorical, and perhaps epistemological crisis. This crisis rather quickly followed his appointment as university chancellor. The French crown, with the urging of Philip the Bold, began to consider withdrawing its obedience from Benedict XIII almost as soon as Benedict was elected. Although Benedict had promised to solve the schism by renouncing his office in a timely manner, the French perceived that he was not acting quickly enough. Calling French ecclesiastical synods in 1396, 1398, and 1399, the crown first encouraged and then bullied the French clergy into denying Benedict's spiritual and temporal authority over the French church.[1] As Benedict's client, Gerson could not support this decision despite the fact that one of his former teachers from the College of

Navarre, Gilles Deschamps, became the leading theologian in the pro-subtraction party. Gerson's closest mentor, Pierre d'Ailly also remained loyal to Benedict and left Paris once it became clear that Benedict's authority was threatened.[2] This rift among his teachers, however, was not the only tribulation Gerson suffered on account of the subtraction vote.

Although Gerson provided serious theological arguments in opposition to the policy of subtraction in 1395, he and his mentor Pierre D'Ailly were suspected of supporting Benedict XIII because of the offices the pope had given them. As a result, they were excluded from university deliberations on the subject of the subtraction crisis. Nothing could make it more clear that Gerson's colleagues no longer looked up to him as one of their leaders as when the university decided in favor of the withdrawal of obedience, despite Gerson's vocal objections to the policy. The crown then used the university's decision to convince reluctant members of the French clergy to support the withdrawal.[3] As soon as it became clear that dissenting opinions would not be tolerated, Gerson left Paris, ostensibly for the sake of withdrawing from public life.[4]

By 1 March 1400, Gerson had formally resigned the chancellorship and a replacement had been named . The bishop of Paris and cathedral chapter of Notre Dame refused to fill Gerson's place, and by the end of March, Gerson had resumed his post.[5] Moreover, in returning to Paris, where the withdrawal of obedience was a royally enforced reality, Gerson effectively silenced himself on this matter. In fact, he did not deliver any major political addresses on behalf of the university during this tense period.[6] He may have been in charge of policing doctrinal error as chancellor, but he could not address the most crucial question of obedience to the pope, as his faction was no longer in power within the university.[7] Until the French restored their obedience to Benedict in 1403, Gerson had to direct his energies elsewhere.

In light of his immediate institutional and rhetorical situation, it is interesting that upon his return to Paris he initiated a thoroughgoing reform of the practice of theology. This chapter argues that Gerson's reform attempted to reconstruct the university in accordance with the model of a female contemplative saint. This model emerged at least in part as a natural result of the rhetorical strategy Gerson adopted for the purpose of reconstituting theological authority in the wake of the subtraction crisis. Using the same strategy he had adopted for the political sermons he delivered before the French royal court, Gerson focused his institutional critique upon the deadly sins rather than the concrete issues that needed change.[8] In particular, he denounced the scholarly

sin of prideful curiosity rather than the ways in which factionalism and patronage networks prevented the university from arriving at reliable objective truths.

As a remedy for this sin, Gerson urged his colleagues to focus their efforts more upon the humble and penitential contemplation of divine love than upon either obscure speculative questions or the advancement of their own intellectual reputations.[9] These efforts, he explained, would prepare the university to live up to its role in Christian society. The university, he posited in his treatise Contra *Contra curiositatem studentium* (Against the Curiosity of Scholars), existed to promote "the avoidance of the confusion of doctrine." For this reason, he argued "that just as there is one faith and one head in spiritual matters, thus there should be a singular and excellent incorruptible fountain of the study of theology, from which other schools of theology are derived just as streams."[10] Through these admonishments, Gerson attempted to redefine the university in keeping with the idealized republic of learning he had described in *Gallia quae viris semper* in 1389, as indicated by his reference to how the university watered the earth with good teachings in both works.[11]

At the same time that he celebrated the university's intellectual authority, he appeared to be reigning in the university's political ambitions by turning its attention away from the major disputes of the day and back towards its foundational charge, namely the elucidation and dissemination of sound doctrine.[12] The language he employed to describe the changes he asked theologians to make echoed both long-standing critiques internal to academic theology and widespread cultural interest in cultivating a consoling relationship with God.[13] Many of those who critiqued theologians for their intellectual pride and vanity, however, did so by opposing the more reliable and useful knowledge obtained by pious women through their affective contemplation of God to the blindness of proud theologians who chased their own glory when they thought they were seeking the truth. In accepting these critiques and modeling male theologians in dialogue with the example provided by female contemplatives, Gerson's reform became one more force that gendered the university female.[14]

Gerson's reform of the male theologian's gender, however, was complicated to the extent that it was undertaken in dialogue with a full understanding of the rhetorically and epistemologically complex nature of the figure of the female solitary contemplative. Gerson seems to have attempted to divide this figure into two differently charged but artificial categories: one focused upon quiet reading and spiritual consolation,

and the other focused on extreme asceticism and uncontrolled ecstatic experiences. This chapter begins an exploration of the connections between Gerson's rejection of extreme asceticism and ecstasies of some female contemplatives and his valorization and imitation of the devout female reader which will continue in Chapter 5. It does so by mapping Gerson's journey from the optimistic valuation of learned male consensus he enjoyed at the beginning of his career as a politically active theologian through the launching of his ambitious and ambivalently gendered theological and pastoral reforms.

Rethinking academic consensus

In the beginning of 1395, Gerson had every reason to be optimistic about the university's ability to lead the church to a peaceful conclusion of the schism, and the crown to a peaceful conclusion of the Hundred Years War. This optimism derived from two legal victories the university had won in the 1380s.[15] The subtraction crisis, however, revealed to Gerson that those victories had not been as significant as he had hoped. Despite its proven ability to regulate its own members, the university would not be able to lead the church to peace unless the theologians themselves were reformed with respect to their interests, their day-to-day practices, and their gender. Gerson, however, did not come to this conclusion right away. Rather he arrived upon this conclusion through a series of events and coincidences that began with his harsh criticism of the failings of the university and its theologians. Gerson's journey from focusing upon these failings to a gendered theological and pastoral reform reveals the ways in which gender provided him with a means for imagining hierarchical and practical reform.

In both his theological refutation of the proposed withdrawal of obedience and his letter of resignation explaining why he felt compelled to abandon his post, Gerson spoke more plainly about the inner workings of the university than he would on most other occasions.[16] His revelations completely undermined the kinds of authority claims he made in *Gallia quae viris semper*. The charges he levied carried severe epistemological and rhetorical consequences. Namely, Gerson revealed his own awareness of the limited and constructed nature of theological consensus. Moreover, he bluntly addressed the extent to which theologians served as flatterers at the French royal court. In short, Gerson admitted that he was well aware of the fact that the very academic consensus that was supposed to defend France from heresy and solve the problem of the schism was much less reliable than the university's

official reputation suggested. Significantly, the weaknesses Gerson disclosed derived from both external and internal forces.

The most epistemologically challenging limit Gerson's confessions revealed about academic consensus arose from his recognition of its localized and somewhat coerced nature. This admission was particularly problematic against the backdrop of the papal schism. As long as there was only one pope, clergy members could arguably insist that princes obey the tenets of Catholic doctrine as they were defined, promulgated, and enforced by a coherent church hierarchy. As soon as there were two popes, however, rulers were free to choose which pope they would obey in accordance with their own political goals, and as a result, to consider that pope's opponent illegitimate. Recognizing this potential for political autonomy from the church, some rulers and independent territories switched papal allegiances more than once as their political strategies dictated.[17] For Gerson, this practice caused a crisis in theological authority, religious community, and princely ethics.

Each time rulers demonstrated the voluntary nature of their obedience to a given pope; they reinforced the idea that military elites were ruling the Church rather than the Church leading the military elites. As a result, reformers like Gerson feared the dissolution of the Church into multiple smaller units, each controlled by an independently minded prince. Preachers like Gerson also understood that the princes' freedom to change religious allegiance on a whim restricted a preacher's ability to demand substantial and perhaps unpopular political changes by appealing to a given prince's religious responsibility. A prince who opposed to reform could always look for a more agreeable clergy member who would support his policies. Although princes enjoyed such doctrinal flexibility on the local level before the schism, the damage that the schism did to any appearance of verifiable and fixed ecclesiastical consensus drastically exacerbated this problem.[18]

The ability of princes to shape church policy and doctrine in accordance with their political goals was particularly apparent to Gerson in 1396 and 1398 as he vigorously opposed the subtraction of obedience. As Gerson explained in a treatise he wrote in 1395 to protest the harsh treatment shown to Pope Benedict XIII by the University of Paris, any attempt to force the pope out of office could cause a permanent schism of the faith. Gerson provided two examples to demonstrate the truth of this claim: these were the division of the early Christian church into the Latin and Greek churches and the exclusion of the Dominicans from the University of Paris following the papal inquiry into the university's treatment of the Dominican theologian Juan de Monzon in 1388.[19]

Both of these were timely examples. The division of the Greek and Latin churches that began in 1053 provided the most powerful example of the danger that the schism could become permanent. It was also a topic of interest to secular and ecclesiastical leaders alike, since the advance of the Ottoman Empire had encouraged renewed diplomatic conversations between Constantinople and the leaders of Western Europe. Thinkers like Gerson argued often for the necessity of quickly ending the schism in the Latin Church for the express purpose of being able to reach out to the Greek church.[20]

The controversy surrounding Monzon was equally poignant because of the extent to which it demonstrated the limitations of the university's authority and independence as a self-governing corporation. Moreover, these limits became more apparent the longer the conflict persisted. The university had censured Monzon for labeling as heretics all those who believed in the controversial but popular Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. Since the status of this doctrine remained disputed and the Dominicans believed that their theological debates were independent of the university's oversight, they supported Monzon's decision to appeal his case to the papal curia. When it appeared that the university might win, however, Monzon fled the papal court and was condemned for contempt of court. The university then expelled the remaining Dominicans who were members of the University of Paris. The university then celebrated this expulsion as a sign of its universal theological authority. Gerson's 1389 treatise *Gallia quae viris semper* participated in this celebration.

Although the university had been successful in expelling the Dominicans, it had not been able to force a retraction from Monzon or his colleagues. University members liked to attribute Monzon's escape from justice to the evils of the schism, since Monzon avoided punishment by fleeing to the opposing obedience. The schism, however, did not explain why the remaining Dominicans were able to continue to oppose the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception as Monzon had. Their freedom came from the fact that the local jurisdictions that had censured Monzon, namely the faculty of theology, the university as a whole, and the bishop of Paris, actually did not have the authority to define doctrine for the papally protected Dominicans, who continued to play an important role in the church.[21] In this sense, the Monzon case, like the schism between the Greek and Latin churches, emphasized the religious and political uncertainty created by multiple centers of truth and authority from which individual magnates and intellectuals could choose in accordance with their wishes.[22]

In 1395, Gerson feared that yet another religious and political division of such disastrous proportions could easily happen as a result of France's withdrawal of obedience. As he explained, it was likely that in response to any decree the university might issue against the pope, the pope and his supporters, "who are similarly clergy," could "decree some things in opposition." The resulting schism would then be incurable because in order for it to be settled, one party would have to retract its determination. Such a retraction was unlikely, however, because, as Gerson elaborated, when clergy members made determinations they were "not prepared to be corrected to the opposite."[23]

This explanation indicated that Gerson was acutely aware of the ways in which factionalism and intellectual pride could prevent university-trained church leaders from communicating with rival groups and achieving a consensus in times of crisis. In fact, we know he was not speaking hypothetically. One of the biggest obstacles to ending the schism was the refusal of both parties to admit to being wrong. In fact, determining how to end the schism without blaming either obedience played a central role in royal and ecclesiastical discussions.[24] For the University of Paris, of course, its reputation was at stake. It had allowed Charles V to force it to acclaim Clement VII pope in 1379. Despite the coerced nature of the university's decision in 1379, this decision had indeed become a point that required defending. Moreover, the fact that Gerson assumed that the clergy working for each papal claimant would naturally arrive at conclusions supporting their particular patrons also indicates Gerson's awareness of the extent to which the patronage system of academic support and princely coercion influenced the pursuit of Christian truth within university and church assemblies.

On an even more profound level, this particular opposition that Gerson offered to the proposed subtraction of French obedience from Benedict participated in a widespread theological debate regarding the elusive nature of reliable theological truth. This debate concerned the impossibility of identifying with any unshakable certainty the location of absolutely reliable Christian authority, an issue that would preoccupy Gerson throughout his life. Although ultimate authority had come to reside in the pope, the fact that by 1395 two viable claimants to papal authority had existed in competition with each other for 17 years seriously undermined theologians' trust in papal authority. Ecumenical councils, although their truth claims were valued as representing a consensus of the entire assembled church, had been known to err in the past and also needed to be called to assembly by an appropriate

authority figure, like a pope who was universally recognized as authoritative.[25] These difficulties made universities who were always assembled and included some of the most theologically learned individuals in the church seem like appealing alternatives.[26]

The subtraction crisis proved to Gerson, however, that universities also could make disastrous errors. Since Gerson had been promoting the university as the most reliable source of Christian truth available to popes and kings, this defeat affected him profoundly.[27] Although this chapter largely focuses on the rhetorical challenges the subtraction caused for Gerson, it is crucial to remember that these rhetorical challenges arose from a very real crisis in authentication and that Gerson, who had been educated to believe in the truth value of scholastic learning and discourse, very likely experienced a severe epistemological crisis as a result of the subtraction vote and his subsequent departure from Paris.[28]

Rethinking *Gallia quae viris semper*

The fact that Gerson likened the schism between the Latin and Greek churches to the schism within the university caused by the exclusion of Monzon's supporters demonstrates the significance Gerson ascribed to Monzon's defeat. Chapter 1 explained how Gerson's treatise *Gallia quae viris semper* celebrated the university's successful censure of Monzon as evidence of the ways in which its internal mechanisms for regulating the ideas produced and disseminated by its members served to protect France and the greater church from heresy. In addition to confirming the reliability of academic consensus, the university's censure of Monzon reaffirmed the university's ecclesiastical independence and universal authority, as well as the superiority of the theological faculty within the university. In fact, as J. M. M. H. Thijssen and Douglas Taber have argued, Gerson and his mentor Pierre d'Ailly relied upon the university's successful prosecution of Monzon and Blanchard as the basis for future theorizing about the teaching authority of theologians and the extent to which that authority applied to the world outside the university.[29] The university's case against Monzon, however, had never been solid. For this reason, as soon as it was tested, the idealized portrayal of the university collectively constructed and commemorated in the wake of this momentary victory immediately fell apart. More significantly, an examination of Gerson's evolving thought regarding the Monzon case reveals how actively Gerson and his colleagues engaged in imagining and re-imagining an idealized understanding of the university as a means of forwarding the university's authority.

In prosecuting Monzon, the university had overstated both Monzon's lack of experience and the singularity of his opinions. University accounts of the prosecution characterize Monzon as an arrogant individual, who foolishly denounced the popular belief that the Virgin Mary had been conceived without original sin because he had been poorly trained and lacked the intellectual faculties necessary for arriving at reasonable theological conclusions.[30] Yet, many well-respected theologians, including those whom Gerson considered authoritative like Bernard of Clairvaux, believed that it was necessary that Mary's flesh be just as impure and sinful as all other humans in order for the death of her son, Jesus, to redeem sinful humanity. This issue was so complicated and so difficult to decide that the Catholic Church did not determine definitively that Mary had indeed been conceived without sin until the nineteenth century.[31] In this sense, the university did not censure Monzon for forwarding universally offensive opinions, but rather for being on the wrong side of a local eruption of a heated theological controversy.[32]

In fact, as an individual who had been selected to represent his order at the University of Paris on the basis of his scholastic successes in Dominican schools, Monzon was anything but the confused and arrogant thinker university accounts portrayed.[33] He was the spokesperson of an order that both collectively abhorred the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception for defensible theological reasons and had been instigating a debate on this issue by preaching publicly about it since at least 1362, when two Dominicans were censured for preaching on the topic in the diocese of Châlons-sur-Marne.[34] Moreover, Monzon emphasized the collectively generated nature of his arguments when he refused to retract because he had forwarded them at "the command and authority of the fathers of the entire order, which I could not contradict even if I wished."[35] As William Courtenay has demonstrated, Dominican scholars were not allowed to publish their opinions without the approval of the order.[36] Considering that rather than censuring Monzon the Dominican Order paid the court fees for his appeal to the papal curia, it is safe to conclude that he spoke for the entire order, rather than himself.[37]

Seen from the both the university's and the Dominican Order's perspective, the university's attempt to censure Monzon and Monzon's appeal to the papal curia were part of a longer struggle regarding the authority the university exercised as a collective entity over its members who owed their primary loyalty to a religious order. This struggle had become particularly heated between the university and the Dominicans,

as well as other mendicant orders (Franciscans, Augustinians, and Carmelites), after the mendicant orders repeatedly refused to participate in the academic strikes (collective cessations of disputing, teaching, and preaching) that the university called when it determined that its juridical, fiscal, or political privileges were threatened. Although popes and French kings had worked together in the thirteenth-century to force the university to fully integrate its mendicant members, and the university had succeeded in gaining the right to extract a loyalty oath from mendicant members in 1328, the reasons behind the initial conflict remained important points of competition between the two overlapping associations.[38] In fact, the university's inability to negotiate its conflict with the mendicants without outside mediation is one of the reasons Richard Southern suggests for a late thirteenth-century decline in papal enthusiasm for the university's ability to solve the controversies that plagued the church.[39] For this reason, authoritatively censuring Monzon's opinions would have demonstrated that the university did indeed have authority over its mendicant members despite their loyalties to their orders and thus was a universal arbitrator of Christian truths.

In this sense, the university's portrayal of Monzon as an errant individual who acted independently and foolishly when he denounced the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception as heresy may have represented wishful thinking rather than dishonesty on the part of Gerson and his colleagues. Portraying Monzon as a single individual conformed more to the university's idealized understanding of its membership than did portraying Monzon as a representative of a powerful order, which sometimes disrupted the university's work. Further evidence of this kind of thinking can be seen in the university's practice of frequently refusing to allow other clerical groups to participate in the university's liturgical processions because doing so would cause a conflict of interest for too many university members. Those who enjoyed dual membership in the university and other religious orders could potentially dilute the performance of the university's corporate size and unity by processing with their religious orders.[40] In Monzon's case, it was this very dual membership that the university took advantage for the purpose of expelling the mendicants. As Gerson admitted in 1403 when he prepared the university to reintegrate the Dominicans, the university had demanded that all remaining Dominican members take an oath renouncing Monzon's positions as a condition of remaining in the university. When the members refused to take such an oath, which they could not do without permission from their order, they were expelled for disobeying the university.[41]

The university's defenders, namely Gerson and his mentor Pierre d'Ailly, further demonstrated their awareness of the limits of academic consensus when they exaggerated the objectivity of their process of evaluating Monzon's work by recounting how two separate six-person committees of theologians, each having three secular and three mendicant members, had carefully examined Monzon's work. Additionally, they reported that a survey of all of the theologians of Paris – made through the anonymous collection of ballots in publicly placed ballot boxes – revealed a consensus that Monzon was wrong.[42] Through these processes the university's defenders created the impression that Monzon was the only person in the world who embraced his foolish opinions. The other three mendicant orders, however, already embraced the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. In this sense, the university ensured that it would arrive at a consensus that opposed Monzon's ideas by excluding the Dominicans from membership on the committees evaluating Monzon's work. To some extent, these strategies successfully discredited Monzon and created the appearance of objectivity. The monastic chronicler of Saint Denis, for instance, characterized Monzon as "a most bitter wild vine" and suggested that he had appealed to the papal court because he knew he was guilty and so feared receiving a fair trial in Paris.[43]

The university's somewhat fictional portrayal of its expertise during the course of the Monzon case supported the claims made by Gerson and his colleagues regarding the trustworthiness of deliberative academic consensus and the truth of the university's claim to be the site of wisdom on earth, i.e. reliable Christian truth. Gerson knew, however, that Monzon's censure had not really achieved its goal. We know that he knew this because he compared the subsequent exclusion of the Dominicans from the university to the schism that had occurred in the church between its Latin and Greek speaking constituents. As long as the Dominicans remained excluded from the university and continued to preach against the Immaculate Conception, there was the risk that two opposing and somewhat equal centers of theological truth could congeal around these two competing institutions: the university and the Dominican order.

Ironically, in forcing the French clergy to authenticate the crown's policy of subtraction, the crown's advocates, helped by Gerson's former teacher Gilles of Deschamps, employed strategies that created the false appearance of a consensus as the university had done in Monzon's case. For instance, the crown framed the questions for discussion, promised support for those who agreed with the policy, denounced its opponents as heretics, and reduced complex issues raised by discursive ballots to

votes for one of three options. All of these options supported the withdrawal of obedience. They simply differed with respect to whether or not Benedict should be given more time to resign before the withdrawal was enacted. Significantly, the university deliberated independently during this synod and reported its support for the withdrawal while voting was in process. According to Howard Kaminsky, the university's decision swayed other clergy members to support the retraction.[44]

It was this separate vote by the university that must have really challenged Gerson's belief in the value of academic consensus. In 1395, Gerson had already denounced the university's initial decision to support a partial withdrawal of obedience that would prevent Benedict from collecting taxes and collates from French clergy for the purpose of reforming papal finances and convincing Benedict to resign. He did so, however, in a manner that demonstrated the strength of his belief in the advisory potential of a properly achieved academic consensus. Gerson attributed the university's failure to arrive at the appropriate decision regarding the subtraction of obedience to its failure to follow the appropriate protocol in such cases. In particular, Gerson argued that the university had come to its wrongful conclusion about the subtraction of obedience because it had failed to allow the faculty of theology to determine the correct position on the matter before the rest of the university put the question to a vote. In his understanding, by deliberating and voting as an entire body, the university violated its true hierarchical structure, which Gerson believed subordinated the other faculties to the faculty of theology, especially in cases when the university was deliberating questions of church doctrine.[45]

Contrary to Gerson's idealized understanding of university voting, the decision regarding subtraction had been made by the university as a whole with the theology faculty having only "a quarter voice" along with the other three faculties. It would have been better, he argued, if concerning things "which are of the faith" that the university proceed, "just as at another time it was done in the matter of the Jacobites (Dominicans)." What he meant by this was that the entire issue "must be first to be examined by the before said faculty (of theology) most solemnly and wisely." Only once the theology faculty had made its decision, Gerson stipulated, should this decision be reviewed and approved by the university as a whole.[46]

In other words, Gerson suggested in 1395 that if the theology faculty had been leading the university as it should the university and the French clergy would not have so rashly supported the decision to subtract obedience from Benedict. This assertion demonstrates both the

extent to which Gerson was unable to support the subtraction vote and the extent to which he still desperately wanted to believe in the value of academic consensus. His solution, like the university's solution to the Monzon case on which it depended, had required him to imagine the university as functioning differently than it actually did. The Monzon case had only begun in the faculty of theology because it was a disciplinary matter that concerned a supposedly errant theologian. The idealized chain of command that Gerson claimed had functioned in this case did not exist but had rather arisen from circumstance.

As an institution that had grown organically out of the rich scholastic environment in twelfth-century Paris, the university had multiple leaders and centers of power. Because it was not quite able to free itself from episcopal authority, the University of Paris had a papally appointed head, the chancellor of Notre Dame Cathedral. Because it was determined to maintain its independence through collective self-government, it also had an elected rector. The chancellor, not the elected dean of theology, ensured the orthodoxy of the university by controlling who could sit for and pass the examinations that were necessary for the receipt of degrees and the license to teach within the diocese of Paris. The rector of the Faculty of Arts served as the symbolic head of the university in royal processions suggesting that philosophy, not theology, was the public face of the university. The law faculty, not the theology faculty, placed its members in the king's court, the Parlement of Paris, which became an important advisory body of royal government and before which d'Ailly pled his case against Blanchard.

The University of Paris, like the wider church, was indeed a many-headed monstrous body in which multiple centers claimed prominence and authority in competition with each other. Theology only ruled this institution in the aspirations of the theologians. However, for an individual like Gerson, who was actively crafting the epistemological, institutional, and rhetorical justifications for the university's authoritative participation in the solution to ecclesiastical and political discord, ideals were almost as important as realities. As his later career and reputation indicate, ideals were quite powerful in creating the appearance of practical authority and universal truths.

"I am forced": Gerson and patronage

Ideal theological consensus required ideal theologians. Theologians, however, were just as incapable of offering consistently objective and reliable advice to the church and crown as all other aspiring political

advisor because like all members of the secular clergy, they were implicated in the system of benefices that made clergy dependent upon their aristocratic patrons. Gerson, like many of his colleagues, devoted considerable efforts to the task of securing an ecclesiastical living suitable to his station and office.[47] Most church benefices, however, were either controlled by the pope or by local magnates. In Gerson's case, his need was exacerbated by the fact that as a scholarship student, he entered the University of Paris without family resources or connections. His parents, who had spent their savings to send him to Paris, also expected him to provide for his younger brothers while they attended the university. He noted the desperate nature of his finances in a letter he wrote to a prospective patron early in his career. Revealing the pressure he was under as the child who had received all of his parents' resources for the sake of his studies, he fretted about how his parents would feel when he returned from Paris without his degree because he had run out of funds. He even imagined how the neighbors would mock his parents for aspiring to place their son so high despite his humble origins.[48]

Fortunately for Gerson, his skills impressed powerful men. In 1393, Philip the Bold made Gerson his own chaplain and also dean of the collegiate church of Saint Donatian in Bruges. Through these appointments, Philip provided Gerson with a yearly pension, two servants, and three horses. Apparently these resources were not enough to supply for all of Gerson's needs. In 1395, when the Avignon Pope Benedict XIII made Gerson chancellor of Notre Dame and the University of Paris, he allowed Gerson to keep these offices in addition to the chancellorship, which was supported by the income from a small parish in Paris.[49] Benedict XIII had to make a special accommodation for Gerson in this regard, because although medieval clerical leaders frequently held more than one church office for the purpose of augmenting their income, doing so was technically prohibited by church law.[50]

Even so, Gerson continued to complain and to pursue a more lucrative parish benefice than the one he already had for the purpose of increasing his income. From his perspective, his situation was dire. He lamented that he was almost forced to beg and could not maintain a lifestyle appropriate to his office.[51] In addition to being financially stressed, Gerson was well aware of the ethical issues his pursuit of benefices raised, particularly the fact that he held the chancellorship of the University of Paris, which required him to be in Paris, and the deanship of the collegiate chapter of Saint Donatian in Bruges, which required him to be in Bruges. In other words, he collected funds from two offices although their geographical disparity ensured he could not

fulfill the responsibilities associated with both of them well. In response to this situation, Gerson admitted, "I am rightly called a two-headed monster."[52]

Gerson's struggles regarding his benefices continued until he left Paris for the Council of Constance in 1414, and were a source of criticism from his contemporaries.[53] However, most scholars, excepting the mendicants, shared his struggle. Theologians were not supposed to charge fees for their teaching. They relied upon the church's practical solution of financing education by allowing students and teachers to live off parish tithes collected from a distance as long as the absence was not permanent and they hired someone suitable to fulfill their responsibilities while they could not. The multiple benefices needed to support a scholarly life in Paris, however, remained a symbol of church corruption that required reform. More significantly, the extent to which the quest for benefices indebted scholars to aristocratic patrons completely undermined the role Gerson was trying to construct for the university as an objective moral leader for the church and crown in this time of crisis caused by the schism and the Hundred Years War.

Gerson mercilessly exposed the evils of scholarly dependence upon aristocratic patronage in a letter he wrote between 1398 and 1400 detailing the reasons why he should renounce the chancellorship. Noting the ways in which scholars humiliated themselves in an effort to ingratiate themselves to their patrons, Gerson complained about being forced "to please or be respectful" towards "most hostile" lords, to reply in a pleasing manner to men of dubious morals, "to hear constant rumors" which are a source of sin, and to choose between being silent in the face of destructive doctrines or face danger.[54] Considering the extent to which the coercion he suffered forced him to endanger his soul and the little good he was able to do, he questioned whether it was any use for subordinates to try to instruct magnates who expect to be told only what is pleasing to them. Refusing to be yet another doctor of theology who replied to magnates like "jesters and entertainers," Gerson chose the contemplative life. [55]

Gerson's admissions shed new light on his attempts to portray the greedy flatterer as the dangerous opponent of the University of Paris in the first political sermon he delivered before the French royal court.[56] He was all too familiar with who she was, as were the magnates that demanded the constant attendance and agreeability of theologians at court. Their success in convincing scholars to flatter them in exchange for much-needed financial support had an incredibly divisive effect upon the university both as its members struggled to come

to a consensus on important political issues and as they lived their daily lives. As William Courtenay's careful prosopographical study of fourteenth-century Parisian scholars demonstrates, members of the University of Paris did not all share a common social station. There were those who were very wealthy and lived among princes and those who were much less fortunate and lived quite humbly. Their perspectives and loyalties would have been unavoidably affected by this situation. These discrepancies explain to some extent why the university most often cooperated as an institutional body when either its rights were threatened or the French crown needed its public collective support for a potentially controversial policy decision. Most of the time, it seems, university scholars pursued their individual careers by building their own reputations and courting powerful patrons.[57]

Considering the role played by patronage in the day-to-day functioning of the University of Paris, it is not surprising that when the French clergy decided to subtract obedience from Benedict in 1398, it was merely ratifying a decision made by King Charles VI on September 12, 1397.[58] Immediately, the crown issued a royal decree prohibiting any criticism of this policy.[59] Gerson's objections were not only futile; they also placed him in professional and perhaps physical danger. Soon afterwards, he took an extended leave of absence from Paris for the ostensible purpose of administering to the benefice that he held from the Duke of Burgundy at Saint Donatian's in Bruges.[60]

During this leave, he formally resigned his position as chancellor.[61] Since the person who was slated to replace him supported the subtractionists, it is unclear whether Gerson resigned out of his own frustration, was pressed into this decision by his political opponents within the university, or went through the motions of laying down his office for the purpose of acquiring important political capital.[62] Regardless of his motivation, by withdrawing from Paris, Gerson explicitly separated himself from the factors he deemed most compromising to the university's integrity, namely the numerous times powerful outsiders interfered in the university's day-to-day operations through the exercise of patronage.

Whereas most Gerson scholars interpret this resignation, following the explanations Gerson provided, as an indication of Gerson's desire to pursue a more devout and quiet life, it is worth noting that this moment of voluntary withdrawal became the basis of the authority he did exercise when he returned to the university late in 1400. Gerson claimed he left Paris to embrace the contemplative life. In doing so, he repudiated not only the ways in which patronage corrupted the University of Paris, but also the active religious life entirely. He suggested that the best use

of the time and talents of those who were too scrupulous to withstand life at court was in prayer undertaken at a remove from the cares of the world.[63] In short, his explanation and supporting action implicitly condemned all those he left behind as being insufficiently scrupulous and lacking in devotion.

Gerson was not necessarily insincere in making this statement. Others who were not in his difficult situation felt the same way. In fact, one of the strange phenomena of the early fifteenth-century university is the large number of scholars leaving university life for the monastery and the life of quiet contemplation.[64] Regardless of Gerson's motive, however, his decision to embrace the contemplative life claimed access to a particular level of spiritual insight that was crucial to fourteenth-century theological inquiry. This was the aptitude for divine illumination.[65] Moreover, in stepping down from his office, he compared himself to Pope Celestin V, who had voluntarily stepped down from the papal throne in 1296 and was considered a saint.[66]

Further evidence that Gerson consciously augmented his authority as he crafted his resignation letter comes from the extremely short duration of the official resignation – less than one month – and the ways in which Gerson's resignation and his justification for it built upon a longstanding classical and early Christian tradition of establishing one's virtue through political withdrawal. This trope was well known to medieval European Christians because they had inherited it from the classical world. Upon this belief rested the political power of asceticism. People had long learned to trust the opinions of men who had clearly demonstrated their virtue through either their voluntary withdrawal from politics or their feats of asceticism. Both sets of acts announced an individual's complete lack of desire for wealth, power, sex, or material comforts. Such men were trusted because it was believed that reason, not desire, determined their actions. Moreover, since they clearly wanted nothing for themselves, the political assertions they made appeared to have been made for the sake of the common good. For this reason, such men, whether they were philosophers, saints, or bishops, could speak without fear before the most ruthless tyrants. Their reputation for virtue protected them from punishment. Anyone seen mistreating such an individual would appear to be unfit to govern.[67]

This tradition must be taken into account in our interpretation of Gerson's resignation. Most Gerson scholars concur that Gerson's resignation was heartfelt and that he would have indeed retired permanently had he been allowed. These scholars explain that Gerson had always wanted to pursue a life of contemplation, but had been prevented from

doing so by the need to provide for his siblings, as Gerson indeed indicated by lamenting that his resignation would prevent him from fulfilling this family obligation.[68] It is likely that there is at least some truth in Gerson's statement.[69] Gerson and his colleagues, however, were in the midst of a revival of the study of classical literature that was replete with references to the philosophical renunciation of public life. Gerson could not have praised the contemplative life while actually laying down his post without being aware of the performance of virtue that such an act entailed. Moreover, when he returned to Paris, he demanded the same actions from every single theologian within the university as a means of recovering from the embarrassment of the subtraction crisis. In the process, he opened theologians up to a tradition of critique that typically compared pious devout women favorably to overly proud and spiritually sterile academic theologians.

"Take hold of them by force": Gerson's reform begins

Gerson's withdrawal from political life lasted less than two years. As a poor scholar who had made his career on the basis of his skill and reputation, he was not free to abandon the very patronage network that had allowed him to become the well-known intellectual he was. Gerson had been determined to retire and to fulfill his obligations as dean of the collegiate chapter of Saint Donatien in Bruges. He needed this benefice to support himself while embarking upon his contemplative journey. The Duke of Burgundy, who had granted Gerson the Bruges benefice, however, insisted that Gerson resume his post in Paris.

After suffering a long illness during most of the spring of 1400, Gerson returned to Paris in September 1400.[70] He did so, however, on his own terms. He had already initiated his theological reform of the university through letters he wrote from his bed during the spring of 1400. These letters suggest that his theological reform of the university, as much as it may have been influenced by Gerson's own practice of contemplative theology, was also driven by Gerson's desire to strengthen his personal authority as chancellor for the purpose of leading the university and the church towards reform and the end of the schism.

Gerson most clearly laid out his plans for reform in a letter to Pierre d'Ailly, written on 1 April 1400. In this letter, Gerson lamented the "general disaster of the church" and a general "reduction in pious affection." He then suggested that he and d'Ailly solve these problems by entering "this most windy storm or abyss," and force prelates to embrace reform.[71] These plans called for Gerson, as chancellor, to

exercise unprecedented authority within the church and the wider world. His failure to influence the vote regarding the French subtraction of obedience from Benedict, however, demonstrated quite clearly that he did not have such authority as a function of either his office or his reputation as a gifted preacher and client of the Duke of Burgundy and Avignon Pope. Gerson must have realized that if he wished to exercise this kind of authority, namely the exact kind of authority he seems to have exercised at a church synod in 1408 and also at the beginning of the Council of Constance in 1415, he was going to have to construct it himself.[72]

Gerson created this authority for himself by actively redefining the university's role in society, and in the process reframing the ways in which its members were supposed to interact with each other and the wider church. First, Gerson set the university up as the corrector of bishops and attributed all of the patronage problems he had identified as belonging to theologians instead to prelates. Prelates, Gerson complained, failed in their greatest duty of preaching because they were much more concerned with pursuing their temporalities. He then contrasted this behavior with the situation of theologians, whom he claimed were sparingly given temporal goods for their spiritual work.[73] He said this, moreover, despite the fact that as a theologian, he had been given ample material goods by both the Duke of Burgundy and the pope. In this manner, Gerson artificially separated himself and his colleagues from the world of patronage he had revealed in his resignation letter and implicitly blamed prelates for the mistaken subtraction.

Once he had separated the university from the world of politics, he could undertake a theological reform of the university that would allow it to claim the right to correct princes and bishops on the basis of its reconstituted moral authority. This does not mean that Gerson or his colleagues stopped pursuing aristocratic patronage. It means that they defined their purity on other rhetorically-powerful grounds.

Gerson did not attempt to restrict or control theologian's temporalities, he attempted to control their ideas and their behavior by redirecting all of their intellectual energies towards two inter-related activities: contemplation and preaching. The plan was brilliant because it allowed Gerson to liken the proud theologian to the avaricious prelate, and through these associations promote the morally superior authority of contemplative theologians. In this manner, Gerson was able to challenge the prelates and university members who had opposed him during the subtraction crisis and to do so without having to confront them directly. His pursuit of contemplation, his pastoral care for the laity, his

lectures on mystical theology, and his moral harangues against proud curiosity allowed him to cultivate a reputation for being extremely pious, pure, and politically innocent while the subtraction crisis raged around him. Although he may have been sincerely motivated to pursue all of these projects for the sake of improving his own soul and those of his parishioners, the culmination of his reform activities reflected a powerful logic, whether intentional or not, that focused upon two figures: Monzon and the female saint.

Proud curiosity

In a letter he wrote to his colleagues at the College of Navarre shortly before his return to Paris in September of 1400, Gerson evoked his own *Gallia quae viris semper* by first recalling the glory of the University of Paris and its irrigation of the earth with sound doctrine, and then lamenting the fact that it was at present greatly disturbed.[74] Rather than noting the true cause of the disruption, namely the subtraction crisis, however, Gerson reflected upon the university's need for pedagogical and moral reform. More significantly, however, he decried the absence of the Dominicans from the university, noting that their absence deprived the university of good sermons.[75] In doing so, he demonstrated both the powerful role the university's censure of Monzon played in his institutional imagination and the extent to which his thought had changed during the course of the subtraction crisis.

Once again, Gerson blamed the entire case and subsequent exclusion of the Dominicans on Juan de Monzon's rash and impious errors. In this letter, however, he suggested that his secular colleagues might also be possessed by such pride if they refused to reintegrate the Dominicans because they could not forgive the Dominicans for the cost the Monzon controversy had caused to the university's honor and finances. Denying the necessity of such severe animosity, Gerson reminded his audience of the need for Christian charity.[76] Moreover, it is highly likely that his discussion had political import, since the reintegration of the Dominicans and Gerson's return to political life immediately followed the French restitution of obedience to Benedict XIII in 1403.

In taking up this campaign to re-integrate the Dominicans, Gerson reaffirmed the fact that the University of Paris was the center of intellectual truth for the entire church, not just one faction of the church. This allowed him to use the reconciliation between the Dominicans and the university as a model for the hoped-for reconciliation between the two opposing papal obediences. Most significantly, however, it allowed him

to characterize the opponents of his reform as internal "Monzons" bent upon tearing apart the university in their prideful competition to establish the supremacy of their intellectual schools and their reputations as gifted scholars. In contrast to these proud scholars, Gerson offered the contemplative soul as a model for theologians to follow. In doing so, he reshaped the theologian's role to the extent that he had to address explicitly the correspondences between this new role for theologians and the pious practices of unlearned laywomen.

Gerson preached the theological reform he had written about during his illness to the members of the University of Paris, beginning with two lectures delivered on 8 and 9 November 1402, and collected in his treatise, *Contra curiositatem studentium* (Against the Curiosity of Scholars). These lectures focused on the theme, "Repent and Believe in the Gospel," and began by examining in great detail the spiritual peril that threatened scholars who refused to follow this command. Only after evoking the specter of divine punishment did Gerson elaborate upon his more precise plans for the reform of the university and the church.[77] These lectures, which anticipated and directly preceded Gerson's famous lectures on the practice of mystical theology, addressed the concerns that Gerson raised in the letters that he wrote from Bruges to Paris during his prolonged illness the previous spring.[78] Namely, they explained how Gerson thought the university should be reformed so that it would become a vehicle of reform for the wider church.

Returning to the theme of useless teachings, the first lecture of the treatise contrasted the pride-induced sins of curiosity and singularity with the salvific effects of true penitence.[79] Since pride offends God, Gerson argued, repenting from pride-driven acts is not a matter of choice. Scholars may choose to repent from these acts immediately, or they may choose to repent for these acts eternally when they are damned. Gerson also urged university scholars to repent because, as he argued, penitence facilitates belief. This is because the penitent soul adopts a humble attitude that allows it to accept the simple truths of the Gospel instead of searching for more complicated truths, which are both unnecessary and beyond its limits.[80]

In presenting this proud and overly curious debater as the most significant threat to university unity, Gerson attempted to meet the university's institutional and political challenges with a moralizing argument. The result was Gerson's rhetorically powerful and famous mystical reform of the university, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

This rhetorically savvy move also had significant consequences for the university's intellectual gender. Throughout the entire history of

its existence, the opposite of the overly-proud scholar had always been portrayed as a pious woman. This trope was used in part to shame proud scholars by proving to them that those whom they least respected exceeded them in religious devotion.[81] The same trope, however, had played an important role in the ability of devout women to claim successfully that they had received revelations directly from God and to influence important political decisions on the basis of these claims. The acute political and epistemological concerns that drove Gerson to embrace this complexly gendered discourse as a central component of his theological reform suggests a more nuanced interpretation of Gerson's famous persecution of these women, which has always been interpreted as an instance of male incursion into female space.[82]

The theologian and female space

Gerson's aggressive attempts to restrict the contemplative practices of pious women has yet to be fully situated in relation to his other religious, political and rhetorical concerns. Historians tend to look to Gerson's relationships with women rather than to politics when attempting to understand his pastoral attitudes regarding ecstatic female piety. The most organic explanation relies upon Gerson's relationship with his sisters, who decided to embrace a life of quiet contemplation at the same time that Gerson decided that he needed to leave Paris and abandon politics.[83] Others have suggested that he encountered the Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life during his stay at Bruges and became interested in their practice of quiet devotional reading and reflection while he was there. Finally, some suggest that Gerson's relationship with the famous court poet Christine de Pizan, who may have sought his spiritual guidance, encouraged him to be more interested in the pastoral care of women.[84]

It is likely that all of these influences helped Gerson to adopt a radical shift in his portrayal of theologians that is best appreciated when compared to the ideas he expressed regarding lay belief, devotional practices and female contemplatives prior to his stay in Bruges during the subtraction crises. For instance, it is likely that Gerson was concerned with the oversight of the laity prior to taking up his position as chancellor in 1395. His handbook for parish priests, *Doctrinal aux simples gens*, which he wrote so that selections of it could be read aloud to the laity by their curates, has proved difficult to date and may have been written before this time.[85] Gerson also described his upbringing as religious, supplying specific examples of his parents' efforts to teach him about the power

of prayer and the meaning of the Passion of Christ. Given this context, it would not be surprising that he would naturally be concerned with ensuring that the laity received proper pastoral care as he explained in detail in his manuals for confessors. Having grown up in a village and maintained close contact with his family, Gerson could readily call to mind detailed descriptions of country life and the concerns of "simple" people, whom he often evoked as the unintended innocent victims of religious controversy and seigniorial warfare. While referring to the suffering of the powerless and uneducated was a popular trope among Gerson's contemporaries in their treatments of the schism and seigniorial warfare, it is likely that he could not make these claims without calling to mind his childhood experiences.[86] All of these conditions likely enhanced Gerson's understanding of the theologian's traditional role as a defender of orthodoxy and promoter of doctrinally correct devotion in a manner that would have encouraged him to pay attention to the university's role in pastoral care as he sought to advocate its authority to shape the decisions of popes, prelates, and princes.

Gerson also definitely demonstrated an early interest in contemplation, maternal love and affective piety as these forces of personal and church reform were portrayed in the lives and writings of ascetic female visionaries. For instance, in his 1392 sermon *Nimis honorati sunt*, he opposed prelates to theologians by contrasting the source of prelates' authority – namely hierarchical positions and worldly wealth – with the boundless love of theologians. Furthering this contrast, he compared the love of theologians to that of Saint Paul, who put off his own entrance into heaven for the purpose of converting as many souls to the Christian religion as possible. Moreover, Gerson demonstrated his awareness of the extent to which this characterization of Paul called to mind the practices and writings of female ascetic visionaries, who urged God to increase their own suffering for the purpose of reducing the suffering of souls in purgatory. Gerson revealed this awareness by carefully distinguishing himself from the heretical position embraced by some of these ascetics by stating directly that Paul had no intention of permanently foregoing his entrance into paradise for the sake of others.[87]

Furthermore, in his 1397 sermon on the Annunciation of the Virgin, he contrasted the political chaos and sorcery that had plagued the French court with the Virgin queen of heaven's practice of secluding herself in her room where she would be protected from the cares of the world and free to practice quiet contemplation. Lori Walters has suggested that Gerson's characterization of the Virgin as a solitary female (seulette) may have reflected his acquaintance and collaboration

with the famous proto-feminist court poet Christine de Pizan, who would adopt the purity implied by this term as the basis of her literary authority.[88] In this sermon, however, Gerson deployed the figure of the Virgin, engaged in contemplative reading in the seclusion of her room a means of warning royal women against bringing ruin to their kingdoms through their failure to protect their own chastity and humility by carefully regulating their contacts and clothing. Whereas chaste mothers brought only good things to their kingdoms, Gerson warned, evil women of high status caused their kingdoms much evil.[89]

Gerson's belief in the healing power of divinely inspired, compassionate, and essentially maternal love, moreover, was not restricted to the vernacular sermons he delivered to the people of Paris and the royal court. He had expressed a similar concern in the *resumpta* or authoritative conclusion of the first public debate he delivered as a licensed master of theology in 1392. In this address, which marked the official beginning of Gerson's official career as a theology master, Gerson argued that the true pope should identify himself to the world by voluntarily resigning his office in the same way that the true mother of a contested infant identified herself by relinquishing her claim when the biblical King Solomon threatened to cut the child in half and give a half to each purported mother.[90]

In each of these instances, Gerson acted as the authoritative theologian who either drew upon the example of female piety and love for the sake of imagining alternative hierarchies, admonishing aristocratic excess or chastising his opponents. Loving and pious women served Gerson as a symbol of the kind of purity necessary to combat the excesses and corruption of the powerful for the sake of defending the truth and the faith. By siding with these examples of female innocence, Gerson proclaimed his own political innocence and purity. Before Bruges, however, he did so in such a way that he did not surrender any of his authority as a male theologian. In this sense, he wielded his discussions of these women in the same manner as his mendicant competitors, especially Dominicans like those who promoted the cult of Saint Catherine of Siena. Catherine, whose holy life served to authenticate the Roman obedience in the schism, inspired considerable publishing efforts as her *Vita* and collections of her letters were being reproduced at the same time that Gerson was experiencing his crisis in authority.[91] In each of these instances, Catherine's feminity symbolized the purity of the cause for which she promoted and served to rebuke the worldly pride of the powerful. Her promoters did not attempt to imitate her.

It is a testament to the challenges that he faced, and perhaps the inspiration he found in Bruges, that when he returned from Bruges to Paris, he encouraged theologians to join with these contemplative women in their practice, while simultaneously circulating works that would allow more members of the laity to embrace a consoling contemplative practice. These post-Bruges pastoral works threatened to collapse the difference between pious lay Christians and theologians that Gerson and d'Ailly had so carefully promoted in the 1380s. In this case, Gerson's instance of intrusion into the sphere of laywomen's spirituality, which became a source of authority for him, began in a very lonely and potentially powerless place.

3
Inspired by Princess Isabelle

Gerson first fully embraced the feminine and embodied subject position implied by the university's royally granted title, the Daughter of the King, in the course of defending the university's rights during the summer of 1404. That summer, violence broke out between members of a university procession and the household of a well-connected member of the king's council. In an characteristically aggressive attempt to assert its privileges, the university sought the punishment of this highly-placed aristocrat, Duke Charles of Savoisy, in addition to the punishment of the members of his household who were directly involved in the violence.[1]

Savoisy's rank, well-placed friends, and refusal to concede to the university's account of the violence it suffered required Gerson to emphasize three crucial arguments as he pursued the university's case. These were the university's privileged status as a royally protected institution, the university's innocence, and Charles of Savoisy's malicious intent. Gerson supported these assertions by portraying the university as a young, enthusiastic, and pious royal daughter who was mercilessly assaulted in the middle of the streets of Paris. In this manner, he equated what he understood to be a purposeful attack upon the university's dignity with the rape of the university's female persona, the Daughter of the King.[2]

This chapter examines the ways in which Gerson consciously gendered the university as a means of emphasizing the university's royal status, youthful innocence, and feminine victimization in the sermon he authored during this conflict titled *Estotes misericordes* (Be merciful).[3] When read in dialogue with other contemporary accounts of the conflict between Savoisy's men and the university procession, Gerson's purposeful feminization of the university reveals his acute awareness

of the complexity of the ways in which gender worked in power negotiations in late medieval Paris. The way he negotiated these gender dynamics, in turn, reveals his goals for repositioning the university in a manner that would close the distance between his own belief in the university's claim to royal protection and his acute awareness of the university's delicate political location within an increasingly volatile situation in Paris.[4] As the king's mental illness deprived privileged royal institutions like the university from negotiating for the enforcement of their privileges through a direct audience, Gerson and his colleagues emphasized the fictive royal kinship the university enjoyed as a result of her title, Daughter of the King, as a means of transferring to the university the respect all French subjects owed to the king and his immediate household.[5] The university hoped that this rhetorical strategy would encourage Parlement to rule quickly and in the university's favor without following its customary investigative process because the king's honor required that anyone who harmed his daughter be summarily punished. This was especially true for those who were so completely lacking in respect for the crown that they were willing to attack the king's daughter in broad daylight in the middle of the city.[6]

Gerson's personification of the university as the Daughter of the King worked within a well-established ecclesiastical tradition most clearly represented by the tendency of clergy members to personify the Church as a whole as either the female figure *Ecclesia* or the Bride of Christ.[7] Georges Duby and others have suggested that these widely employed feminized abstractions of male-run institutions often had nothing to do with real women.[8] This may have seemed especially true under the French monarchy, where the king was understood to be the father of the country, and as a result, all royal institutions were politically gendered as dependent females. In fact, the university's well-established legal and rhetorical use of its title as Daughter of the King developed in dialogue with these traditions.[9]

What is most striking in *Estotes misericordes*, however, is how Gerson's feminization of the university encouraged him to construct a subject position for this all-male institution that closely mirrored that occupied by the king's biological daughter, Isabelle of France (1389–1409). In this respect, the female persona Gerson employed in this sermon was unusually concrete in comparison to the established tradition of female personification, contemporary depictions of the violence that took place between Savoisy's men and the university, other university references to the university's title as Daughter of the King, and Gerson's earlier feminized portrayals of the university.[10] The concrete nature of

Gerson's female personification of the university as the Daughter of the King provides crucial insight into his political goals for the university and his subsequent aggressive opposition of university authority to the informal persuasive authority exercised by royal women.

In examining the ways in which Gerson mirrored Princess Isabelle's public persona as he constructed his female personification of the university, this chapter begins to explore the relationship between powerful noble women and politically ascendant institutions that will be the subject of Chapter 4. In doing so, it pays attention to the ways in which Gerson's context pushed him to feminize his presentation of the university. As Chapters 1 and 2 argued, Gerson, who preferred to authenticate the university's truth claims by characterizing the institution as a collective of learned male experts, feminized his portrayal of the university in response to rhetorical and institutional pressures by emphasizing the university's title as Daughter of the King in the political sermons he delivered before the French royal court and by encouraging theologians to model themselves after humble devout women in the course of his theological reform of the university. Similarly, the university's inability to obtain the punishment of its attackers in the summer of 1404 encouraged Gerson to elaborate creatively upon the university's royally-granted title as the Daughter of the King in a manner that called to mind the French princess Isabelle of Valois, emphasized the university's dependence upon royal protection, and equated the university's dishonor with the dishonor of the king.

This synthetic, creative, and rhetorically effective argument, however, altered the university's well-established tradition of relying upon its royal title as a means of securing the crown's protection. In particular Gerson's elaboration upon this university tradition collapsed the distance between the university and the women of the French royal court. As Gerson drew upon Princess Isabelle's example for the sake of constructing the university's persona, he demonstrated the charged interdependent relationship between female personifications and the public personas of real women. He also took one step further towards placing the university in open competition with the women of the royal court for the right to persuade the men who ruled France.

The assembled university

Gerson adopted the drastic position of portraying an attack upon the university as the violent assault of the king's daughter because of the vulnerable position the University of Paris occupied during the king's

periods of mental illness. This vulnerability became readily apparent on 14 July 1404, when the University of Paris undertook an annual procession to pray for peace in the church and realm and the health of the king.[11] Although university processions were regular occurrences in late medieval Paris, they became more and more frequent as the king's health deteriorated. By moving through the city of Paris in a formalized and religiously sanctioned manner, the university was performing its public identity as an important royal institution with a stake in the king's recovery.[12] The university found such processions to be so valuable that it processed on 328 special occasions along different routes through the city, carrying lamps and arrayed in special vestments. As Antoine Destemberg has suggested, such processions allowed the university to perform its symbolic dominance over the city.[13]

As this particular procession passed by the dwelling of Charles of Savoisy near its conclusion, however, violence broke out between the procession's participants and members of Charles of Savoisy's household. According to all available reports of the incident, this violence occurred in two phases. In the first phase of the violence, at least one horse belonging to a man in the employ of Charles of Savoisy knocked down some of the procession's participants. In the second phase of the violence, men believed to be members of Charles of Savoisy's household attacked the procession participants with weapons and even followed them into a church while mass was being said.

So much disagreement exists between the surviving accounts that this chapter reads the accounts comparatively for the sake of understanding what kinds of gendered political claims they attempted to make rather than to discern what actually happened.[14] Each of the main points of disagreement holds a particular political significance. These points include: the number of horses involved in the first phase of violence, the initial catalyst of the conflict, whether or not university members retaliated against those whose horses had disrupted their procession, whether or not university members followed Savoisy's men back to Savoisy's dwelling, and whether or not those who chased the procession's participants into the church of Saint Catherine were members of Savoisy's household or patrons of a tavern connected to his dwelling.[15]

These differences are significant. If, for example, as Savoisy argued, the incident occurred because disorderly and loud students startled a horse until it ran into their procession, and then angered by the horse's actions, chased its rider, while throwing stones and mud, all the way back to Savoisy's residence to the extent that anonymous tavern-goers attacked them, then there were no identifiable guilty individuals to be

punished.[16] If however, as the university claimed, Savoisy's men purposefully ran their horses into the university procession for the sake of trampling the young children in the front row of the procession, and as a result, intimidating the university, and then compounded their offense by chasing the peaceful university members into a church with weapons and harming them while a mass was being said, these men deserved severe punishment in accordance with a widely-shared legal and religious understanding of the sanctity of churches and importance of the university within the realm.[17] Furthermore, if Savoisy had ordered the attack, then the crown's long tradition of punishing those who violated the university's protected status would require that he be punished regardless of his rank and connections.[18]

Regardless of what actually happened, the university desperately needed a conviction and the public punishment and shaming of convicted party. As Chapter 2 indicated, the university was a loosely organized institution comprised of members who were divided among themselves by the regional nations to which they belonged, their loyalties to different religious orders, and their dependence upon rich and powerful patrons. As Gerson indicated in his call for theological reform, university members were further divided amongst themselves by their loyalties to different philosophical schools.[19] Aside from the oath that they took to the rector, their presence at certain university events, and their responsibility to contribute to the university's legal fees, members of this institution rarely enacted in public their membership within the university in such a visible manner as they did when they participated in a procession.[20]

University processions, in this sense, made the university, as it was idealized in Gerson's works praising corporate consensus, appear as a visible reality. Additionally, when the university processed as a ritually ordered ecclesiastical corporation, it also announced its privileges to all those who witnessed it passing through the streets. These privileges included the freedom from suffering violence at the hands of the citizens of Paris, members of the nobility, and royal officials.[21] Finally, by holding an organized liturgical procession, the university was claiming to perform a ritually effective act. This procession, for instance, claimed to request divine aid for the peace of the church, the health of the king, and the fertility of the land.[22] In doing so, the procession also asserted the university's right to be involved in the matter of the king's health, while simultaneously confirming the university's role as a sacred institution that could intervene with God on behalf of the church, the king, and the people of France.[23]

For these reasons, any disruption of such a procession denied the validity of the ideals, privileges, and authority the university was trying to assert. Regardless of their intentions, those who disrupted this ritual called all of the claims associated with it into question. By physically harming individuals who were supposed to be protected by the general privilege of the clergy and particular privileges granted to scholars, the disrupters announced their lack of respect for the church and their disregard for the university's status as a royally protected institution. This was the case even if the disruption was accidental. The clergy believed that their processions should elicit a level of respect that would instill careful and reverent behavior in all who witnessed them, and as a result, would not consider an accident to be an acceptable excuse for the disruption of a procession. For these reasons, had the university allowed this attack to go unpunished, it would have conceded that it had no authority to make such a public display of its liturgical and theological position within the kingdom, that scholarly privileges were negotiable, and as a result, that the university was not quite as holy or valuable as it claimed.[24]

This interpretation is supported by the agreement among all available accounts that those, who purposefully inflicted violence upon university members and within a church during the celebration of the liturgy, merited punishment. What is significant for our understanding of how the university fit within the city of Paris and why Gerson chose to portray this attack as the rape of the Daughter of the King is the ways in which these accounts disagree. In the disagreements between the accounts we can see arguments forwarding different ideals about urban space, the relative authority of the church and aristocracy, and the university's relationship to the French king.[25]

At the most basic level, the differences in these accounts may be understood as reflecting different assumptions about the relationship between the church and state. In the accounts discussed below, these assumptions were expressed through explicitly gendered language. Paying careful attention to this language allows us to see how different groups within the city mapped power and authority onto differently gendered bodies, how their gender expectations overlapped, and where they diverged. Most significantly, a careful examination of the gendered language employed in these accounts reveals Gerson's political agenda and his skillful maneuvering of the complexly gendered rhetorical field in which he operated as a university-trained theologian addressing the king, the princes of the blood, and representatives of the king's power. Gerson purposefully manipulated the gendered tropes available to him to make the defense of the university a matter of personal royal honor,

reflecting upon the reputation of the king's own family rather than the king's power to protect clerical privileges.

Gerson's elaboration is particularly significant given the ways in which the available accounts disagree about the nature of the privilege of the clergy protecting all clergy members from physical violence. Whereas members of the clergy vigorously defended this privilege for obvious reasons, members of the aristocracy and representatives of the king frequently challenged it.[26] Although university members enjoyed the privilege of the clergy, representatives of the king often imprisoned, beat, and sometimes killed the university members they apprehended for starting fights in bars, harassing women, or engaging in other criminal behavior within the city of Paris. Whenever any of its members suffered violence at the hands of royal officials for whatever reason, however, the university vigorously defended its clerical rights through legal actions, university-wide strikes, and polemical sermons. In each of these instances, moreover, the university eventually convinced the crown to punish the offending official regardless of either the charge that had been made against the injured university members or the university's evaluation of its injured members' guilt.[27]

For instance, in May of 1408, Gerson successfully demanded the prosecution of the provost of Paris for causing the death of two students who were in his custody on the charge of murder.[28] Despite the fact that these students were not completely innocent, however, the university succeeded in forcing the provost to process from one end of the city of Paris to another, accompanied by the dead bodies, and to announce publicly at set locations that these were the bodies of the students which he had caused to die without just cause. Such rituals of public shaming were part of a well-established university strategy for deterring Parisians of all ranks and offices from inflicting harm on university members.[29]

Another strategy the university embraced as a means of demonstrating the inviolable nature of its rights and also its place within the religio-political order was to require those guilty of harming university members to establish memorial chapels, which the guilty would also fund in perpetuity, so that the crime and its punishment would remain fixed in the memory of both the university and the people of Paris.[30] In fact, the church to which the university processed on 14 July, 1404, Sainte-Catherine-du-Val-des -Ecoliers, was one such chapel, founded in 1278. By 1517, 13 such chapels had been founded to commemorate violence suffered by the university.[31]

While some modern scholars have scoffed at the near obsession with the defense of university privileges that marks the writings of

individuals like Gerson, pressing practical concerns informed both the university's and the crown's position in this debate.[32] Rulers, who justified their wealth and privilege on the basis of their ability to keep order, could not afford to allow one group to go unpunished regardless of its offenses without admitting that their power was limited with respect to this group. For instance, the Parlement of Paris repeatedly stated its discomfort with the university's demand that it proceed against Savoisy on the basis of the university's privileged status rather than following customary trial procedure at least in part because doing so would have undermined the Parlement's expertise and authority as the king's court.[33] The Parlement also was the king's daughter, as the university's representative Friar Pierre aux Boeufs suggested in his testimony on 19 August 1404.[34] Furthermore, other royal institutions expected the king to protect them as much as royal officers expected to be able to enforce the law in the king's name and well-placed aristocrats expected the personal relationship they enjoyed with the king and his court to protect them from the legal penalties prescribed for wrongdoers of a lesser status. In short, the university enforced its privileges and special relationship with the crown, as royal officers sometimes noted, at the expense of others who believed that their claims to royal protection should have precedence.[35]

University members, like other clergy members, however, felt obliged to defend their privileges in every instance because as unarmed and outspoken members of society, they would have been particularly vulnerable to violence. This was especially true for university scholars, who often traveled far from home and therefore far from networks of kinship and support, for the purpose of studying in Paris. As they were not citizens of Paris, they were not protected by its laws and could easily be taken advantage of by the permanent residents of the city. As they were not citizens of the territories they passed through, without their privileges they would have been vulnerable to all sorts of violent acts from extortion to murder.[36] For this reason, the university treated every infraction of its privileges as an occasion for demonstrating to the people of Paris and the royal court, through the exemplary punishment of those who breached them, the inviolate nature of those privileges.[37]

Men and horses

The university was successful in constantly reasserting its privileged status at least in part because this dispute about privileges touched upon more abstract and significant understandings of power and authority.

The clergy were immune from violence because they were supposed to be holy and because the holiness they claimed was valued by the aristocrats who protected them. In this sense, royal or aristocratic violations of clerical privileges might be understood as challenges to the authority of the clergy in general and/or challenges to particular clergy regarding their assertions of moral probity and religious authority. We can see these concerns functioning in Savoisy's explanation of the struggle that erupted between members of his household and the university procession as the procession neared its destination, Saint Catherine on the Rue de S. Antoine. Savoisy employed gender language to excuse the fact that some members of his household had violated the privilege of the clergy and insulted a royally protected institution.

Savoisy was forced to adopt the gendered defense that he employed by the charges the university made before the Parlement of Paris on 19 August 1404. The university, represented by Friar Pierre aux Boeufs, had accused Savoisy of supplying himself with "wicked men to be his servants" and "receiving, aiding, comforting, mounting, and arming them" so that they could "commit the said cruel crimes."[38] Reading the attack as politically motivated, the university explained to the Parlement of Paris that Savoisy had sent his men to attack the university, "the daughter of the king," for one of three reasons, each of which placed him outside all respectable human society. As Pierre aux Boeufs explained:

> If he wished to destroy her because she prays for the peace of the church, he is not a good Christian, if for praying for the health of the king, which they were doing, he is not loyal to the king, if for the goods of the earth from which the people live, he is not worthy to be among people.[39]

The friar also demonized Savoisy's men by emphasizing the youth and innocence of the victims, "who were sweetly, devotedly, and simply going along in procession, no more armed than lambs" when Savoisy's men chased them with swords, daggers, knives, and bows and arrows all the way into the church of Saint Catherine at the same time that "the body of the Lord was between the hands of the prelate who was saying the mass."[40] Denouncing the sacrilege involved, Pierre aux Boeufs compared this act to the murder of Saint Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury.[41] Decrying the cruelty involved, he asked "who is more cruel than those who beat small innocent ones, and not with fists, but with short swords" and described how bewildered Savoisy's victims felt as they saw others injured from arrows in the heart, arms,

legs, and hands.[42] Noting the strike the university had called to protest Parlement's failure to punish Savoisy earlier in the summer, he reminded the Parlement of Paris that "no one reads, preaches, or disputes" in Paris, that the university was dispersed, and that more would leave if the guilty party was not punished soon.[43] In short, Pierre aux Boeufs portrayed Savoisy as a wicked, heartless, faithless knight, who was so determined to undermine royal and ecclesiastical authority that he was willing to attack unarmed children in a church during the celebration of the mass. He implied that such a man could hardly be judged human. In fact, he lacked the very rationality that university members celebrated as the height of masculinity and the natural result of the kind of intellectual training they underwent during their studies.[44]

Savoisy, speaking through his lawyer, aggressively refuted the charges forwarded by the university. Since these charges were so serious, however, he also defended himself by affirming his honorable nature, loyalty to the king, and family's history of respect toward the university. He then provided an alibi that would allow for the fact that violence against the university had occurred within his own dwelling without his consent or knowledge. Savoisy explained that he had been fighting in Normandy, and after riding back to Paris quickly, had fallen ill and was in bed under doctor's orders when he heard a commotion within his own courtyard. After leaning out of the window and noticing someone in a clergyman's garb being beaten, he had ordered the beating to be stopped and the doors of his dwelling to be closed. Having forbid his people from doing any wrong, he was further exonerated when two representatives of the university came to him to tell him that some university members had done wrong in his house and to ask for their release. After agreeing to punish those who had done wrong to the university, he then waited until all of the students and other members, along with the university representatives, had departed honorably and peacably.[45]

Through this carefully constructed narrative, Savoisy assured the Parlement of Paris that his personal honor, reverence for the university, and loyalty to the king was such that it would have been impossible for him to authorize any attack upon it. Moreover, he demonstrated that he was a virile defender of France, who roused himself from hard-earned and much needed rest to restore order after over-zealous students disturbed the peace within his own house. Further demonstrating his own trustworthiness and natural leadership abilities, Savoisy characterized the incident as a squabble between mere children and himself as the only fully-adult male on the scene.

Taken as a whole, Savoisy's account suggested that the university had behaved both dishonestly and dishonorably in pressing charges against him. He had not been personally present during the initial phases of the conflict, had tried to stop it, and had graciously pardoned the errant members of the university. Moreover, his final act of benevolently pardoning the university not only emphasized his innocence, but also demonstrated his political competence and superiority in relation to all those involved. He continued to press this point as he sought to place the entire blame for the conflict on the university. That he did so from a perspective that equated militarily-defined masculinity with the right to rule only further discredited the university and undermined its authority.

Savoisy explained that the entire conflict began because university members did not know how to comport themselves as civilized men when processing through the streets of Paris. More particularly, young men in his service found themselves riding their horses into the university's procession because of the failure of the procession's participants to behave responsibly around horses. He reported:

> [O]n the said fourteenth day, a valet went or came from the river on a large horse, and in passing before the children, who were whistling as some times they do, the horse became agitated and smashed into some [of them], for which they threw both rocks and mud at him, such that it was necessary that he dismount; afterwards, two valets from his dwelling on two horses came to the unpaved place to allow their horses to canter, which were agitated because of the children, who were speaking foolishly, and the students were crying "to the stones", and they followed and pursued them [the valets] all the way to Savoisy's house, and in this manner and by force they entered into the court of Savoisy, then they revenged themselves on the valets, some whom were wounded with stones. And because of this, there was a rumor that someone was killing Savoisy's people in his dwelling, some people from the near the region of Tyron came to and went out of the tavern, and they took bows and short swords, and since the students were in the street, they pursued and chased them, … and those are worthy of punishment.[46]

Savoisy's account, in other words, portrays the violence as a result of the careless and aggressive behavior of the university and the opportunistic violence of tavern goers. In the process, it skillfully manipulates contemporary understandings of gender in such a way that not

only places the blame for the ensuing violence on the university but also discredits the university as an authoritative contributor to political debates. It does so by gendering the university as comprised of young boys rather than men. Rather than calling to mind a solemn and ordered procession that was disrupted by an irrational animal, Savoisy implied that the procession was comprised of an unruly group of children who were so unable to contain themselves that their noise startled a horse into a frenzy, and then when the horse behaved as horses are known to behave, fell into a violent temper tantrum that caused them to invade Savoisy's house and attract the unwelcome attention of violent drunks.

In this sense, Savoisy's defense expressed aristocratic assumptions about the relationship between gendered comportment and political authority as it sought to undermine the university's accusations. First, Savoisy's description of an unruly children's procession robbed the procession's participants of the possession of the rationality necessary for governance, which would have been displayed through their controlled comportment. For the nobility, the ability to control an irrational horse, which was a requisite skill for battle, demonstrated a man's ability to control his own passions and thus his ability to rule rationally. This military-centered explanation left no room for the clergy to move in an influential and independent way through the streets and political debates of Paris.[47] After all, they could not even walk through city streets without frightening their neighbors' horses. By contrasting his own restraint and emphasizing the youth of the members of his household who were involved in the violence, Savoisy further discredited the university's account and portrayed the institution as a whole as a disruptive child.

In this sense, rather than expressing the reverence for the university, which Savoisy claimed he felt, this description portrayed the university as a disorderly force that needed to be contained. Savoisy's insinuations that university members were neither honorable nor fully-formed men, moreover, reflected a general aristocratic hostility to any attempts made by university members to involve themselves in royal policy making. Louis of Orléans, for instance, would tell the university only one year later to find its fulfillment in studying and to stay out of politics.[48] In the immediate context, Savoisy's argument also reduced the university's case to the angry complaint of a badly behaved child. From the perspective of his account, there was no cause for a legal proceeding. Careless children had startled horses and enticed drunks and then suffered the natural consequences of those actions.

Demonic pride

The irreconcilable nature of clerical and aristocratic definitions of masculinity becomes readily apparent in the manner that Michel Pintoin, the chronicler of the royal monastery of Saint Denis recalled the event. These irreconcilable perspectives about the ideal nature of masculine virtue, in turn, shaped the way clergy members and military aristocrats understood and presented the events of the conflict. They may even have shaped understandings of guilt. Whereas Savoisy was able to dismiss the entire affair as arising from a series of unfortunate accidents caused by careless children, Pintoin could neither allow accidents to excuse sacrilegious behavior nor attribute the evils done to childish irrationality. Rather, he understood them as resulting from the long-standing problem of aristocratic pride. In this sense, Pintoin's casting of Savoisy as a proud desecrator of a church conforms to existing stereotypes about aristocratic rulers, whose power was based upon military might rather than justice.[49]

Since we are investigating the use of gender as a means of shaping political discourse, polemic, and hierarchies, it is worth evaluating the clerical bias of this account. Unlike Savoisy, the chronicler attributed all of the initial unruliness and civic disruption to members of Savoisy's household. For the chronicler, a single young page's disruption of the university procession resulted from the combination of carelessness and a serious character flaw. The chronicler reports that the "most-stupid youth" had accidently thrown his horse into the procession, injuring its participants, because he had impatiently spurred on his horse as he passed near the processing university. Although the horseman may not have intended to cause harm through this act, his carelessness reflected an inappropriate disregard for the seriousness of a liturgical procession. In this manner, the chronicler portrayed the horseman in a fashion that conformed to clerical ideals of masculinity. Namely, he presented aristocratic lay leaders as being less in control of their passions than the rational and educated clergy.[50]

Following this suggestion that the conflict began because of the unfortunate carelessness of a young noble, the chronicler of Saint Denis characterized the ensuing violence as a battle of honor between the university and Savoisy's household. Defending the university's honor and privileges, the chronicler reports that while members of the university procession were "rebuking him for his evil deed, one slapped him, and soon fleeing, he reported to his lord, weeping his laments."[51] In other words, the university members dishonored this youth in the process

of defending their own honor. The chronicler, however, seems to have approved of their actions because he did not denounce them as he denounced Savoisy's.

Emphasizing that it was a struggle over precedence in public space that fueled the subsequent violence, the chronicler reported that Savoisy then ordered a concerted counter-attack, which resulted in the invasion of a church while mass was being said. According to the chronicler, these men were so overcome with "sacrilegious furor" and lacking in respect "for the church and for Jesus Christ," that they shot "their arrows all the way up to the sanctuary as if it were a den of brigands." [52] Through this characterization, the chronicler suggests that the attackers' concern about their honor was misplaced. Moreover in seeking vengeance for this assault upon the honor of one of the members of his household, Charles of Savoisy clearly violated what the chronicler considered an immutable natural order of space and status.[53]

In fact, the chronicler attributed a state of near-demonic possession to all of the actions that contributed to the violence inflicted upon the university members in response to the university's reprimand of the careless page. The chronicler reports that the page's tearful story "whipped up so many angers and resentments" like a "spark of alum [incites] a vast fire." According to the chronicler, Savoisy's followers were already "transported by the desire for vengeance and possessed by a diabolical rage," when they "ran towards the church with swords, bows, and other weapons while a mass was being said." Drunk with pride, the chronicler reports, the Duke of Savoisy not only congratulated "the instruments of his vengeance" when they returned from committing sacrilege, he also "promised them impunity, counting on his attachment to the king, the queen, and the dukes of France."[54]

Throughout his account, the chronicler focused upon his portrayal of the pride and rage that allowed Savoisy and his followers to lose their heads to such an extent that they thought they could get away with violating clerical privileges and the sanctity of both a physical church and the celebration of Mass. Moreover, he characterized this pride as resembling demonic possession. In doing so, he made a blanket statement about military aristocrats' fitness for rule that complemented Gerson's treatment of the virtues and vices in his political sermons and conformed to traditional treatments of aristocratic pride.[55] He suggested that these aristocrats were so overcome by their passions that they could lose their senses to the extent that they might desecrate a church.[56]

This suggestion that the military elite were easily dragged about by their senses is crucial for two reasons. First, it suggests that for the

chronicler the level of sacrilege involved in desecrating a church was so great that one could not mistakenly carry out a violent attack inside a church unless one was already overcome by the deadly sins of furor and pride. The taboo against committing violence would be too strong for all right-thinking individuals to allow such an event to occur. This belief makes it nearly impossible for the chronicler to tell his story any other way than he did. Second, this reference to demonic possession by the deadly sin pride demonstrates that the chronicler shared Gerson's belief that the leading members of the nobility needed sober, educated, and pious men to advise them in their policy decisions because their own reasoning facilities had been corrupted by their violent lifestyles, overwhelming privilege, and quest for power. In other words, the chronicler's account constructs an idealized image of the hierarchical order of society that is the mirror opposite of the one Savoisy provided but equally consistent with the one forwarded by Gerson and his colleagues at the University of Paris.[57] Following clerical understandings of Christian masculinity, the chronicler effectively feminized aristocrats like Savoisy and demonstrated their need for rational and religiously correct clerical leadership.

Justice

Despite his thorough demonization of Savoisy, the chronicler of Saint Denis did not expect him to be punished. Moreover, Savoisy's actions, as the chronicler described them, demonstrated that he believed he was above the law. This was not an unreasonable assumption. Most powerful nobles did believe that they could count upon either their own status or their powerful patrons to protect them from facing the consequences of their actions. They believed this because to some extent it was true as was evidenced by the fact that although many legal cases were heard in the Parlement of Paris, the king heard the cases involving close family members privately and decided upon them based upon his own discretion rather than the systematic application of the law.[58] Gerson protested this inequitable distribution of justice vigorously in all of his court sermons for very good reason. According to this system, clerical privileges were negotiable depending upon the status of the person who violated them.[59]

Savoisy, according to the chronicler of Saint Denis, expected such preferential treatment. He had good reason, moreover, to feel confident that he would be protected. In addition to serving as the king's chamberlain, he was also a very important client of the king's brother, Duke

Louis of Orléans. Moreover, at the time that his men disrupted and then attacked the university's procession, Louis was effectively ruling Paris. Charles VI, who had suffered intermittent bouts of insanity since 1392, had stipulated in 1393 that Louis would serve as regent after his death. Louis used this promised regency as the basis of his authority during those periods when the king himself was incapacitated.[60]

Louis ruled with the cooperation of the queen, who had been appointed guardian of the royal children at the same time that Louis had been appointed regent. The queen had also been empowered in 1403 to mediate between warring magnates and to rule in conjunction with the royal council on those occasions when the king could not be present. These overlapping grants of power made to Louis, the queen, and other members of the king's council demanded that all parties work together both to see to the government and defense of the realm and also to avoid hostilities as much as possible. This latter task was made more difficult by an ongoing rivalry between Louis of Orléans and the king's cousin, Duke John the Fearless of Burgundy.[61]

The king had been incapacitated for most of the summer of 1404, and had not been available to the help the university when it sought redress for the violence immediately following the incident. This situation placed Louis and Isabeau in a difficult position. Savoisy expected their protection and the university's royally granted privileges demanded his punishment.[62] Moreover, the event had been public, and regardless of who instigated the fighting, the university's clerical privileges, which forbid members of the laity from harming its members physically under any circumstance, had clearly been violated.[63] Furthermore, if Louis pardoned Savoisy, he could have been suspected of encouraging Savoisy's violence for two possible political reasons. First because the university and Louis had opposed each other over the schism and withdrawal of obedience for most of the reign of Charles VI, causing the university to see John the Fearless as a more like-minded ally.[64] Second, the university's procession for the sake of the king's health could be read as a critique of the way that Louis and Isabeau were governing just on the basis of the kinds of rhetorical claims that ecclesiastical processions made. These possibilities ensured that John the Fearless might use any decision pardoning Savoisy as a means of calling into question Louis's loyalty to the king and furthering his own agenda in his dispute with Louis. Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that after receiving the university's complaint regarding the injuries it had suffered that Louis and Isabeau promised the university justice, but stalled in carrying it out. By the time that Pierre aux Boeufs spoke before the Parlement

of Paris, it had become clear to the university that its case might be lost in a long, drawn out, and inconclusive trial.[65]

For this reason, it is either a testament to the strength of the university's campaign or the king's determination to demonstrate his authority over the other magnates that when the king came to his senses in mid-August of 1404, he ruled so decisively against Savoisy.[66] The chronicler of Saint Denis reported Savoisy's punishment with both astonishment and glee. In addition to demanding that Savoisy pay for the university's legal expenses and the health expenses of the injured, the king demanded that Savoisy hunt down and punish the guilty members of his household even if they had fled to the farthest corners of the kingdom. He also demanded that Savoisy's beautiful dwelling in Paris, the place where the violence had transpired, be razed to the ground. More significantly, perhaps, the chronicler noted that on the place where Savoisy's house had stood, a public square would be dedicated to the memory of both his crime and its shameful punishment. For the chronicler, this rare instance of royal justice cemented the inviolate nature of clerical privileges.[67]

For Savoisy, the punishment caused a serious but temporary inconvenience. Demonstrating that he did indeed inhabit a world that functioned by rules other than those determined by the clergy, he redeemed himself by successfully raiding and burning the English coast the following summer.[68] The very fact that he had to redeem himself, however, is a testimony to the effectiveness of the strategies the university employed to bring him to justice.

The university succeeded in its case against Savoisy by emphasizing his malicious intent and portraying its members as helpless and innocent victims of the attack. In this manner, it explicitly challenged Charles of Savoisy's strategy of portraying the incident as the unfortunate response of well-trained men to an incursion of disorderly university students into their space. This strategy may have worked if Savoisy had been able to convince all parties that he had not played any role in the event. In this case, the simple punishment of the men who committed violence within the church may have sufficed. Savoisy had anticipated this reasoning and had blamed the worst violence upon anonymous tavern-goers over whom he had no control. In this sense, Savoisy's account offered Louis, Isabeau, and the Parlement an opportunity to show their support for the university's privileges without actually punishing anyone. Who, after all, could be held responsible when a street scuffle between badly-behaved university children and boys who had not yet learned to control their horses was suddenly overcome by

anonymous drunks who zealously embraced the opportunity for violence? In this sense, it is not insignificant that Savoisy was represented in Parlement by Louis of Orléans's lawyer.

Framing the king

It is likely that Gerson authored *Estotes misericordes* for the purpose of forcing the Parlement to abandon its slow investigation into the truthfulness of the university's and Savoisy's statements, particularly as these concerned Savoisy's claims that university members forced themselves into his dwelling and that university representatives settled the matter with Savoisy that same day when they collected the university members who had become trapped in Savoisy's dwelling. Gerson's employment of gendered royal discourses works to remove the case from this institutionalized legal context of the Parlement, where the procedure centered on gathering the facts regarding the relative guilt of both parties, to the king's private chambers, where Gerson could ask the king how he would punish the infamous criminal who had assaulted the king's daughter in public without feeling any remorse. In this sense, Gerson's sermon, which may have never been delivered, could have served the dual purpose of first, influencing the crown and the Parlement, and second, memorializing the crime.

Although most scholars report that Gerson delivered this sermon as part of the university's first audience with the Parlement of Paris on 19 July 1404, Charles Tournier has argued convincingly that a lack of documentary evidence identifying Gerson as a speaker in the Parlement's records for its audience with the university on that day, as well as the sermon's allusion both to the university's frustration with its inability to secure a quick ruling and its subsequent decision to call for a cessation of all academic activities, suggests the sermon was written later in the summer. Significant overlap between the portrayal of the event by Pierre aux Boeufs and Gerson also suggests that both sermons were developed either in dialogue with each other or within the contexts of the same university discussions. For this reason, Tournier seems to think that Gerson was asked to speak for the University on 19 August 1404 and was unable to do so at the last minute.[69] The ways in which Gerson's argument intensified that made by Pierre aux Boeufs by decreasing the age of the injured university members and fully feminizing the university, however, suggests that Gerson wrote after the university's case stalled on 19 August. We know for instance that the university continued to agitate for an exceptional hearing based upon its rank as

Daughter of the King and the notoriety of the event.[70] Such an exceptional hearing, had it been granted, would have provided the perfect context for Gerson's sermon about the Daughter of the King's honor.

Even if this is not the case, we do know that Gerson wrote his sermon *Estotes misericordes* closely after the incident between the university and Savoisy's men because he drew upon the ideas he developed in this sermon in his most famous court sermon, *Vivat rex*, which he delivered just one year later in 1405.[71] It is also likely that Gerson wrote the sermon prior to the King's ruling, because if he had not, he would have likely memorialized the university's victory as he did in his sermon *Gallia quae viris semper*, which he wrote to celebrate the university's victory over the Dominican theologian Juan de Monzon.[72]

What we do not know is whether or not Gerson ever delivered this sermon and with whom he might have shared it. We do know, however, that Gerson worked quickly in dialogue with current crises and also with his previous works to create a discourse that defended the university's authority to intervene in royal politics. We also know that his colleagues were engaged in the same process. And we know that Gerson was a savvy court preacher who knew what the nobility wanted to hear.[73]

For all of these reasons, this sermon is most valuable as an indication of both what kinds of arguments Gerson thought were necessary for the university to win its case against Savoisy and his hopes for the university's future positioning in French society. His response to the subtraction crisis suggests that Gerson had embraced the project of redefining the university's authority for the long duration.[74] He did not need to win a particular battle. He needed to shift the rules of the game. Since he demonstrated this same tenacity throughout his career, we can use this sermon to understand what he thought he needed to do to prevent future disruptions of university processions and how he could use the disruption that had occurred to advance the university's authority with respect to the French royal court.[75]

In this sense, Gerson's sermon demonstrates most forcefully that he understood how easily military aristocrats could silence the university with the threat of force. Moreover, this understanding would have been reinforced by parallel examples. Gerson was living and working in a time when the magnates of France were using the king's mental instability as a means of reversing the processes of royal centralization that had occurred under Charles V of France and had been continued by Charles VI in the four short years during which he ruled independently prior to the onset of his mental illness. These centralization

efforts had focused upon the creation of a bureaucratic class that could administer the royal government and in this manner protect the crown's resources from opportunistic members of the king's family like Philip the Bold, John the Fearless and Louis of Orléans. These bureaucrats, called the marmousets (little monkeys) by hostile members of the nobility, were expelled from power when Charles V died in 1380 before Charles VI had reached an age that would allow him to rule independently. They were expelled again when Charles VI lost control of his government in 1392.[76] The two other non-noble professional groups that claimed the right to advise the king were the Parlement of Paris and the University of Paris. Although the Parlement of Paris had developed into a firmly entrenched branch of royal government by Gerson's time, the university occupied the same kind of marginal status as the marmousets to the extent that it hoped to interfere in royal government.[77] And even the Parlement of Paris was afraid to rule on the Savoisy affair while Louis of Orléans was in Paris despite the fact that the clerk of the court, Nicolas de Baye, reported that the incident had started when multiple pages in the service of Charles of Savoisy purposefully encouraged their horses forward, in accordance with "their customary extravagance" so that the horses blocked the students' passage into the church of Saint Catherine, causing the students to throw stones and mud at the pages. In short, Nicolas, despite the fact that he recorded Savoisy's testimony, clearly believed that the violence had not begun the way Savoisy suggested.[78]

As he undertook his task of defending the university, Gerson shrewdly alluded to this political aspect of the struggle by emphasizing the connection between the university's vulnerability and its protected royal status. Gerson remarked in astonishment that Savoisy had punished the entire university while it was "very solemnly assembled." Considering this brazen behavior, he argued, individual scholars would not be safe when they went out in twos and threes unless the perpetrators were prosecuted.[79] In this sense he suggested that if Savoisy were not prosecuted, the university would cease to exist. In doing so, he removed the specter of a fully assembled and politically active university from the consideration of the judges. Indeed, Savoisy's account may have implied that the university was attacked because its many processions in the name of the king's health were out of place, and through these processions, it was interfering in the government of the realm in a manner that was beyond its competence. Implicitly denying the political import of processions, Gerson's account portrayed the university as a politically naïve institution that was blindsided by the malicious attack

of yet another member of the aristocracy who was bent on dismantling the foundations of royal government.

Gerson's most aggressive attempt to reconfigure the university as a politically innocent victim, however, turned upon his own careful reinterpretation of the university's title as Daughter of the King. This title allowed the university to emphasize its closeness to the crown in a manner that allowed it to demand the same kind of preferential treatment that Savoisy requested. As Serge Lusignan has observed, the university had repeatedly deployed this title since the 1380s in its interactions with representatives of royal power. In these previous deployments, university representatives had suggested that the king's officials should judge in the university's favor because of her close relationship with the king. Particularly when the university's interests were pitted against those of other ecclesiastical institutions, the university claimed preference because of the royal lineage implied in its title Daughter of the King.[80]

This aggressive positioning on the part of the university did not always prove successful. If the university's opponents included representatives of royal power, then the deployment of this title could be quickly turned against the university to suggest that the university's refusal to accept the decisions of royal authorities demonstrated that she was a disobedient daughter. In January of 1403, when the university defended in Parlement the rights of one of its members to be tried in Paris for a debt owed to a citizen of Rouen, the bailiff of Rouen asserted that since he was the representative of the king in his jurisdiction, the university as Daughter of the King could not rightfully challenge his authority. Although the university seems to have successfully appealed this case to the royal procurator, the argument used by the bailiff remained a resource for the university's opponents. In December of 1403, the university's opponent, the chapter of Saint-Germaine-L'Auxerrois of Paris, secured the support of the king's procurator. When all of the parties appeared in court, the chapter chided the university for taking a position against the procurator of her father.[81] Moreover, the Parlement seems to have provided the same response to Pierre aux Boeufs' unembellished assertion that in attacking the university, Savoisy attacked the Daughter of the King and thus the case demanded an extraordinary hearing based upon the university's royal rank.[82] Moreover, with the king mentally incapacitated and the Duke of Orléans in the position to control events within Paris, the Parlement of Paris, which included one of Savoisy's cousins, was not likely to rule against Savoisy.[83]

Gerson countered these obstacles by portraying the attack against the university as exceptionally savage. A large part of his argument worked

to elicit royal outrage. He accomplished this by highlighting the innocence and nobility of the victim of Savoisy's violence and creatively interpreting the nature of the crime. He also departed significantly from the ways in which the university had been using its title Daughter of the King in its cases before the king's Parlement. Rather than claiming privilege on the basis of royal rank, Gerson claimed innocence on behalf of the university by emphasizing the Daughter of the King's female and youthful purity. He then mobilized this innocence to characterize Savoisy and his men as monstrous beasts whose actions threatened the honor of the king and the rule of law throughout the kingdom. For this purpose, Gerson merged his account of Savoisy's attack against a university procession of young boys and men with the pleas of the helpless and publicly violated Daughter of the King. He did this for the purpose of urging the loyal representatives of her father to avenge an unforgivable injury to her honor.

Rape and infanticide

In Gerson's account, Savoisy's men became evil unprovoked aggressors. Rather than presenting the conflict as beginning with a misunderstanding caused by the youthful mishandling of horses, as both the Chronicle of Saint-Denis and Savoisy's account suggest, Gerson's account paints a picture of young students "trampled to the ground" beneath the horses of multiple adult attackers. Immediately characterizing Savoisy as a particularly heartless individual, he reported that "some of the household of the enemy," motivated by "exquisite wickedness, broke into the procession by ambling and driving their horses at the youths, knocking them down and throwing them to the ground and into the mud." Nor did Gerson admit that the procession's participants responded to the attacker(s) with insults, an admonishing slap, or the throwing of stones. Rather, having the Daughter of the King refer to these members as "my sons, the students," he observed "small and weak children have no other way of avenging except to cry for help and mercy" and "those who could have repelled violence with violence have such temperaments that they would not wish to take up vengeance themselves, but to leave it to the king and to justice." Despite these pleas for mercy, however, Savoisy's men continued to attack the university with weapons "as they should fight against the enemies of the king and the kingdom."[84] In addition to emphasizing the university's innocence, Gerson politicized his account by implying that this attack against the university expressed a seditious as well as criminal tendency on the part of Savoisy's men.

Moving from sedition to sacrilege, Gerson further elaborated upon the helplessness, innocence and youth of the university members who were attacked as a means of stripping his opponent, Savoisy, of any claim to human feelings. Like Pierre aux Boeufs, Gerson described the young university members as "innocent lambs fleeing" and reported that they went into the church of Saint Catherine "as a place of refuge and of safety, like baby chicks go beneath the wings of their mother."[85] Gerson then further elaborated upon the youthful innocence of the university members by reporting that "the good women who were there, caught the arriving children under their mantles" in a futile attempt to protect them from "a persecution exactly like you see in those paintings of when Herod killed the Innocents."[86] By placing these soon-to-be sacrificed lambs in the hands of Paris's most devout matrons, Gerson's account equated the university members that Savoisy's men hunted down in the church with both the beginnings of Christianity and the future of French civilization as it was embodied in French children and protected by good mothers.

Closing off the possibility that Savoisy's men had understandably gotten carried away in the defense of their honor when faced with a disordered and aggressive university mob, Gerson's narrative progressively decreased the age of the university participants until they seemed like mere infants torn from the arms of their protective mothers by men who could be none other than monstrous beasts. In other words, Gerson's narrative conveyed the message that Savoisy ordered his men to attack the university's procession because he held the sanctity of churches and the bond between mothers and children in contempt. Worse, he likened them to Herod's soldiers, who mercilessly murdered infants, under orders intended to bring about the death of the infant Jesus. Savoisy, Gerson seems to imply, ordered an attack upon the university's procession because he desired to murder Christ and persecute Christianity.

Furthermore, Gerson's framing of this account as part of a plea for justice made on behalf of the king's daughter rendered Savoisy's monstrous behavior a matter of the king's honor. Although all parties involved in the Savoisy case demonstrated an acute awareness of the fact that all of the victims in the affair were male, Gerson framed his account of Savoisy's attack in such a manner that the gender of the victims becomes confused. Instead of beginning his plea against Savoisy with an account of the actual attack, Gerson's sermon opens with the Daughter of the King pleading with Parlement to avenge the wrongs she suffered at the hands of Savoisy's men as her father the king would if he were well enough to grant her an audience. Lamenting the fact that the university

as Daughter of the King is "like an orphan" when she cannot speak directly to her father, he characterized Savoisy's aggression against the procession as an assault on a young maiden's honor.[87] Completing his personification of the university as Daughter of the King by speaking in the Daughter of the King's voice, Gerson provided Parlement with the following first person account:

> I suffer coercion (*force*), says the Daughter of the King, and violation (*violence*), not only in one of my parts and of my members, but in all and through my entire body. And each one already knows this; this detestable deed is so notorious that if I wished to hide it or conceal it, it would not be possible.[88]

With this assertion, Gerson begins his task of mapping the corporate body of the university as an all-male institution onto the subject position normally occupied by a noble virgin. It is entirely possible that the first half of the Daughter of the King's complaint may be ambiguously gendered, referring to the institutional honor of the university rather than sexual honor of the king's daughter. The second half of the sentence, however, clearly evokes the emotion of shame, indicating that Gerson did not intend for his audience to envision a powerful institution like the university as the victim of Savoisy's violence. Rather, he sought to evoke the picture of a young girl who needs to worry about her reputation for virtuous comportment and sexual purity.[89]

The possibility that Gerson intentionally endowed the university's title as Daughter of the King with vulnerable female flesh in this passage is supported by what follows. Having established the fact that a crime against honor had taken place, he elaborated upon the identity of the victim by explaining how the crime had come to pass. According to Gerson's narrative, the source of the Daughter of the King's suffering was her own religious piety and love for her father. Still speaking directly in the Daughter of the King's voice, he reports:

> I was seized by [such] filial and loyal love for the king my father, and by devout religion in my sincere innocence, that I went solemnly in an ordered procession all the way to the church of the glorious virgin and martyr of God, Saint Catherine, in the view of all the people, for the purpose of moving them to devotion.[90]

Here once again the complex identity Gerson attempted to craft for the Daughter of the King becomes visible. The mention of a solemn

and ordered procession clearly refers to the university as a powerful corporation. This reference, however, seems to be overpowered by the spontaneous nature of the Daughter of the King's actions. Rather than noting the careful planning required to organize a procession, Gerson suggested that the Daughter of the King acted out of an overflowing love for her father and for her faith. Such enthusiasm evokes a feminine actor within the system of Gerson's thought. For example, his most famous treatise on the discernment of spirits suggest that the divine encounters reported by women and youths should not be trusted in part because of the irrational enthusiasm with which they approach their religion.[91] His reasoning seems to suggest that although those who allowed themselves to be overcome by their enthusiasm might be excused from full responsibility for their actions, they were also to be excluded from positions of unsupervised leadership in the church and state. In this manner Gerson agreed both with the chronicler of Saint Denis and Charles of Savoisy on the principle that public space should be ruled by men who were in complete control of their impulses.

Taken together, these opening assertions made in the voice of the Daughter of the King insinuate that Charles's men attacked an innocent and pious royal maiden and not a collection of politically mobilized or rowdy over-privileged scholars. The reference to "the glorious virgin and martyr Saint Catherine" seems to confirm this portrayal of the university as an innocent and vulnerable female, as does the transition Gerson provided to link this characterization to his account of the struggle between Savoisy's men and the procession's participants. In describing the comportment of the Daughter of the King in procession, Gerson asserted, "[a]lso, I went to the Church of Saint Catherine, in my sincerity, in the innocence of my members, in a very beautiful arrangement and in a marvelous number."[92]

This assertion allowed Gerson to begin his account of a well-ordered procession of the members of a large and powerful institution without losing the impression that the subject of this procession was female. The speaking "I" that had up to this point been personified as a young and vulnerable royal girl on her way to church, if traveling as a modest high-born maiden, would have been accompanied by others of equal rank to defend her honor. She has done so sincerely, with no political motivation. And yet, the innocent members of this procession that had been arranged beautifully and contained a marvelous number of individuals could also be the University of Paris, marching in full force to demonstrate to the people watching the university's pious support for the king. In effect, this transition transfers the feminine innocence

and vulnerability Gerson attributed to the figure the Daughter of the King to the multitude of university members engaged in the procession. This transformation is crucial. French kings regularly used university processions to shore up popular support for their rule and policies.[93] The university also frequently processed as a means of expressing its own political opinion. Seen from this perspective, the procession Savoisy attacked mostly likely would have signaled to the members of the nobility that the university wanted a voice in the governing of the realm during the king's mental lapses. Gerson, however, by portraying the university procession as a spontaneous act of piety undertaken by a virginal young girl, suggested a much more innocent motivation and a much less threatening processing subject. According to Gerson's account it was the embodiment of nobility and innocence that Savoisy attacked, not a powerful corporation making a bid for authority.

Only after providing this introduction did Gerson first recount how Savoisy's men maliciously used their horses to trample young and helpless school boys to the ground and then explain the harm this attack inflicted upon the institutional honor of the university and the personal honor of its injured officials. The injured female body of the Daughter of the King, however, frames both ends of Gerson's account. He returned to her identity at the close of his narrative by begging the Parlement to have mercy on both "the Daughter of the King and her humiliation" and the king and the entire aristocracy. As he explained, "as the honor of the daughter affects the honor of the father, equally, the daughter cannot be dishonored without the dishonor of the father."[94] While it would be possible to interpret Gerson's reference to the king's lost honor as a general reference to the damage the king's prestige would suffer as the result of his inability to protect those whom he has promised to protect, namely the legally privileged university, Gerson's references to shame, spontaneous piety, and the honor of fathers and daughters all suggest that in addition to speaking to the institutional needs of the university he also sought to evoke the image of a vulnerable but virtuous royal girl who, after being shamelessly attacked and humiliated, was in need of her father's protection. In doing so, he likened the university to the virgins of late antique and medieval hagiography whose purity was proven by their narrow and graphically-narrated escapes from sexual violation.[95]

Gerson's selective memory of events, careful description of the injured youths among the university party, and personification of the university as the king's victimized daughter allowed him to turn what may have been a street scuffle between opposing political factions

into a "repugnant" act of "abominable sacrilege," and "very ruthless depravity," having "no equal in its wickedness," which Savoisy's men inflicted upon the innocent and politically non-threatening university to the great dishonor of the French crown.[96] This attempt to demonize Savoisy turns upon Gerson's portrayal of the university as the king's young and pious daughter. By imagining that Savoisy's men attacked an innocent young and royal girl as she tried to perform her religious devotions rather than a powerful Parisian corporation engaged in a political procession, Gerson was able to characterize Savoisy's men as monstrous brutes who should have protected the university as Daughter of the King rather than attacking her if they were actually loyal to the crown.

In this manner, Gerson argued that the preservation of royal authority and justice required the punishment of Savoisy by portraying the violence his men directed against the procession's participants as the violent assault of the Daughter of the King. In doing so, Gerson elaborated upon well-established traditions. The French crown had allowed French universities to claim the title "Daughter of the King" in their negotiations with the representatives of royal power since at least the mid-fourteenth century and ecclesiastical institutions often portrayed themselves as the vulnerable bride of Christ when confronted with aristocratic threats of violence. Gerson, however, breathed rhetorical life into the university's title as Daughter of the King and the violence she suffered through his careful description of the Daughter of the King's appearance, emotions, sight, voice and parentage. These descriptions worked to establish a likeness between his personification of the university as Daughter of the King and the king's flesh and blood daughter Princess Isabelle of France.

Imitating Isabelle

Gerson drew the persona and power of his imaginary female entity, the Daughter of the King, from the symbolic presence of the king's daughter Isabelle in court ritual and diplomatic negotiations. Likening the university to Isabelle served two inter-related purposes. First, it allowed him to portray the university as an innocent victim of violence that contemporary accounts of the event suggest arose because of the misbehavior of members of both parties. This careful framing of university-focused urban disorder as a result of unprovoked aggression on the part of the university's enemies conformed to both longstanding university practice and the institutional narrative cultivated by university members that justified the protection of university privileges at all costs. In other words, gendering the university as female with respect to the

people of Paris, the king's officers, and the French nobility served well both the rhetorical goals and the carefully cultivated public identity of the university as a corporation. The university had sought to be treated as a precious and fragile ward demanding the vigilant protection of both pope and king since the earliest years of its existence. This desire for protection had informed the university's consistent use of the title "Daughter of the King" from the mid fourteenth century when the crown had first granted it that privilege.

Second, claiming the subject position of the king's flesh and blood daughter, Isabelle of France, for the University of Paris also served to mobilize the crown's sympathy for the university's position in its case against Charles of Savoisy. In demanding the punishment of a highly placed member of both the king's and Duke of Orléans' households, the university made important claims about its place within the hierarchy of the kingdom of France. Gerson made it clear that he understood this struggle as a question of relative honor when he portrayed the violence the university procession suffered as the rape of the king's daughter and informed the king in plain words that his own honor had been sullied through the attack on the university. In this sense, the university's case against Charles of Savoisy served, like other defenses of university rights undertaken since its foundation, to secure the institutional privileges and intellectual authority of the university within a shifting field of political loyalties and centers of power.[97] The fact that Gerson continued to personify the university as the Daughter of the King after the conclusion of this conflict in the university's favor suggests that he found this figure useful in the promotion of the university's expertise and favored status within the kingdom of France.

The subject position of young royal maiden constructed by Gerson in his sermon resonated with the values of the French royal court to the extent that it mapped onto the real-life situation of the eldest biological Daughter of the King. Gerson wrote this address to a Parisian audience that would have still been aware of the debate surrounding Isabelle of France's marriage to Richard II of England and her subsequent return to France following Richard's murder. Gerson's deployment of the university as the shamefully wronged Daughter of the King in the aftermath of the overthrow of Richard II and during the same summer that Isabelle's second marriage to the eldest son of Louis of Orléans was announced also served the purpose of challenging the political import of the protection Louis of Orléans and Queen Isabeau were likely providing to Savoisy.[98] Gerson's co-optation of the young Princess Isabelle's history may have suggested the mother and future father-in-law of Isabelle had

an undeniable responsibility to protect the king's other daughters, especially the university, from aggressors like Charles of Savoisy.

The question of Isabelle's honor had played a central role in French politics since 1396, when she was betrothed, at the age of six, to the twenty seven year old king of England, Richard II. French poets who advocated the marriage and perhaps tried to distract potential critics from the twenty-year age difference between the two members of the betrothed couple promised Richard that Isabelle herself was so young and innocent that she would inevitably be an agent of peace.[99] In this manner, the personal experiences and characteristics ascribed to Isabelle served to flesh out Gerson's personification of the university as the Daughter of the King. By cloning for his own purposes Isabelle's unquestionably innocent subject position, Gerson was able to conclusively condemn Savoisy.

Isabelle was a particularly potent figure to associate with the university because of the charged nature of her position in the political negotiations and theorizing surrounding the Hundred Years War. Isabelle's betrothal marked the end of long and difficult peace negotiations between the French and English and the actual marriage occurred when Isabelle was only eight years old. As Fiona Harris Stoertz has argued, such youthful marriages were common among elites, especially royalty, as was the practice of placing future queens in the households of their future husbands so that they could quickly learn the languages and customs of their new countries. These young brides and brides-to-be, however, remained vulnerable until their marriage was consummated at the age of consent, which occurred in their twelfth year. They were particularly vulnerable if the marriage occurred to cement a peace treaty between two kingdoms and the peace did not hold. In these situations, the daughters of foreign kings and enemy magnates could be imprisoned, held as hostages, or physically and sexually abused as a means of insulting their father and thus encouraging hostilities. Kings who could respond to the mistreatment of their daughters with war did so.[100]

These long-standing traditions suggest that as the guarantor of a peace that was not universally welcomed by the English nobility and the people of London, Isabelle occupied a precarious position. The fact that she was a child queen of England married to an unpopular king only exacerbated the situation. Those who opposed peace with France favored deposing her husband and sending Isabelle back to France before the marriage could be consummated.[101] It is not surprising then, that when Henry of Bolingbroke captured and imprisoned Richard II, he dismissed the twelve year old queen's household, including all of its

French members, and held Isabelle in England while he established his authority among the English nobility.[102] Although Henry may not have meant to abuse Isabelle or anger her father, the dismissal of those sent by her father to guard over her suggested an insult to the king of France.

Froissart, a popular chronicler of the Hundred Years War between France and England, also noted the potentially problematic nature of Isabelle's continued presence in England when he reported in detail the complicated negotiations concerning her return to France. The French were particularly concerned that Henry would force Isabelle to marry his own son or some other person without their consent and in blatant contradiction of the promises the English made to the French on the occasion of Isabelle's marriage.[103]

As the chronicler of Saint Denis reported, after a month of negotiations between the English and the French, Henry of England decided that Isabelle could return to France with all of her gold, gems, and silken garments.[104] After the agreement to return Isabelle to her father had been made in May of 1401, Henry then returned all of Isabelle's goods to her during a public ceremony that summer and arranged for her to be suitably escorted by members of the English nobility all the way to Calais, where the Duke of Burgundy took her under his care and provided for her escort to the Northern French city of Bolougne. Philip the Bold of Burgundy dramatically honored the young princess by setting up a pavilion between Calais and Bolougne, where the French nobility could greet Isabelle and partake in refreshments. Philip then escorted Isabelle to Boulogne in the company of "six hundred knights and squires arrayed for battle". To celebrate her safe arrival in Boulogne, the clergy of Boulogne undertook a solemn procession. Similar honors were shown to her as she entered other French cities, including Abbeville, other cities of Picardy, and Saint-Denis until she reached her parents in Paris, who received their virgin daughter with great joy.[105]

Clearly this sequence of events suggests that Isabelle's honor, her intact virginity, and the public displays of respect that her rank required, had been a matter of intense political negotiations for both her father, Charles VI, and Henry of Bolingbroke, the King of England. Henry had forced Charles to negotiate for Isabelle's release, but once her return had been negotiated, he was extremely careful to ensure that the French would have no complaints about Isabelle's treatment. Similarly, Philip of Burgundy took advantage of the opportunity Isabelle's return to France presented to him, and arranged for a lavish display of his loyalty to the crown through his reception and escort of the king's daughter.

These events of such great ceremony and emotional charge occurred just three short years prior to the incident between Savoisy's men and the University of Paris. In light of these relatively recent and well-known events in the life of Isabelle, it is likely that Gerson intended his depiction of the dishonor of the university as Daughter of the King to contrast with the nobility's joyful celebration of Isabelle's safe return from England. Gerson's implicit comparison between the two events would suggest that his personification of the university as Daughter of the King drew some of its rhetorical power from the emotions and sense of responsibility that the French nobility and people of Paris felt towards Isabelle of France, and perhaps the French royal family in general. By likening the university to Isabelle and harnessing the pride and protectiveness that she elicited, Gerson was then able to call Savoisy's loyalty to the crown into question. It may have been all the more significant that he did so just a month or so after Louis of Orléans had successfully negotiated the engagement between his son and Princess Isabelle. If the university were able to convince Charles VI that Louis had defended Savoisy against charges of dishonoring the king's daughter, Louis's ability to guarantee the honor of Isabelle as her father-in-law, might have been called into question.[106]

For all of these reasons, it makes sense that Gerson would have purposefully highlighted the similarities between the university's position as Daughter of the King and that of Princess Isabelle as a means of forwarding the university's case against Charles of Savoisy. By feminizing the university, Gerson was able to make Savoisy's behavior appear monstrous. By stressing the spontaneous and sincere nature of the university's behavior, Gerson was able to deny that the university's procession was politically motivated. Finally, by comparing Savoisy's behavior unfavorably to the nobility's careful treatment of Princess Isabelle, Gerson was able insinuate that Savoisy's attack upon the university was nothing less than an attack against the king's authority. Gerson emphasized this message by elaborating upon what would happen to the kingdom of France if Savoisy remained unpunished. France, Gerson warned, would be plagued by "murders, pillaging, treason, robberies, sacrilege, and the rape of women."[107] In doing so, he asked his audience to imagine an alternative ending to Princess Isabelle's stay in England, one that they perhaps feared during the course of the negotiations between Henry of Bolingbroke and the French crown.

4
Co-opting Royal Women's Authority

As Chapter 3 demonstrated, in the summer of 1404, Gerson characterized the University of Paris in a manner that recalled the very public and politically-charged homecoming of the king's flesh and blood daughter, Isabelle of France as a means of mobilizing the crown's sympathy for the university's position in its case against Charles of Savoisy. Portraying the Daughter of the King as a weak dependent in need of fatherly protection, however, was not suited to the more significant task of creating an independent voice for the university within the government of France. Moreover, as hostilities escalated between the Dukes of Burgundy and Orléans, France seemed more and more in need of such a voice.[1] In this situation, the political authority the queen exercised as the guardian of the dauphin, and thus the future of the French monarchy, offered Gerson both a useful model for shaping the university's political aspirations and a target for political critique. These circumstances encouraged Gerson to reconsider the particular female characteristics he attributed to his personification of the University of Paris as the Daughter of the King.

It is difficult to determine whether or not Gerson consciously set out to create a fully personified hybrid gender identity for the university that he then opposed to the authority of royal and aristocratic women. This effect may have initially emerged as the cumulative result of the juxtaposition of the gendered political discourses Gerson had at his disposal for responding to particular political and rhetorical challenges. By 1408, however, he had come to understand and present the university as a superior, prophetic agent of female persuasion and to oppose this figure most aggressively to the frivolous, inherently sinful, and factitious influence of noble women.

Gerson began to juxtapose directly the university's authority with that exercised by aristocratic women in his 1405 sermon, *Vivat rex* (Long live the king). While maintaining her daughterly dependence and loyalty, Gerson attempted to present the university as the only reliable, objective, and moral authority figure who could help the king and his court see the unbearable consequences their policies had for the university, the city of Paris, and the French people. Gerson further elaborated upon this persona in 1408, in his sermon *Veniat pax* (Let peace come). In this sermon he primarily identified the University of Paris as the daughter and agent of the King of Peace, namely God, rather than the King of France. He then opposed this divine authority to that of Valentina Visconti, the widow of the Duke of Orléans, for the sake of characterizing as diabolically inspired her demand that her husband's murder be avenged. In the process, he demonized all persuasive women while aggressively co-opting the informal authority they exercised within their families for the learned men of the University of Paris.

It is likely that Gerson did not arrive at this aggressively misogynist position on purpose. To some extent, Gerson's revised personification of the University of Paris as the Daughter of the King merely effected a more concrete embodiment of several ideas that he had been playing with as he sought a mode of effectively communicating the university's authority to the French royal court. In this sense, the personifications of the University of Paris in his 1405 sermon, *Vivat rex,* and his 1408 sermon, *Veniat pax,* combined the abstract and objective quality of his comparison of the University of Paris to the virtue Reason and the personification of divine Wisdom from his earliest court sermons with the concrete characteristics attributed to the real women associated with the French royal court such as Princess Isabelle, Queen Isabeau, and Duchess Valentina Visconti. In keeping with his institutional values, he also attributed to this female persona the cumulative, wide-reaching expertise and authoritative consensus of the university's four faculties. The resulting construction was a hybrid figure that was simultaneously both mother and daughter, both female and male, both singular and collective, both allegorical and real, and both related to the king by kinship ties and a completely independent prophetic messenger from the realm of divine truth.[2]

Gerson offered this figure as the most-trustworthy advisor to the crown and guardian for the dauphin in a desperate attempt to free the French kingdom from the chaos of factional politics. In doing so, he entered, whether consciously or not, into a zero-sum competition with the women of the French royal court. No human woman could

seemingly benefit from the divinely inspired, collectively generated, expert and objective bird's-eye-view of politics that Gerson claimed for the university. In this sense, he contributed to a well-established clerical discourse that had challenged the lordship powers of queens and other aristocratic women since the beginning of the twelfth century.[3] He also constructed a model for the male public intellectual that was authenticated in opposition to insinuations of inherent and diabolically enhanced female weakness.

Despite the misogynist tenor of his arguments, it seems that it was rhetorical need rather than misogynist intent that encouraged Gerson to deploy and elaborate upon existing misogynist discourses for the sake of promoting his own authority. As previous chapters have argued the university could not live up to the promises Gerson made regarding the objectivity and universal authority of the university's pronouncements. Gerson sought to establish the university's political innocence and trustworthiness in a moment when all speakers were party to partisan loyalty pacts that implicated them in ongoing factions as either sworn members of these allegiances or the clients of sworn members.[4] In order to escape this trap and situate himself outside of a corrupt and ineffectual system of government, in which he was clearly implicated by both the university's institutional relationship and his own personal relationship with Duke John the Fearless of Burgundy, Gerson co-opted for the university a form of persuasive speech reserved for the queen and other royal women.[5] He then aggressively discredited his female competitors.

In doing so Gerson employed a well-established strategy of pitting good female influences against wicked ones that drew upon two complementary ancient Mediterranean discourses regarding the temptations presented by the five senses and the dangers of female persuasion. These discourses had been adapted by Christian monastic authors into popular treatments on the seven deadly sins, the evils of marriage, and the roles that married women should play in the salvation of their husbands.[6] By situating his argument within this framework, Gerson determined that the prophetic and collectively generated authority of the university personified as the Daughter of the King was only as trustworthy as the human women with whom she competed were deceptive, misguided, and ill-intentioned.

In *Vivat rex* and *Veniat pax*, Gerson associated his female competitors with the vices as a means of shoring up his claim that the university simultaneously represented the voice of objective reason and prophetically inspired wisdom.[7] In doing so, he drew upon classical and

medieval treatments of political and religious ethics, which identified virtues by contrasting them with their opposites. Frequently, the rhetorical strategy of personification facilitated a merging of these two traditions so that virtues were personified by good women and vices were personified by bad women.[8] Gerson had already personified the University of Paris, as the virtues Reason and Wisdom, in the first two political sermons he delivered before the royal court. Moreover, in both sermons, Gerson encouraged an easy slippage between personified vices and his contemporary political opponents.

For instance, in 1391, his sermon *Adorabunt eum* identified the university members as the "counselors who love God above all else" by opposing them to greedy flatterers who care for nothing but their own advancement.[9] Likewise, in 1392, his sermon *Accipietis virtutem* identified the university as the voice of wisdom from Proverbs, without which kings are unable to rule justly or hold onto their kingdoms (Proverbs 8:15). The proof of this identification lay at least in part with Gerson's imaginary debate with the personified bloodthirsty vice Dissension, who voiced the chivalric values which Gerson believed drove the ongoing wars between France and England.[10]

In both of these examples, Gerson identified his opponents as personified vices, which he credited with acting either independently or through the individuals whom they had captivated and misled. These were stock characters that were so vaguely identified and associated with particular behaviors and ideas rather than persons that they could not be mapped onto any particular members of the royal court with any certainty. Although Gerson's 1392 sermon accused all of those who supported continued war with England, whom he called Dissension's suitors, of being more cruel than one having the name Polyphemus, "fomenters of schisms", "enemies of Christianity" and "guesthouses of the devil", their identity remained fluid and abstract.[11]

It is crucial to note that these early sermons do not consistently gender the vices as female. In fact, for the most part, when Gerson associates the vices with historical figures in these first two sermons, he genders them as male. In *Adorabunt eum*, both the counselors who love God and those who have been misled by Avarice enjoyed an implied male identity. Similarly, in *Accipietis*, although Gerson's identification of his enemies as Dissension's suitors imputed a female gender to this vice, he opposed her to the very male personification of himself in the debate that comprises the last section of this sermon. In this sense, both the voice of reason and the political actors chastised retained a male gender in this sermon.[12] Only in his treatments of the vice False Love in

Adorabunt eum, did Gerson invariably recite the names of famous female temptresses, and as a result, portray the vice as exclusively female.[13] In this case, however, Gerson acted in accordance with both a well-established monastic tradition that equated the mere female form with the diabolically inspired temptation to abandon one's vow of chastity and the tendency of high medieval clergy to see each woman as a second Eve who posed a spiritual threat to married men as well as to men who had taken a vow of chastity.[14]

The crucial difference between these earlier sermons and the sermons he delivered in 1405 and 1408 is that Gerson's later sermons explicitly mapped these allegorical vices onto the bodies of particular real women and as a result collapsed the distance between women and the deadly sins in such a way that violently undermined the public roles aristocratic and royal women fulfilled as a result of their status and family responsibilities. At best, this rhetorical strategy contributed to a general suspicion about the intentions and abilities of all politically engaged women that equated them with the evils of factional politics, petty emotions, and all other enemies of the emerging idealized rational state.[15] At worst, it encouraged the development of discourses about witches, which could be used to isolate politically unpopular aristocratic women, as evidenced by Valentina Visconti's involuntary exile from the French royal court in 1396 after rumors spread that she had caused the king's illness through magic.[16]

Such an abrupt and effectively misogynist transition from a generalized if apocalyptic presentation of the evils that plagued France during the schism and Hundred Years War to the naked association of royal women with sin and demons would justify a careful investigation even if Gerson's ideas had not spread and exercised the influence they did over European thought. Shifts in thought like this, especially when they were clearly catalyzed by external factors, provide us with crucial illustrations of how misogyny works and perpetuates itself.

Moreover, this information is equally relevant for intellectual history and women's history. From the perspective of Gerson studies, exploring Gerson's progressive feminization of the vices in his court sermons illustrates the gendered nature of the university's relationship to the French crown, the extent to which Gerson coveted the power he believed royal women exercised, and the gendered nature of the authentication strategies available to him. From the perspective of women's history and gender studies, this shift in Gerson's thinking helps to explain how European Christian society, which always had the capacity to believe in witches and fear women, only came to fear witch conspiracies as potent

threats to political, religious, and social order in the late medieval and early modern period.[17]

While direct evidence of Gerson's contribution to the early modern European witch scare is limited to the circulation of his discernment treatises with the *Malleus Maleficarum* and his general condemnations of magic and sorcery, the evolution of his arguments co-opting female persuasive authority for the university demonstrates how the intellectual and polemical building blocks of witch conspiracy theories could come together in reaction to seemingly unrelated concerns. In this manner, Gerson's progressive gendering of the vices helps to explain witch hunting first and foremost by illustrating how one extensively educated and politically pragmatic individual could, through his interaction with the royal court, begin authenticating his truth claims with reference to female diabolical adversaries rather than academic consensus.[18] The extent to which Gerson's synthesis of the deadly sins with the fear of female persuasion represented his own innovation or a broader cultural trend is difficult to determine. Gerson was not alone in employing the sins as a means of political critique. The use of the sins in mirrors for princes was well established at the French royal court through luxurious royal treatises such as the *Somme le Roi* and moralizing literature like the *Pilgrimage of Human Life*.[19] Finally, the overall popularity of allegorical rhetorical strategies among theologians, poets, and visionaries during the reign of Charles VI has been well established.[20] Gerson's only clear innovation seems to have been the very particular manner in which he constructed the university's authority in dialogue with the deadly sin tradition and then opposed the vices, especially as they were embodied in royal and aristocratic women, to his divinely inspired, prophetic personification of the university as the Daughter of the King.

For this reason, this chapter is devoted to a careful reading of these two sermons in dialogue both with the immediate political context in which they were written and Gerson's pre-existing ideas about women's authority. The interaction of these two forces illustrates how Gerson's theological thought, rhetorical strategies, and political goals developed in dialogue with current debates about royal authority, particularly those involving the queen and other influential women at the French royal court.

Gerson and Queen Isabeau

As Chapter 3 argues, Gerson was inspired to grant the university's title as Daughter of the King more compelling flesh at least in part by

the role played by Princess Isabelle of France in the theatre and discourse of royal and national power both leading up to her marriage in 1396, and following the sudden overthrow and death of her husband Richard II (r. 1377–1399). In a similar manner, Gerson's decision to ground his epistemological arguments regarding the university's trustworthiness as a political advisor in a fleshed out personification of the Daughter of the King in 1405 was inspired by the intercessory and advisory role Queen Isabeau played in her husband's regency government. In this sense, Gerson's rhetorical response to Isabeau's constantly evolving political role was part of a broader phenomenon. As Theresa Earenfight has observed, legal and political events like regencies and guardianships, which made a queen's authority starkly apparent, were always charged moments that often resulted in the construction of new ideologies and institutions around queenship that affected all participants in monarchical power.[21]

After almost burning to death in a fire in 1393, Charles VI of France first appointed Queen Isabeau as guardian to the royal children in conformity with a longstanding Capetian tradition and also the practice of his own father.[22] Noting a mother's greater love for her children and softness of heart, Charles named Isabeau as guardian of the royal children, emphasizing that all decisions regarding them should be made in the presence of her and her eldest son, and in the company of male guardians that he had designated to protect them, namely, the Dukes of Berry, Burgundy, and Bourbon, as well as Isabeau's brother, Louis of Bavaria. He then named his brother Louis of Orléans as regent, ensuring by this division of power that the royal children would be cared for and that none of his relatives would be able to prevent his oldest son from taking control of the government when he reached the age of majority at fourteen.[23] This decision likely reflected the fact that Charles VI had not been able to seize control from his own regency council until he was 20 years old in 1388. His regency council had also enriched itself at the expense of the crown during the eight years between the death of Charles' father and his realization of self-rule. Thus Charles VI came into power with an acute awareness of the ways in which his male relations could weaken royal power to their own benefit.[24]

These provisions that Charles VI had made in the case of his death, however, were more immediately tested because of the mental illness that began to intermittently incapacitate him in 1392. This illness complicated Queen Isabeau's role in royal government by forcing her into the frequent position of having to represent her husband in peace negotiations between warring magnates without exercising his full

authority.[25] Charles VI actively contributed to Isabeau's prominence and predicament. As he realized the extent to which his illness regularly prevented him from mediating in the frequent disputes between his male relations, he progressively empowered Queen Isabeau to mediate on his behalf when he was incapacitated.[26]

For instance, when the Duke of Orléans angered the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry by suggesting that France restore its obedience to Pope Benedict XIII in March 1402, Charles VI set up practical provisions to protect both the pope and city of Avignon from this conflict and demanded that the Dukes approach him before entering into any disputes. On the occasion that he was unavailable, Charles VI demanded that the Dukes approach the queen, who would then call upon the counselors of her choice to advise her in this matter. Moreover, calling her his "very dear and well-loved companion", Charles threatened those who did not follow this prescription with the withdrawal of his aid from them in the future. Furthermore, the king concluded this pronouncement, which he opened with a reflection upon how much Christ, who humbled himself to take on human flesh, wanted peace, by demanding that the dukes take an oath to obey this proclamation both on the gospels and the memory of the passion. By asserting that Christ sacrificed himself for the sake of peace and naming the devil as the source of France's political discord, Charles VI constituted Isabeau's authority in language that Gerson would echo in his 1408 sermon *Veniat pax*.[27]

Although Charles continued to modify the specific nature of the queen's authority, her role as peacemaker remained constant. For instance, he expanded on the practical meaning of the authority he had granted Isabeau in June of 1402 by specifically empowering her during his absences to do "all that we would be able to do if we were there in our own person," noting specifically that the dukes, members of the royal council, and king's officers should obey all of the ordinances that his "companion," the queen, might make.[28] Although Charles VI may have reduced Isabeau's freedom to act in his absences in April of 1403, when he determined that she would rule in concert with the most important dukes and king's council, on the same day, he also effectively removed Louis of Orléans from the position of regent by calling for the immediate crowing of the dauphin upon his death. Moreover, he demonstrated his further trust in Isabeau by naming her first among the list of guardians who would protect the young king if he were crowned while still a minor. The fact that on the same day he also required all the magnates and members of his government, including

Isabeau, to swear an oath of loyalty to him, suggests that Charles VI felt potentially threatened by the ambitions of all of those close to him, even the queen.[29] On 12 October 1405, however, it was the queen, acting in consort with the royal council, who demanded that the dukes of Burgundy and Orléans desist in their military struggle for control of Paris and make peace with each other.[30] As the chronicler of Saint Denis reports, Isabeau was accompanied by the King of Navarre and the Duke of Bourbon when she initiated peace talks and received the two dukes' promise to end hostility in the presence of the Duke of Berry.[31]

This ability to call for peace with the support of powerful magnates is exactly the type of advisory authority that Gerson sought for the university. To some extent, it does not really matter for our understanding of Gerson's rhetorical strategy to what extent the king's royal ordinances intended to empower Isabeau or were effective in doing so.[32] What was crucial to Gerson was the expectation that the queen would have a voice and would even be expected to intervene and take part in the resolution of conflicts. As Tracy Adams has argued convincingly, by ruling in conjunction with the dukes and the royal council, Isabeau behaved as a traditional mediating queen.[33]

In fact, as Theresa Earenfight has explained, queenly intercession both with the king and among other magnates was an institutionalized aspect of a queen's role, often resulting in the creation of formal petitions by those who sought the queen's help in securing a favorable ruling from the king. It played a central role in preserving the monarchy because the queen's feminine pleading allowed the king and other male potentates to change their minds and make concessions without losing their appearance of being forceful and in control. This aspect of monarchy was so important, that some queenly intercessions were elaborately staged events. The resulting interdependence between the king and queen is just one of many reasons why queens, and other noblewomen as well, exercised considerable power in concert with their husbands.[34]

The parallels between this type of mediating and intercessory authority and the kind of protective advisory position that Gerson had been claiming for the university in the political sermons he delivered before the French royal court beginning in 1391 are particularly striking when considered in light of the famous proto-feminist Christine de Pizan's portrayal of queenly intercession. Christine, who had close contacts with the French royal court, shared many friends with Gerson and is thought by many Christine specialists to have collaborated with him, authored many of her works with Isabeau's and other princesses' mediating position in mind.[35] For instance, she explained in *The Book of the*

Three Virtues, which she dedicated to Margaret of Burgundy after her marriage to the dauphin in 1404, why the mediation of women was necessary.[36] She advised that a good lady who learns of the possibility of war, "in thinking of the great evils and infinite cruelties, losses, killings," will "want to work and toil wisely in appealing to God for his aid and very good counsel" concerning "what way of peace may be found." According to Christine, this task fell to women because, "men are by nature more inconstant and hotter, and the great desire they have to avenge themselves neither allows them to consider the dangers nor the evils that might come."[37] In making this argument it is worth noting that she characterized men in a manner that resonated with the description of Savoisy's men provided by the chronicler of St. Denis in his report of the attack the university suffered. Christine seems to have agreed with clerical characterizations of aristocratic masculinity.[38] It is also worth noting, however, that Gerson would attribute such rage and the desire for vengeance upon women in the sermon he preached against Valentina Visconti in 1408, which is discussed at the end of this chapter.

Despite this convergence of thinking about aristocratic male behavior, Gerson's decision to adopt a queenly model as a means of forwarding the university's authority required him to rethink his entire rhetorical strategy. Gerson's early sermons had relied upon established allegorical traditions as a means of constructing an abstract feminine position for the university. He carefully limited any connections that could be made between these abstractions and actual living women, however, because such a construction would have hindered his ability to represent the university's authority as based upon collective, rational, learned, male consensus. Gerson came to reconsider this position as a result of Charles VI's official recognition of and elaboration upon his wife's powers, the intensification of hostilities between the dukes of Burgundy and Orléans, his experiment with modeling the university in dialogue with the public persona of Princess Isabelle in 1404, and the university's interaction with the queen in 1405.

Prior to 1404, he carefully maintained a distance between the university's allegorical personification as Reason combating the deadly sins and her interaction with real-life political actors as a means of maintaining her masculine professional identity. Even in a sermon he delivered in 1392, in which he experimented with portraying the idealized historical person of Saint Paul as an indulgent wet-nurse and anxious mother to all potential Christian converts, he was careful to maintain Paul's masculinity while he emphasized Paul's maternal

traits.[39] Gerson identified Paul, as he had identified the University of Paris in 1389, namely as ""the beautiful clear sun of the world" and then explicitly compared his conversion activities to the work the sun does when it "chases all unclear darkness in its coming." When admonishing the French to give Paul his due, he explained that they were especially indebted to him because he was the teacher of the famous French martyr and patron of the monastery where the kings were buried, Saint Denis, the Apostle to Gaul.[40] In short, he emphasized Paul's virile, authoritative, and illuminating activities.

In this manner, Gerson's exploration of Saint Paul's hybrid gender as mother and teacher resembled Gerson's characterization of the gender of the University of Paris in the sermon he delivered in 1404 for the purpose of seeking the punishment of Charles of Savoisy. The wounded daughterly persona Gerson had crafted for the university in this instance did not claim to exercise political authority. He deployed her only for the sake of eliciting the Parlement of Paris' sympathy. When he wanted to address the university's theological and political authority in the same sermon, he described the university's numerous members and located its authority in its representative nature. Its students, he reminded the king, came from all over France.[41] Although Gerson was willing to feminize the university for the sake of positioning her politically with respect to more powerful secular and ecclesiastical authorities, he was not willing to characterize her intellectual powers as female up through 1404. In this sense, when Gerson imagined Saint Paul as mother in 1392, he acted much in the same way as Bernard of Clairvaux when he imagined himself as the mother of his monks. Both acted as privileged male leaders, who wished to interact with others in a maternal fashion as a means of re-imagining existing social and power relations. The fact that he had to do so reveals the rigidity of medieval gender roles as perceived from the perspective of the clergy, as does Gerson's refusal to fall completely into a fully-fledged feminine role.[42]

In light of how Gerson carefully avoided grounding the university's political authority in the imagined flesh of its female personifications, it is significant that Gerson decided to identify the university with Bathsheba in his 1405 sermon titled *Long live the king*. The similarities between the role played by the biblical mother Bathsheba and the role Charles VI had legally constructed for his wife, Queen Isabeau, indicate that Gerson had become acutely aware that the type of authority he hoped to exercise in the name of the university was exactly like the type of authority that the Queen already exercised. He was fortunate, however, that the exegetical tradition regarding Bathsheba allowed him to

embody the university as a female figure more fully than he had in the past without losing the most crucial aspects of her institutional, collective, male identity. As a result of relying upon the figure of Bathsheba as a means of making space for the university to speak, Gerson forwarded the University of Paris as a much more trustworthy guardian of the dauphin and the French people than the officially appointed guardian, Queen Isabeau.

Vivat rex

Gerson's sermon, *Long live the king*, dwelt upon two inter-related goals. The first of these was the protection, education, and elevation to power of the dauphin, Louis of Guyenne. In this sense, Gerson's sermon shared the concerns expressed by Charles VI in his documents empowering the queen, namely that his children's royal rights should not be usurped by their cousins and uncles.[43] The second was the promotion of just and rational rule of the kingdom. In this second and more pressing goal, Gerson exceeded the concerns of any of the princes and worked on behalf of the more humble and therefore more vulnerable members of the French kingdom, who, according to Gerson, "kill themselves out of rage and despair from coercions they cannot endure."[44] As Gerson elaborated upon these two goals, he provided some crucial insight into just what the university might have meant to convey by processing in the name of the king's health in July of the previous year. As Gerson explained in his 1405 sermon, the words "Long live the king" referred to the king's bodily health, the health of his lineage, the health of his kingdom, and the spiritual health of the French church.[45]

It was in his discussion of the health, education, and well being of the dauphin that he first identified the University of Paris with the biblical queen Bathsheba. His decision to evoke this figure would have been particularly poignant in the moment in which it was deployed. Bathsheba was the mother of one of the most famed kings of Israel, King David's son Solomon. More significantly, she nearly single-handedly prevented another of David's sons from usurping the throne at Solomon's expense. In other words, she prevented the exact type of crisis in succession that Charles VI relied upon Isabeau to prevent (1 Kings 1.1–53).

At the time of Bathsheba's intervention, Solomon, like the French dauphin, was not yet at the age of his majority. His father, King David, was so old he had become frail and thus was vulnerable in a manner similar to the way Charles VI's mental illness made him vulnerable. David, however, had promised Bathsheba that Solomon would succeed

him on the throne. So when the prophet Nathan informed her that David's eldest son, Adonijah, was gathering supporters and preparing to seize the throne, Bathsheba went before David to remind him of his promise to her. He responded by crowning Solomon and processing through the streets with his newly crowned son. The people then cried out *"Long live the king!"*

Gerson's 1405 sermon *Long live the king* was built around this moment in I Kings 1.39, when the people lauded their new child-king Solomon as he processed alongside his aged father. In this sense, the sermon clearly argued for the crowning of the dauphin as king, which would not necessarily disempower Isabeau. Charles VI himself had suggested in the ordinance he issued in April of 1403 that if he were to die before his son reached the age of fourteen, that the young prince should be crowned immediately and rule without a regency. His mother, however, would remain guardian and would participate in the governing of the realm through the royal council.[46] It is perfectly possible, when the similarities between this reading and Charles's ordinances are considered in isolation, to interpret Gerson's adoption of the persona of Bathsheba for the University of Paris as an assertion of the university's heart-felt support for the enforcement of Charles's wishes.[47]

In fact, when the sermon first references Bathsheba in the course of Gerson's exploration of the Daughter of the King's authority, it is difficult to tell whether Gerson claimed queenly authority for the university or merely sought to demonstrate his support for Isabeau's guardianship. This is in part because the reference is so brief. It directly follows his opening assurance that the university addresses the crown with complete humility, "as a very obedient daughter" addresses a father and a "loyal subject" addresses "his sovereign and rightful lord." As Gerson explains, it is because of this obedience and loyalty that the university cries out the same words the people of Israel cried out "to Solomon when David, who was still living, commanded that Solomon would sit on his throne and reign." He then observed that David crowned Solomon in accordance with the entreaty made by Solomon's mother, Bathsheba.[48]

For this reason, Gerson's first reference to Bathsheba seems to distinguish the role played by the University of Paris in the kingdom of France from that played by the biblical queen Bathsheba in David's kingdom. By focusing his sermon on the people's cry "long live the king," Gerson allowed the university to speak for the French people, who desperately sought an end to civil strife. He also celebrated Bathsheba's intervention by recalling that this cry was only possible because of Bathsheba's

successful persuasion of David. All of these details suggest that it would be possible to read this reference as an exhortation to Isabeau to encourage Charles VI to crown the dauphin immediately rather than waiting for the dauphin to be crowned after his father's death. In making this exhortation, moreover, it would seem that the university was patterning itself after the prophet Nathan, who was the one who advised Bathsheba of Adonijah's attempted coup and directed her to play upon David's affection for her for the purpose of bringing about the crowning of her son.

Furthermore, it makes sense that Gerson would open this sermon by asking Isabeau to use her powers to protect the royal succession and save France from political chaos. The sermon, after all, was delivered in Isabeau's residence, although she was not present.[49] In this sense, the University, voicing the clamor of the people, "long live the king," may be understood as a petitioner begging the queen to act upon her natural maternal affection for the protection of her son and her people in the face of a destructive political rivalry.[50] Such a plea, moreover, would follow a well-established model of the relationship between clergy and noblewomen, which urged women to use their husband's affections as a means of influencing policy in a manner that was favorable to the church.[51] This interpretation is all the more likely since Gerson wrote this sermon in dialogue with a letter which Christine de Pizan wrote for Isabeau for the express purpose of celebrating the mediating abilities of women. In her letter written 5 October 1405, Christine explicitly urged Isabeau to follow the good example of Ester and Bathsheba, who successfully counseled their kings against violence. Although Ester does not appear in *Vivat rex*, she does appear in Gerson's 1408 sermon *Veniat pax*.[52]

Four inter-related factors, however, challenge this uncomplicated pro-Isabeau interpretation. These are the timing of Gerson's comparison of the University of Paris to Bathsheba, the established exegetical treatment of this biblical queen, Gerson's university-based opinions about women's authority to teach and rule, and Gerson's desire to construct an advisory position for the university that would transcend factional politics. These factors, when examined in dialogue with Gerson's personification of the University of Paris as the Daughter of the King, suggest that although Gerson may have not felt critical of Isabeau personally, he thought that the University of Paris could preserve the health of the realm more effectively. In this sense, his use of the figure Bathsheba most likely sincerely appealed to Isabeau as a mediating queen and the mother of the crown prince in its opening framing while simultaneously promoting the university's qualifications as a guardian

of the realm and advisor to the crown by identifying the university as the kingdom's allegorical mother and guardian. In this sense, Gerson presented the queen's and university's roles as complementary to a limited extent. By separating the protection of the dauphin's physical body from the governance of the realm, however, he encroached upon the authority that the royal ordinances empowered the queen to exercise. Furthermore, by identifying the source of the kingdom's problems with female vice, he undermined the queen's reputation and authority.

The two sides of Bathsheba

In light of these considerations, the timing of the sermon suggests that Gerson sought to criticize the queen and the other guardians of the dauphin as much as he sought to encourage them to continue to protect their young king once they had ensured his immediate elevation to the throne. Gerson delivered his sermon, *Long live the king*, after a summer of intense fighting between Louis of Orléans and John the Fearless of Burgundy that had devolved into a custody battle over the dauphin and the city of Paris. Alarmed by John's decision to approach Paris at the head of a large army in late August of 1405, Isabeau and Louis fled the city under the disguise of a hunting expedition and then ordered the royal children to follow them the next day. John, however, intercepted the royal children before they could reach their mother and brought them back to Paris, where the king remained, raising the possibility that John could attempt to seize control of the government through his possession of the crown prince. The Duke of Berry responded by securing the city of Paris with his own troops, and the Duke of Orléans amassed troops outside the city. A completely destructive war involving Paris was avoided, however, due in part to the mediating efforts of the queen, who secured a peace agreement between the two dukes on 16 October 1405.[53] Considering that Christine de Pizan wrote her letter to Isabeau extolling the mediating capacities of princesses just eleven days prior to the peace agreement, it is likely that Christine encouraged Isabeau and the princes to accept the mediating role, which Isabeau had been granted by her husband's previous ordinances and which she had fallen into as a result of the circumstances. Gerson's sermon, delivered 7 November 1405, well after the matter was settled, however, asked much more of the queen and the dukes than the peaceful conclusion of the most recent conflict. He demanded an end to wars entirely.

When examined in dialogue with events that preceded the sermon, Gerson's casting of the university as Bathsheba directly opposed the

university's fitness as guardian to the dauphin to that of the queen. Gerson performed this opposition subtly. When he first introduced the figure of Bathsheba, he did so in a manner that seemed to liken her with Isabeau and cast the university as petitioning Isabeau to engage more energetically in the protection of the dauphin and of peace. As his argument developed, however, Gerson aligned the figure of Bathsheba with the University of Paris in a manner that implied criticism of Isabeau's ability as guardian to the dauphin both by evoking a negative comparison between Bathsheba's behavior and Isabeau's and drawing upon the traditional exegesis of Bathsheba's relationship with David to separate the guardianship of the dauphin's physical body from that of the realm.

In making this argument, Gerson was aided by well-established literal and allegorical exegeses of the figure of Bathsheba. Bathsheba was a particularly powerful figure because of the complex exegetical tradition she inspired. As 2 Samuel reports, David's lust for Bathsheba drove him to commit adultery with her and then arrange for her husband to die in battle. In the literal interpretation of this episode, which precedes the birth of Solomon, Bathsheba represents the source of David's sin. In the Psalter of Saint Louis, for example, an illustration of David gazing on Bathsheba is opposed to Louis gazing on the cross as a means of emphasizing the difference between lustful physical vision and the pure vision of the spirit.[54] When applied to the context in which Gerson delivered *Vivat rex*, Gerson's reference to Bathsheba might have been intended to encourage the crown to take its advice from the Church as represented by the University of Paris rather than the queen. In this sense the university, like other arms of royal bureaucracy, promised to help the crown to raise itself above aristocratic power-wrangling, which was something that the queen could not do because she herself was so deeply implicated in the alliances that kept such power-wrangling going.[55]

The well-established literal and fleshly interpretation of Bathsheba reminded men, especially royal men, to avoid the temptation of lust presented by beautiful women. This reminder is interesting in light of some contemporary accounts of the marriage between Isabeau and Charles VI. Although this marriage served the immediate political needs of France, contemporary chroniclers portrayed Charles as having been so overcome with Isabeau's beauty that he married her more hastily than was decorous.[56] For this reason, in addition to urging Isabeau to be more careful with the dauphin, Gerson's evocation of this complex biblical figure also chastised those in power about their fleshly desires in such a way that implicitly challenged any trust that had been placed in the hands of a potentially seductive woman.[57]

In fact, Gerson emphasized this very theme as a cause of the ruin of France later in his sermon. In particular, citing sensual delight as the most dangerous vice for the nobility, he warned knights to beware the fate of those illustrious men who were ruined by their incontinence, like Hannibal, Anthony, Alexander, Sampson and David. Curiously, when he named the women who had brought such men to their ruin, he refrained from naming Bathsheba, whose beauty had caused David to murder her husband. Rather, he made some surprising additions to the standard list of temptresses, which often included Helen of Troy, Cleopatra, and Medea. These were the virtuous Roman matron Lucretia, who killed herself after being raped for the sake of defending her family's honor, and the early medieval queens Rosamund and Brunhild.[58] This strange constellation of dangerous women becomes all the more interesting when compared to a similar listing from a political sermon Gerson delivered in 1392. As part of an admonishment against the dangers of false love, this sermon lists the following famous women whose beauty brought men to their ruin: Bathsheba, Helen of Troy, Delilah, and Cleopatra.[59]

Gerson's revision of his own list of female temptresses suggests that he was aware of the two-sided meaning of his Bathsheba reference and that he intended to use this symbolic complexity for the purpose of co-opting queenly authority for the university. As his mention of Lucretia in this list indicated, even the most honorable women served as temptations to lust. For this reason, Gerson implied, it was preferable that the crown should rely on ecclesiastical institutions, like the university, when seeking policy advice. This reading of Gerson is strengthened by the most accepted medieval allegorical interpretations of the biblical figure of Bathsheba.

Several early Christian authorities such as Augustine of Hippo, Jerome, and Isidore of Seville interpreted David's desire for Bathsheba as Christ's love for all peoples. Bathsheba, according to this tradition, served as a prefiguration of Mary or the Church. Her legal husband, Uriah, whom David killed, was read as symbolizing either the devil or Judaism. In these readings, Bathsheba's bath becomes a baptism and she is equated with "the object of Christ's affection in the *Song of Songs*." These interpretations also characterized her as the Fountain of Knowledge.[60] In this sense, the Christianized and purified Bathsheba simultaneously represented both the Church and the university. The juxtaposition of these two traditions, which would have been apparent to a learned audience, simultaneously cast suspicion upon the influence noble women exercised over their husbands and supported Gerson's

assertion that the university alone offered the trustworthy advice of divine wisdom.

This standard allegorical reading of Bathsheba coincided perfectly with the central message of *Vivat rex* as this message is identified by Gerson's second reference to Bathsheba. Gerson returned to the subject of Bathsheba just prior to introducing his political reform program, which addressed the protection and care of the king's civic life or kingdom. Denouncing "ambition, the mother of evil, cruel treason," Gerson credited the "diligence of Bathsheba", undertaken "so that her son ruled", as a means of encouraging the immediate crowning of the dauphin because "the entire kingdom is also united and joined to him by civil alliance as naturally." Calling for the crowning of the dauphin allowed Gerson to separate the care of the dauphin from the care of the realm, and in this manner, to encroach upon the queen's authority.

For instance, recognizing that the youth of the dauphin demanded that he be "well protected and educated, as the mother of Saint Louis did for him, from which so many good things came," Gerson elaborated that these good things came more from Louis's wisdom and "the strength of his knights, and the justice of his good officers" than from his age at his elevation. Once he had acknowledged Blanche of Castile's role in educating her famous son, he relegated her to the background, emphasizing those with whom the king surrounded himself without explicitly placing the king's mother in that group. Further removing the dauphin from his dependence upon his mother, Gerson presented God as guardian by first citing the biblical precedents for child kings and then noting that "God often wishes and can send prosperity to a kingdom more through innocent youths than by older sinners." God, angels, and good counselors, Gerson promised, would protect the dauphin well if he were crowned king. He then distracted his audience from the controversial nature of his argument by asserting his conformity to God's will and the will of the people. He observed, "God wishes that the king and his noble line be so protected, governed, and instructed that our desire is that it be accomplished," as is the desire "of all loyal French who make this cry: Long live the king! Long live the king."[61]

In this passage, Gerson simultaneously celebrated Isabeau's role as guardian and encouraged her to plea for the dauphin's elevation as Bathsheba pled for Solomon's. Here it would seem that Gerson placed himself as a spokesperson for the university in the place of the prophet Nathan, who encouraged Bathsheba to approach Solomon. What follows, however, suggests that he also sought to circumscribe Isabeau's role. Whereas the previous passage seems to suggest that Gerson charged

Isabeau with the protection and education of the dauphin, the remainder of his sermon asserted the university's right to protect and guard the king's political and spiritual life, namely his kingdom and the church. Gerson explained that "the second life of the king," namely "the civil and political," is "more important that the bodily life alone" because it is "more permanent through legitimate succession."[62]

Once Gerson had distinguished between the king's corporeal and political bodies, he worked to establish the university's authority over the political life. Noting that division and hatred destroyed the political life, Gerson proposed that "the principle intention of the Daughter of the King was to find and help make a remedy" for the disorders of the political realm by identifying the deadly sins that impeded the necessary virtues.[63] Moving to the allegorical realm of the virtues and vices, Gerson established the university as the most trustworthy guardian and advisor for a political reform program. Framing this reform as a battle against the deadly sins, Gerson maintained the university's allegorical role as the mother or guardian of the kingdom's soul while simultaneously offering detailed suggestions for fiscal, sumptuary, military, and juridical reform.[64] In this manner, Gerson advanced the university's authority at the expense of the queen in a manner that was consistent with his previous pronouncements on the limits of women's authority.

A child is born: the Virgin Mary as mother

By presenting Bathsheba as the mother of Solomon following the orders of God's prophet Nathan rather than as the object of David's lust and identifying the university as Bathsheba, Gerson was not celebrating female rule. Gerson had gone out of his way to connect the acceptance of women's limited public authority with the possession of true faith in the incarnation of Christ in a Christmas sermon he delivered in either 1396 or 1402. The sermon, *Puer natus est* (*A child is born*), is most well known for its criticisms of statues of the Virgin Mary that represented her as containing the full Trinity.[65] Gerson addressed these statues in the context of denouncing those who mistakenly revered images and thus committed idolatry. Noting that images served "only for showing to simple people who do not know the scriptures that which they should believe," he explained the necessity of "guarding well against falsely painting a story." As an example of this, he discusses "an image," which has " in its stomach a Trinity as if all of the Trinity had taken human flesh in the Virgin Mary," remarking that "there is neither beauty nor devotion in such work, and it may be the cause of error or irreverence."

Gerson, who would seemingly rather separate the three parts of the Trinity from each other than have the complete divinity contained within women, chose this particular image as an exemplum of all the false images encountered "on pilgrimages or in churches."[66] He seemed to imply that Mary could only carry the Son just like the queen could only take care of the physical body of the heir to the throne and not the civic and spiritual realms he represented.

The *vierge ouvrante* or Shrine Madonna, however, provides only one example of this sermon's systematic dismantling of any claim to female authority that women may have based upon the example of the Virgin Mary. For instance, in emphasizing the singularity of the virgin birth, Gerson explores the ways in which some were confused about the extent to which Mary could be associated with all women. Gerson's orthodox insistence that Mary gave birth without pain and without damaging her physical virginity already separated her from all other mothers. Gerson, however, further separated Mary from all women when he insisted that the fact that Mary had birthed without pain contradicted "the lie and fable" that "the Virgin Mary had the office of women when she gave birth to Our Savior, because she had no need of such help because she gave birth without suffering."[67] According to Gerson, Mary, unlike her medieval counterparts, birthed alone. In this respect he removed the birth of Christ from an area of female sociability and expertise that would have played a crucial role in the lives of most medieval women while simultaneously undercutting a popular aspect of female piety.[68]

The clearest example that Gerson used this sermon to counter any attempt to deploy Marian devotion as a justification of women's authority, however, was his comparison of spiritual and corporeal birth. Gerson belittled the corporal birth of Christ, which linked earthly mothers to Mary by observing that Our Lady "must have preferred to be mother of God spiritually and by grace and by charity than to be his mother bodily without grace and without charity." Although Gerson admitted that the fact that she was granted the right to be both the spiritual and the corporeal mother of God was better than just being granted one of these gifts without the other, he immediately equalized Mary as mother with both male and female believers by urging them "to have great desire to have God with us by grace and charity, because we should prefer this gift" to God taking "human flesh in us" without being "in his grace and in his love."[69] Since the very theme of this sermon was to encourage those in his audience to give birth to Christ in their own hearts, the sermon as a whole undercut Mary's singularity and the significance of

Mary as a role model for royal mothers in a manner that opened up the possibility for men to make similar claims to authority.

When the timing of this sermon is considered, it is highly possible that Gerson delivered it in response to the efforts of Charles VI to empower his wife as guardian of the royal children. Tracy Adams has argued that in the extent of the power that Charles VI attempted to give Isabeau, he was innovative. In fact, Adams has suggested that the regency powers Charles granted Isabeau laid the groundwork for the powerful early modern French queen regents like Marie and Catherine de Medici.[70] This empowerment of female regents countered efforts made by royal bureaucrats to co-opt queenly duties. As recent studies have shown, the discourses activated by individuals like Gerson did not restrict the actual real power of queens.[71] These discourses, however, could shape the way queens and their subjects talked about and framed their power.[72]

Gerson naturally would have viewed Charles' empowerment of Isabeau through the prejudices against women's authority that were current within university circles. These were prejudices that had been recently reinforced during the course of the university's struggles with the corrupt chancellor John Blanchard and the errant theologian Juan de Monzon. In the course of defending the particular nature of the university theologian's authority, Gerson's mentor, Pierre d'Ailly had argued, drawing on Saint Paul's reference to teachers in Ephesians 4, that theologians occupied a divinely ordained position in the church hierarchy. He explained, only those who were approved by the university and licensed by the chancellor could teach, since such hierarchical approval indicated that an individual had been sent by God. As proof of this need to respect the university's procedure for evaluating potential teachers, he reminded his audience that, as everyone knew, the office of preaching and teaching had been prohibited to women.[73]

Gerson's sermon, *Puer natus est*, recalled this very argument as a means of explaining why Jesus chose to be incarnated as a man instead of as a woman. The main explanation he offered for this aspect of the Trinity was because Jesus came to do three things: to govern, to teach, and to combat the enemy. As Gerson elaborated following the standard line of the university, "these offices are not at all appropriate to a woman; she especially must not preach or teach publicly in any way, as the Apostle says: it is not permitted to women to preach." Immediately following this assertion, he denounced "women, who wished to speak and dispute theology more boldly than a theologian would," and contrasted such women negatively to the Virgin Mary. Mary did not

speak of what had been revealed to her. Rather, she kept these things in her heart.[74] In this sense, by 1405, Gerson had already firmly denied that women could legitimately exercise spiritual or political authority while simultaneously promoting an increasingly elaborate female persona for the university. In 1405 and 1408, he claimed the authority he was already co-opting more directly in dialogue with Queen Isabeau's authority as guardian of the crown prince, and then entered into a fierce competition with Valentina Visconti, the Duchess of Orléans, for the royal court's attention and sympathy.

Male eyes in a female body

Rather than empower Isabeau or support her guardianship, Gerson sought to step into Isabeau's place. He understood that the position she occupied both fit with the university's goals and was well suited to Gerson's contemplative theological reform.[75] Gerson did not, however, wish to feminize fully the university because he intended it to function as a political leader and still wished to base its authority upon a modified understanding of academic consensus. In this sense, his position regarding the university's gender remained the same in 1405 as it had been in 1391 when he delivered his first political sermon before the French royal court. He was willing to feminize the university rhetorically but not epistemologically. What changed in 1405 and 1408 was the university's position with respect to royal women. In effect, an unquestionably intelligent, pious, and reputedly compassionate reformer who had been institutionalized to accept that women were not capable of leading or teaching, elaborated upon those assumptions to create a dangerous discourse that equated women with sin and even identified some of them as agents of the devil all for the purpose of increasing his own authority and subsequent ability to demand political reform.

For instance, written just one year after the Savoisy affair, Gerson's 1405 sermon *Vivat rex* opens with a portrayal of the university that is completely consistent with the way in which Gerson portrayed the university in his 1404 sermon *Estotes misericordes*. In the opening paragraphs of *Vivat rex*, Gerson assured the king, who had just punished the university's attacker, Charles of Savoisy, that he could trust his daughter's advice because she relied on him for her protection. He explained:

> But also consider and know well the daughter of the king, whose well being, success, honor and protection depend upon the king as upon a true father, by good, civil and worthy adoption; in his health is her

> health. What marvel therefore is it if she desires and prays for his good life and says: Long live the king! Long live the king![76]

He further feminized the university in likening her to Bathsheba. These references suggest that Gerson purposefully gave the university female flesh and thus a female rhetorical position so that she would seem less threatening as she stood upon the political stage.

The university's eyes, however, remained resolutely masculine and collective. Gerson's characterization of the university's eyes as male can be seen most powerfully in his attempts to suggest that her vision represented the summation of collective opinion and learning. For instance, he emphasized that she spoke for many when he assured the king that she spoke as a daughter to a father by recalling the example of all of the people of Israel crying out "Long live the king" in the moment when King David first crowned his son Solomon as his successor.[77] He then remarked upon the long tradition of learning that his exhortation drew upon by identifying the wise men of Babylon, who greeted Nebuchadnezzar with the salutation, "Long live the king" as the university of that city.[78] Although the clamor of the people was often personified as a woman, most evocatively in the modern period as Marianne and Lady Liberty, the wise men of Babylon, as Gerson characterized them, addressed their king with an authority that clearly derived from a discursive reflection upon cumulative expert male consensus.

Similarly, Gerson drew upon the example of male prophets to claim for the university a level of authority that was at the same time both politically unthreatening and absolutely authoritative. He reported:

> Moreover, the daughter of the king, a more noble title I know not to give her, turns and sends often, all over the entire realm of France, the eyes of her consideration, which are more clear than the sun and more numerous than those of the Argus, for which reason she is well compared to the beasts which Ezekiel saw, with eyes in the back and the front, inside and outside (Ezech 1).[79]

In this discussion of the Daughter of the King's eyes, Gerson conjoined the isolated female contemplative and the academic deliberative process. Her eyes looked out in quiet contemplation but there were so many of them that they saw with the authority of academic consensus.[80] The Daughter of the King, in other words, may have been moved by affection to speak, but what she spoke did not reflect an individual's

personal opinion. Rather it reflected an understanding comparable to that enjoyed by the biblical prophet Ezekiel. Rather than being grounded in personal experience of the divine, however, the truth of her prophecy was guaranteed by accumulated knowledge and institutional process.

By the daughter of king's many eyes, Gerson referred to the university's many disciplines, cumulative knowledge and productive deliberations. Gerson revealed this emphasis when he invited the king and his court to turn the eyes of their consideration to look upon the Daughter of the King to see how well she was prepared to advise the king. Among the many things she offered, Gerson listed: a faculty of medicine to treat the king's health; expertise in moral philosophy, ethics, economics, politics and law to help him govern the state; and theology for the government of the soul. In other words, the Daughter of the King's eyes were comprised of the university's many disciplines that placed it firmly in the academic world from which women were excluded.[81] By providing this list, Gerson implied that the Daughter of the King's eyes are able to see clearly only because she has carefully studied scripture, Aristotle, Cicero and history. They are, in effect, the eyes of learned experts despite their placement in a feminized subject. In this sense, they elaborate upon the problematic gender of the male clergy. They are male eyes in a body that cannot defend itself without the protection of an armed noble patron, but which also claim to be free from the desires and weaknesses of the flesh.[82]

As the cumulative effect of Gerson's arguments implied, the Daughter of the King simultaneously embodied daughterly affection for King Charles VI, the motherly affection of Bathsheba, and the divine wisdom, which had inspired Nathan, the male prophet who had urged Bathsheba to speak to David on behalf of her son. Her advice derived from her knowledge of metaphysics and philosophy, and also her reliance on divine grace. She simultaneously enjoyed the affective power of a female body and the learning and expertise that belonged to men. It was to her rather than the queen, as the cumulative force of Gerson's argument implied, that the princes of the blood were to turn when they sought counsel regarding the governing of the realm. He suggested this most straightforwardly when, after noting "the entire kingdom is also unified and joined to him [the dauphin] in civil alliance," he elaborated, this "second life of the king, the civil and political life," is more important because it is more permanent.[83] As Daisy Delogu has aptly observed, "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."[84] The passage to which she refers speaks directly to the university's representative authority as a royal counselor. Gerson asks:

> But in the end does not the University represent the entire realm of France, verily the whole world, and such that its members come or can come from all parts to acquire learning and wisdom? It is like a virtuous seed derived from the entire body of the public [gestating] in the womb of the university for the purpose of bearing people of every perfection. So must the University in such a way for all France, in such a way for all the estates from which she has students, in such a way for all the relatives and friends left in grievous suffering who cannot come here.... she must, I say, pray and say long live the king, long live the king, long live the king.[85]

These arguments coincided with the position Gerson sought for the university in the opening of his sermon *Vivat rex*. This position was explicitly prophetic and official. Referencing the book of Proverbs, he claimed for the university, "I was made in the presence of God and the king, as she who keeps the peace."[86] Elaborating upon the meaning of this assertion, Gerson explained, "(t)he office of the Daughter of the King is to explain and teach truth and justice."[87] In doing so, he offered this hybrid figure in the place of the real woman whom the king had officially appointed as peacekeeper of the realm. Following Gerson's political goals and belief in academic consensus, we can conclude that he offered this figure of the Daughter of the King, not as mother, guardian, or regent, but as royal counselor.[88]

Royal women and deadly sin

The content of Gerson's 1405 sermon titled *Long live the king* suggests that his strategic deployment of the Daughter of the King was part of a desperate effort to interfere in the family politics of a royal court bent on bringing its country to disaster. With a royal council packed by loyal clients of the leaders of a politically debilitating rivalry, the queen was the only hope for mediation when the king was too ill to rule. She, however, was not able to bring about lasting peace because the negotiation process required her to make concessions to the strongest side. As an alternative to the resulting political rhythm of destructive fighting and uneasy peace, Gerson offered a university-based peace, which he claimed would transcend faction-driven wars because it was rooted in

divine Wisdom. Such an argument resonated with royal propaganda because it supported the idea of a strong, centralized state, advocated peace, and promised to also address the serious concerns that encouraged aristocratic warfare.[89]

Inspired by Queen Isabeau's authority and encouraged by his previous experiments with adopting a rhetorically female subject position for the university, Gerson constructed a hybrid figure that claimed the best of both genders. The University of Paris, personified as the visionary Daughter of the King, made no male claims to hierarchical power, she only sought to persuade like the women of the royal court. Gerson suggested, however, that her advice, because it was grounded in expert male consensus, was more objective than that exercised by actual noble women, who were implicated in the very factional struggles they mediated. In short, Gerson offered advice that claimed to transcend the influence of marriage alliances and competition between lineages.

In 1405, Gerson made this suggestion subtly by evoking well-known tropes about the seductive and effeminizing effects of female influence in contrast to the university's claims to monopolize non-partisan rational thought. In this instance, he did not directly attack the queen because their goals were not necessarily opposed. Both wanted what was good for the crown prince and the realm. In fact, the goals stated by Gerson in *Vivat rex* would have been easily fulfilled by the queen's willingness to solicit the university's advice in the decisions she made with respect to the care, education, and political engagement of the crown prince. In 1408, however, Gerson's promotion of the university's objectivity evolved into a direct attack upon the authority of royal women. In *Veniat pax*, Gerson subtly identified the Duchess of Orléans Valentina Visconti as a proponent of war and negatively contrasted her to the university's personification as the Daughter of the King. In many ways he had little choice. Valentina's role in royal theater following the assassination of her husband brought the similarities between her subject position and the university's into high relief. The established discourse of female persuasion then determined that only one of them could be correct.

This sermon that Gerson wrote in defense of the university's position is significant for three reasons. First, it demonstrates the latent misogynist potential of Gerson's earlier and more widely circulated *Vivat rex* to the extent it almost categorizes Valentina's influence over her faction as diabolical. Second, the context of this sermon's delivery suggests that Gerson actually played the role of an intercessory queen, in that his arguments may have allowed the crown to renounce its decision to

punish John the Fearless without admitting that John's extensive military power exempted him from any effective exercise of royal justice. Third, it explicitly denounced and demonized Valentina Visconti in a manner that not only sought to usurp female persuasive authority for the university but also aggressively dismissed women from the political process altogether.[90]

Valentina Visconti naturally emerged as the leader of a powerful political faction after John the Fearless successfully arranged the assassination of her husband Louis of Orléans on 23 November 1407.[91] Although the French royal court had secretly decided to prosecute John by July of 1408, it did not openly announce this decision until Valentina publicly demanded justice. As the *Journal of Nicolas de Baye*, who was a clerk of the Parlement of Paris, reports, Valentina entered the city in a somber funeral procession comprised of individuals and horses draped in black on 28 August 1408. Accompanied by her daughter-in-law, Isabelle of Valois, she presented herself at the Louvre to appeal to the king for justice on 5 September 1408, only to be told that the king was indisposed.[92] Then on 11 September 1408, the abbot of Cérisy evoked both Valentina and her sons as Louis's aggrieved survivors when he denounced Jean Petit's defense of John the Fearless.[93]

This appeal was dramatically effective. The crown, represented by Isabeau and the dauphin, resolved to punish John. The crown was not, however, able to do so before John won an astonishing military victory that caused the crown and royal council to reconsider the wisdom of confronting John openly. Gerson's 1408 sermon, *Veniat pax*, conveniently countered the emotional plea Valentina had made on behalf of her dead husband. Shortly after he delivered this sermon, which was some time before February of 1409, Valentina's sons, who had inherited the duty of avenging their father from their mother after her death in December of 1408, formally renounced their feud with John and made peace with him in front of a royal audience. The king was then able to issue a royal pardon to a man who had killed the king's own brother and who refused to admit his guilt.[94] In this manner, Gerson acted as a typical mediating queen by begging the crown to show mercy in a time when mercy was actually the crown's only strategic option.

Gerson's sermon set the scene for the crown's act of mercy by acknowledging John's crime and then begging for mercy on behalf of the French people, who would bear the brunt of the suffering to be caused by the unavoidable civil war that would follow any attempt by the crown to punish John.[95] In fulfilling this intercessory function, Gerson deployed his female personification of the University of Paris

in direct opposition to the emotional appeal Valentina and Isabelle had made through their public mourning. Actively calling to mind an opposition between the university as Gerson was positioning her and Valentina, he argued that truth could always be easily discerned from the "confusion of the enemy from hell" because truth always advocated peace.[96] Gerson then insinuated that Valentina's call for vengeance was inspired by the devil by reminding his audience that the devil loved war because it won him in one instance the souls of hundreds of people and sometimes even of whole cities, whereas in times of peace, he could only win souls one by one.[97] In this manner, he insinuated that Valentina's influence was diabolical.

Royal law and aristocratic rules of vengeance, however, required that John be punished. From this perspective, Valentina's argument could be seen as more morally sound. Gerson circumnavigated these challenges first by defeating in debate the female personification of "Rigorous Punishment," whom he identified as the "harsh stepmother of the human race" and "the daughter of God's indignation" and described as being accompanied by "the rage of hunger and thirst." This terrifying daughter of God, who served two important offices of punishing to encourage amendment or "to condemn and exterminate," cried out to Gerson "there must be justice, there must be punishment." He, however, was able to silence her by arguing that the execution of justice must be undertaken only in the pursuit of peace, in fact, justice without peace is injustice.[98]

Further dismissing and belittling Valentina, he invited his audience to imagine a visionary trip to purgatory, where he reported that the souls of the princes of France cried out against this war, lamenting that this attempt to avenge one death would cause so much subsequent violence that it would disrupt the very Masses and devotions that should be said for the purpose of releasing those souls from their punishment.[99] In order to make this point clear, he had the souls in purgatory rebuke Valentina and her sons directly. He imagined:

> For God, our friends on earth, each soul in purgatory could say, for God, think only of helping and delivering us, without adding suffering upon our suffering; you in particular, women and children [without adding] evil upon evil as if to say in each among you there is no integrity. If for one death or some other loss thousands and thousands or one hundred thousand other evils are done, do you think it would be for our aid and deliverance, more than for hindering and harming both of us together.[100]

Once he had characterized vengeance as a misguided preoccupation of women and children, Gerson cultivated a feeling of shared understanding with the princes, by reminding them that they knew well "of the great dangers to body and soul and the hardships which happen through battles."[101] He even further dismissed Valentina by concluding that the best dower to leave a widow was peace.[102] In making this argument Gerson encouraged the warring magnates to bond over their masculine prowess and attendant practical judgment, and reminded them that although they needed to provide for the women and children in their families, they did not need to listen to their political advice.

Once he had discounted Valentina's authority and implied that the apparent need to punish the murderer of the king's brother was an idea generated from irrational and childish feminine fury and perhaps inspired by the devil, Gerson explicitly co-opted the intercessory authority of royal women by associating the university with their biblical role models. He concluded his sermon by encouraging his audience to compare the university "to Judith and to Esther, who placed themselves in danger of death for the peace of their people," explaining that "the university is wise as one knows." Furthermore, he urged "(e)ach good lord or knight who loves the king of France" to "send this wise woman, with approval and recognition, to speak of peace."[103] These biblical women, Judith and Ester, served as important role models for late medieval noble women, and played a central role in the coronation ritual of French queens.[104] Gerson, who had earlier eroded Mary's special claim as mother of Christ by encouraging all Christians to give birth to Christ in their hearts, also suggested that this all-male institution better realized the example set by biblical women than the very women who had based their own authority on those examples.

While the end result of Gerson's deployment of gendered discourses and personifications for the sake of augmenting university authority might be the same as the end result of an attack against women's authority motivated purely by hatred of women or fear of women's authority, understanding the context in which Gerson generated his misogynist discourses illuminates the role played by gender in the construction of types of authority typically studied as gender neutral. Only when it was personified as a helpless young girl could Gerson's university dare to speak authoritatively about its own privileges, the reform of the realm and the resolution of the conflict between the dukes of Burgundy and Orléans. This limitation on the university's authority suggests a need for a gender analysis of all university claims to power. It also suggests that

misogynist polemics may provide clues to many complex relationships that demand further investigation.

Gerson's use of misogynist polemics to advocate his own authority, however, does not provide proof of the extent of his authority among his contemporaries. Although Gerson's arguments attempted to demonize the particularly politically active women of the French royal court and may have provided resources for later authors who hoped to undermine the public authority exercised by noble women, the immediate effect of his writings may have been to augment the authority of royal and noble women. French queen regents subsequent to Isabeau of Bavaria exercised even more authority than she had.[105] Noble women also successfully co-opted his writings for their own purposes. His sermon, *Vivat rex*, for instance, was copied almost immediately following its delivery for the daughter of the Duke of Berry and, like other works of Gerson's, was incorporated into devotional collections for important noble women who were largely associated with the House of Burgundy. Rather than insinuate the university into the royal theatre as a more-trustworthy royal daughter, Gerson may have merely provided devotional resources for the daughters of powerful men who held that right as a result of their noble birth.[106]

At the same time, Gerson's *Vivat rex* also circulated in the libraries of kings and monasteries.[107] Twice the French crown reissued it as means of shoring up royal power. It was also published in England.[108] Gerson's political theories and persistent act of visualizing the assembled and virtuously governed idealized realm of France provided late medieval French and English kings with justifications for the centralization of power. French political thinkers were particularly inspired by Gerson's conflation of the king's body with the realm as a means of making the king responsible for the elimination of vices. This interpretation of Gerson's arguments is readily apparent in a mid-fifteenth century collection of the most significant sermons Gerson delivered before the French royal court and in the incorporation of the virtues and vices, as well as Gerson's conception of the king sitting on the throne of justice surrounded by a harmonious court, into the pageantry and art production surrounding royal coronations and entries.[109]

Furthermore, Gerson made thematic compilations of his works, and then, following his examples, others sought to make complete collections of his works that were then printed and circulated. This act of compilation allowed other readers to use Gerson's ideas for their own purposes. It also allowed them to consider the relationship between his ideas. For instance, the late fifteenth-century Scottish theologian and

courtier who had trained in Paris, John Ireland, plagiarized large portions of Gerson's *Vivat rex* and *Veniat pax* in his own reflections on the reign of Scotland's James III.[110]

Considering the ways in which late fifteenth and early sixteenth century political thinkers could peruse collections of Gerson's works for the sake of constructing their own arguments, it is worth noting the types of gendered politics these works allow. Taken collectively, Gerson's political sermons enact a slippage between the battle between the virtues and the vices and the competition Gerson staged between the university and royal women. While they do not explicitly raise the issue of witches, they do characterize the French kingdom as being constantly assailed by the "soldiers of the devil," namely "the sins," while emphasizing the ways in which women sexually tempted men and were driven to fury. These associations provided powerful building blocks for what would become a widely spread belief in a conspiracy of women who copulated with the devil and worked to destroy the political, social, and religious fabric of Christian Europe. In this manner, they may help explain why early modern theologians and lawyers and other political theorists were so ready to resort to demons when explaining the most difficult questions of their time, and as a result, lay the groundwork for the early modern witch hunts.[111] Interestingly, in France we see this phenomenon attaching itself to the regency of foreign queens in the case of Catherine de Medici.[112]

Witch conspiracies, however, did not exhaust the negative portrayals of female power that Gerson's sermons offered. By equating the University of Paris with Bathsheba, he evoked the powerful opposition between carnal desire and divinely inspired vision that this biblical women embodied in the established exegetical tradition. In light of this argument, it is interesting to note that around the same time that Gerson's portrayals of royal power were gaining prominence in France and England, the image of Bathsheba bathing nude in David's sight, namely the moment when David succumbed to temptation, became the most popular illustration for the penitential psalms in books of hours. Elsa Guyot has suggested that these images served primarily for the reader's prurient enjoyment despite the exegetical tradition regarding Bathsheba's bath. Clare L. Costley, however, has argued that the popularity of this particular image in books of hours demonstrated an increased tendency to allow lust to represent the remaining seven vices. At the same time, monarchs throughout Europe were celebrating their association with king David by displaying elaborate and costly tapestries of David's life. Of these royal tapestries, which were popularized

by the Valois and made in the Netherlands under the influence of the Burgundian court, the one preserved in the Musée de Cluny in Paris and believed to have belonged to Henry VIII of England, is centered on the presentation of the adulterous Bathsheba before David's assembled court. The tapestry's simultaneous portrayal of the glorious early modern court ruled by a strong monarch accepting the adulterous, but beautifully adorned Bathsheba – an event, which in the biblical narrative, triggered God's displeasure and David's repentance – demonstrates the extent to which Gerson's concerns about female persuasion, the temptations of sensual desire, and the need for a prudent and powerful king resonated with and reinforced flexible and unpredictable late medieval and early modern developing royal traditions about the intersection of sexuality, female companionship, and royal power.[113]

5
Gerson, Mystics, and Witches?

In 1423, John Gerson famously denounced ascetic women who claimed to receive divinely inspired visions with such vivid language that he has been credited with inspiring the anti-witch writings of John Nider, and then, through Nider, the *Malleus Maleficarum*.[1] In his treatise titled *De examinatione doctrinarum (On the examination of doctrine)*, Gerson denounced such women for attempting to address "great and wonderful" topics that exceeded their abilities, reporting the effects of brain lesions caused by epilepsy and melancholy as miracles, and claiming to speak directly for God through unmediated revelations. The men who were foolish enough to let themselves be taught by these women, he warned, nourished themselves in such a way that they might find themselves obeying the devil incarnate as they should obey their own superiors.[2] In this and other warnings, which occur throughout Gerson's writings, Gerson contributed to a discourse that thoroughly discredited the very notion of uneducated ascetic women's ability to commune with the divine or their capacity to speak with any authority on contemporary intellectual or political matters.[3]

Recent studies of Gerson's thought tend to characterize Gerson's attempt to discredit ascetic women visionaries as part of a broader effort by the male clergy to establish their authority over the laity's religious practices and beliefs. These studies have centered upon the creation of discernment treatises, which have been portrayed in modern scholarship as systematic treatises exploring the provenance of the spiritual experiences that formed the basis of ascetic women's claims to visionary or prophetic authority.[4] Gerson's discernment treatises have been identified as some of the most openly misogynist and influential of late medieval discernment treatises, and also as an important resource for both the prosecution of Joan of Arc and the descriptions of witches circulated by John Nider.[5]

Dyan Elliott has suggested that the Anglo-Burgundians' employment of similar strategies to discredit and condemn Joan, whom Gerson supported, demonstrates the effectiveness of his method in rendering all women's claims to visionary experiences immediately suspect.[6] Gerson's and others' discernment treatises accomplished this act of censure and silencing by arguing that such experiences and the behaviors that accompanied them resulted from mental illness, prideful ambition or diabolical illusion. By establishing hierarchical obedience, ordered physical comportment and gender-appropriate humility as signs of orthodoxy, sanity and good will, these authors robbed ascetic women visionaries of the charismatic basis of their authority. No longer would their ability to go without food, tendency to be caught up in ecstatic states that removed them completely from their senses, or constant battle with demons signify an ascetic women visionary's communion with the divine.[7]

All of these arguments usefully place Gerson's discernment treatises within a broader trajectory of clerical attitudes concerning women's authority, and as a result, map Gerson's contributions to a rapidly evolving and incredibly harmful misogynist discourse. That Gerson contributed to this discourse is clear regardless of what might be said about his intent in making these comments or the occasions when he decided to defend or praise women as class, particular women, or women visionaries.[8] Our understanding of the significance of this discourse, the forces that pushed Gerson to contribute to it, and the other consequences of his discernment treatises, however, may be improved upon by a more intensely contextualized reading of these treatises that focuses on Gerson alone and thus is intended to complement existing treatments of Gerson's work that locate him in a wider debate about discernment.

Although all accounts of Gerson's criticism of women visionaries recognize that he wrote these works against the backdrop of the crisis of authority caused by the papal schism, most underestimate the tenuous nature of Gerson's authority within the specific historical contexts of the late medieval Church, the politically unstable kingdom of France, and the university as a whole. Assuming that Gerson critiqued women's visionary experiences from a securely authoritative position, they ascribe Gerson's vigorous attempts to control female authority to either his own particularly aggressive brand of clerical misogyny, his opposition to the activities or messages of particular visionaries, or a general clerical panic in response to the crisis in authority represented by the papal schism.[9] A careful examination of Gerson's career, late medieval ecclesiastical and political debates, and the rhetorical strategies Gerson

pursued in his court sermons, however, would suggest that the attempts made by Gerson and other scholars like him to silence the voices of ascetic women visionaries comprised part of a larger effort on their part to promote the authority of university-trained theologians within the realm of ecclesiastical and royal politics.

The benefits of examining Gerson's discernment treatises within the broader context of his thoughts are three-fold. First, they demonstrate that women were not really Gerson's main concern in writing these treatises. He was concerned about promoting the authority of religiously-minded men as a means of challenging the authority of careerist prelates, intellectual rivals, and ambitious princes. Second, the fact that in pursuing these goals he could not but help to employ both subtle and aggressive misogynist arguments, demonstrates the extent to which gender played a central role in late medieval European notions of truth. Finally, in examining how and why Gerson deployed these discourses we can better understand the limits of his authority and the gap that existed between his intellectual and political goals and what he was able to do. Taken together, these three observations suggest that these treatises on discernment are much more significant than they appear when their effects are limited to the extent to which they discredited female visionaries and laid the groundwork for the European witch hunts. In order to demonstrate the extent to which a close contextual reading of Gerson's discernment treatises shifts the debate in a manner that brings visionary women and gender to the center of intellectual authentication debates, this chapter is organized around two issues raised by Dyan Elliott's penetrating treatment of the relationship between discernment literature and intellectual crisis within the medieval university. These are Gerson's co-optation of a traditionally female form of authority and the particularly aggressive tone of his misogynist polemics.[10]

Co-opting female authority

In general, as previous chapters have demonstrated, scholastic theologians constantly struggled with ecclesiastical and royal officials regarding their right to govern themselves, determine their own standards of academic excellence and orthodoxy, and to intervene authoritatively in ecclesiastical and political debates.[11] More significantly, perhaps, the confluence of the schism and the mental illness of Charles VI of France subjected the crown's policy toward the schism to the unpredictable power struggles between the most powerful princes of the realm, leaving the university and its members vulnerable to persecution for

advocating policies that the crown might have encouraged on one day but suddenly opposed the next due to the constantly shifting hierarchy of power between the French dukes.[12]

This context of broad political resistance to the practical application of the university's claim to expertise may explain why Gerson's discernment treatises so vigorously oppose the authority of male university-trained theologians to the authority of ascetic women visionaries. As previous chapters have argued, the uncertain political, institutional, and epistemological context in which Gerson worked encouraged him to develop a female personification for the University of Paris from which he could address the crown in a less threatening manner. Moreover, his quest to purge the university of the political factions and careerism that undermined its ability to function as a reliable and independent rational adviser to the crown also encouraged him to model his reform of the university's theology faculty in dialogue with the devotional practices of simple pious women. His exploration of these female rhetorical positions as a means of creating an extra-hierarchical, non-threatening, but ultimately persuasive foundation for his political arguments made him acutely aware of the potential of convincing visionaries to disrupt existing ecclesiastical, intellectual, and political hierarchies. A mother's and wet-nurse's love, after all, he had explained, was what had allowed Saint Paul, the special Apostolic forerunner of theologians, to convert the majority of the people in the powerful Roman Empire to Christianity "without great eloquence, without arguments and persuasion based upon human wisdom, without a landholder's power," and "without the authority to do so," despite the fact that he was opposed by the "furious power of tyrants", the "mockery of the philosophers," and "was often poor and naked, enchained and imprisoned".[13]

Moreover, when he returned to Paris after the disaster of the subtraction crisis, which pitted Gerson against his colleagues in the university, and began piecing together a theological reform for a university that was under the political control of an opposing faction, Gerson actively promoted arguments that had the cumulative effect of a "take-over" of what modern scholars have traditionally treated as an "area of considerable female accomplishment."[14] This hostile "take-over" consisted of two parts. The first was to encourage but regulate the devotional experiences of laywomen as part of Gerson's wider goal for the university to regulate all preaching and teaching within Christendom in a manner that both established the university's function as primarily pastoral and confirmed its doctrinal authority as supreme within the

church in accordance with the constructions of theological authority forwarded by Pierre d'Ailly in his prosecution of John Blanchard and John of Monzon.[15] The second was to claim contemplative authority and prescribe contemplative comportment for learned male theologians as a means of censuring dissent within the university, proclaiming the university's freedom from corruption by way of the careerism of its members, and locating theological truth in the subjective and reflective quiet of contemplative experiences.[16]

Gerson was assisted in this first task by the religious vocation of his sisters. As Yelena Mazour-Matusevich has argued, Gerson's religious upbringing, which produced so many children dedicated to the religious life, prepared him to accept with enthusiasm his sisters' decision to live a chaste communal life together in their family house and also to want them benefit from the theological knowledge he had gained at his family's financial expense to the extent that such knowledge could be shared with the laity. In this sense, his voluntary assumption of the spiritual direction of his sisters, as well his general concern for the particular pastoral needs of women, very likely reflects the affective ties he had with his mother and sisters and his general compassion for those who relied upon the spiritual direction and leadership of the clergy.[17]

At the same time, by circulating the spiritual treatises he had written for his sisters to a wider audience, he announced his authority to direct and evaluate the contemplative experiences of lay women and his concern for the spiritual needs of the laity in general. Regardless of his motives, the strategy of advising pious women as a means of establishing clerical and theological authority was so well known that Gerson could not have been unaware of the authority claims he was making by sharing the evidence of his advising relationships with his pious sisters in such a manner that claimed the potential to advise all such motivated women who could read these writings, and with them, the laity more generally.[18] Moreover, although his first discernment treatise, *De distinctione verarum revelationum a falsis (On Distinguishing True from False Revelations)*, warned that even learned theologians may be deceived in their own certainty, it also assumed that it fell upon the learned to discern the provenance of their own experiences and those of the laity as carefully as they could and with the help of divine grace.[19]

The tenor of *De distinctione verarum revelationum a falsis*, however, raises a crucial question about Gerson's motivation in writing these treatises. Two scholars Gerson admired and whose works influenced his later discernment treatises, namely Henry of Langenstein and Pierre d'Ailly, had already written discernment treatises that were highly

critical of what they perceived to be excessive claims to divine revelations made by extreme ascetics as a means of discrediting Bridget of Sweden and Catherine of Siena's support for the Urbanist cause between 1383 and 1395.[20] Although Gerson's *De distinctione verarum revelationum a falsis* did indeed criticize excessive fasting and ecstatic visions in a manner that associated such practices with arrogant and foolish women, it blamed the problem of the schism upon a general unwillingness among all Christians to listen to the advice of others. This treatise only discredited extreme asceticism as a means of encouraging theologians to adopt the contemplative life as a means of elucidating theological truths, valuing the good of the church more than one's individual reputation, and preparing themselves to assist the laity in interpreting their own contemplative experiences.[21]

In this sense, Gerson's attempt to distance academic contemplative theology from the irrational asceticism of the laity primarily served to admonish the "curious questioner" and the "worldly wise" who questioned the reality of biblical accounts of revelation and extreme asceticism, and also the worldly laity, who mocked those who pursued the affective life by calling them Beguines and Beghards.[22] For this reason, when comparing those who were deceived by mistaken revelations, Gerson's examples followed the university's understanding of its own comparative masculinity.[23] The mistaken scholar, overcome by ambition, believed he would become pope; the mistaken powerful lay lord (*magno viro*), overridden by passions, confused carnal love with divine love; the perilously tempted cleric found himself developing feelings for a pious nun with whom he had a spiritual relationship; the mistaken housewife, expressed her overwhelming feelings of worthlessness by engaging in extreme fasts, which prevented her from fulfilling her duties to her family and caused her to gorge herself afterwards.[24]

Gerson's description of the fasting housewife from Arras has caught the attention of both Dyan Elliott and Nancy Caciola as a particularly damning *exemplum* in light of the pious practices of asceticism undertaken by extremely devout laywomen at the time. Dyan Elliott has described Gerson's treatment of the housewife who engaged in extreme fasting as "a tonally ugly rendition of the female spirituality associated with Eucharistic feasting and ascetical fasting described in the work of Caroline Walker Bynum."[25] Elliott's evaluation is supported by her belief that Gerson's discernment writings may have prevented the canonization of Dorothea of Montau (d. 1394), who lived a life similar to that represented by the housewife Gerson described prior to coming

under the direction of her confessor, John Marienwerder.[26] Similarly, Nancy Caciola considers Gerson's alarm regarding this woman's lack of a spiritual adviser to represent a lightly veiled critique of lay religious movements.[27]

Indeed, Gerson had already firmly asserted that lay people who were not overcome by sin would follow the dictates of the clergy and that the university would direct the pastoral care of these laity to ensure that they were guided properly.[28] He also, however, famously supported the Modern Devotion, a lay movement whose members pursued a mode of life which combined contemplation and study in a manner that closely conformed to Gerson's own contemplative practice, which he prescribed for all theologians.[29] Members of the Modern Devout, moreover, found particular inspiration in Gerson's work, which they helped to circulate.[30] Finally, this early discernment treatise is quite moderate in comparison to the critiques Gerson would forward later, particularly because it critiques both men and women and also does not exclude women from contemplative experiences as a class. In this sense, Gerson's critique of the fasting housewife from Arras may reflect other concerns that were driving Gerson at the time.

The convergence of forces that were driving Gerson's argument seem even more complex when we consider that in 1402, Gerson sent this treatise, which summarized a lecture Gerson had given in Paris in November of 1401, to his brother Nicolas in the Celestine order.[31] Gerson had protested against Nicolas's decision to join this order known for its harsh asceticism and also had protested even more forcefully when his youngest brother Jean, also joined the Celestines.[32] In light of these protests, Gerson's decision to send this treatise to Nicolas suggests that Gerson was continuing a personal conversation with his brother which allowed him to demonstrate the value of learned contemplation over harsh physical austerity as a means of pursuing truth. In this sense Gerson, who was so learned in classical literatures, may have been attempting to reverse a debate that had taken place in the early Christian world between ascetics and pagan philosophers, which the ascetics had won.[33] Moreover, surrounded by scholars and prelates who seemed to make their political decisions based upon their ambitions, Gerson may have needed to reach out to monks. Monks who took the religious life seriously supplied him with an important basis of support as he encouraged an essentially monastic approach to the quest for spiritual truth.[34] In this sense, separating extreme forms of lay asceticism and prophesy from the practice of contemplative reading may have helped Gerson acquire the monastic audiences among

the Celestines and the Carthusians, that later played a crucial role in the copying and circulating of his works.[35] On a more personal note, Gerson's family, both his brothers and his sisters, may have also been an extremely important audience for him in this time when he was otherwise isolated both from court politics and also from large factions within his own university.[36]

Gerson's tone and message changed drastically when he presented his treatise, *De probatione spirituum* (On the testing of spirits), before the Council of Constance on 15 August 1415. In part his polemical tone may reflect three subtly stated goals. First, he desired to challenge Bridget's canonization, which the council had affirmed the previous winter. Second, he wanted to discredit her revelations, which supported the legitimacy of the Roman papacy and also the English cause in the Hundred Years War. Finally, he sought to make it more difficult for other similar saints, such as Catherine of Siena, to be canonized in the future.[37] Since Bridget was already widely recognized as a saint and her revelations had circulated with church approval, Gerson focused most of his efforts on preventing similar misguided individuals from achieving the level of influence she had.[38] For this purpose, he borrowed heavily from the arguments that Henry of Langenstein and Pierre d'Ailly had forwarded in their attempts to discredit Bridget and Catherine at the beginning of the schism.[39] He also, however, used this opportunity to further his claim regarding the extensive contemplative authority of university-trained theologians.

Gerson's determination to redefine acceptable contemplative practices and verifiable revelatory truths in line with the work of university theologians shaped *De probatione spirituum* much as it had shaped his first discernment treatise. He pursued this redefinition by systematically discounting "precisely the kinds of possessed behaviors and leadership claims" made by pious laywomen based upon their persecution by demons, protection by angels, astonishing feats of asceticism, and divinely granted visions, which had allowed them to gain a religiously and politically relevant position in their communities.[40] In fact, he demonstrated his intent to use this occasion for the promotion of the teaching authority of university-trained theologians, by recalling assertions about the apostolic authority of theologians, which Pierre d'Ailly had made during the university's late fourteenth-century struggles against John Blanchard and John of Monzon. D'Ailly had argued, that popes as "the highest of bishops" are able send people to preach or otherwise govern souls and "in this manner, those who are licensed with the apostolic authority in theology are sent by him." It is this

papal authentication, d'Ailly argued, which separates private correction, open to all Christians, from public preaching. As proof of this separation between private and public teaching, he cited Paul's assertion that "(w)omen are not permitted to teach in the church" (1 Tim 2, 12).[41]

D'Ailly had made this assertion in the context of a struggle between men, namely the pope, the chancellor, and the university as represented by d'Ailly. Moreover, he had done so in response to the fact that Christian teaching in the form of moral correction was open to and even required of all Christians. The chancellor had undercut the official nature of the teaching authority of theologians by equating it with fraternal correction.[42] It is for this reason that d'Ailly followed up his assertion that theologians received apostolic authority in theology from the pope with a warning against accepting more charismatic bases of teaching authority – such as the performance of miracles – without suspicion. Indeed, since God allows the wicked to perform miracles as well as the good, he argued, it would be better to consider public preaching as a right granted by God through men, in other words, hierarchically.[43]

Gerson had repeated this warning about miracles in *De distinctione verarum revelationum a falsis*, but had qualified d'Ailly's statement with the assertion that God would not allow individuals who were evil to perform miracles that proved their own holiness with the exception of the Antichrist, about whom Christians had been sufficiently warned.[44] In *De probatione spirituum*, he elaborated upon this argument, by observing that just as the authority to prophesize, evangelize, or interpret sermons derived from the possession of a hierarchically ordained office, so did the authority and ability to test spirits.[45] Then noting both the difficulty of discerning spirits accurately and the fact that scriptural learning without actual contemplative experience was insufficient, Gerson claimed that "the difference between the men of whom we speak, one a theologian, the other a contemplative," was that between a doctor of medicine and an unlearned but experienced practitioner. Advocating his own particular brand of theological authority, he advised that those best prepared to test spirits would be both skilled in contemplation and learned in scripture.[46] Gerson's qualification, however, was hardly necessary. From the perspective of a member of the medieval University of Paris, the practitioner came under the licensed doctor's control.[47] These confident assertions of authority stand in stark contrast to the position Gerson adopted when he addressed the French royal court on behalf of the university personified as the Daughter of the King. In these instances, he assured his royal audience that he only wished to speak as it was incumbent upon "all Christians without exception in matters

of the faith," to do whatever "is in their power" for the sake of moving others through word or deed.[48]

Gerson's direct reference to the crown's refusal to recognize the university's political authority provides a clear explanation for why Gerson actively promoted the authority of theologians and the value of his own form of contemplative theology in his discernment treatises as much or more than he actually explained the process of discerning spirits. Rather than outlining the method by which university-trained theologians should go about discerning spirits, Gerson exhorted confessors to pay attention to the status of the visionary, being particularly wary of women, youth, and those newly converted to the religious life. He also instructed confessors to systematically attempt to convince aspiring visionaries that their experiences derive from either their own foolishness or designs of the devil.[49] Gerson reassured those who might show concern about discrediting a true visionary that, "if the vision is from God it will not fade away."[50] In other words, Gerson's method seems to require the clergy to deny systematically all women's claims to divine inspiration. As Dyan Elliott has already noted, directing theologians to manage the potentially dangerous spiritual experiences of lay women served as a means of constituting contemplative theological authority that could then be applied in more competitive arenas such as the university and the wider church.[51]

This apparent dismissal of female practitioners and resulting professionalization of the discernment process is all the more striking when considered in dialogue with Gerson's co-optation of female persuasion in the sermons he delivered before the French royal court. As Chapter 4 noted, Gerson claimed for the personification of the University of Paris as the Daughter of the King that the "eyes of her consideration" were "more numerous than the Argus," and as a result, could be compared to "the beasts Ezekiel saw."[52] Furthermore, he encouraged the members of the royal court to discern the worth of the university personified as Daughter of the King for themselves by turning the eyes of their own consideration in her direction and reflecting upon the expansive knowledge she contained in her four faculties of Arts, Law, Theology, and Medicine.[53] In effect, Gerson's female personification of the University of Paris claimed the same kind of contemplative wisdom that Gerson ascribed to contemplative theologians in *De distinctione verarum revelationum a falsis*. Her attention, like that of politically active female visionaries, however, had turned outward to the troubling events of the day.

More significantly, perhaps, Gerson employed the same strategy for differentiating the university and her learned male theologians from

potential royal female competitors that he employed when differentiating the university from her ascetic visionary female competitors. Namely, he alluded to the weakness of the female complexion by characterizing the desire for excessive finery as feminine in *Vivat rex*,[54] denouncing the trouble that women and children cause when they involve themselves in politics in *Veniat pax*,[55] and dismissing the discernment capacities of overly-enthusiastic youths and women as a class in *De probatione spirituum*.[56] In each instance, the difference that he emphasized between those he critiqued and those called upon to reign in the confusion caused by these excitable and misguided women was the difference between those who possessed the hyper-rational masculinity claimed by university members and those who did not.[57] This careful distinction and the fact that the theologian and the visionary stand alone as extra-hierarchical doctrinal authorities in Gerson's 1424 discernment treatise, *De examinatione doctrinarum*, suggests that Gerson understood these two positions to be in fierce competition with each other, as if Gerson was suggesting that the church needed to decide be led by theologians or seduced by mentally ill or diabolically-inspired women.[58]

In fact, if we consider the motivations for the discernment treatises that Henry of Langenstein and Pierre d'Ailly wrote immediately after the schism it seems likely that the French preferred to interpret the schism in just this way. Namely, their side had been guided by the collective rational consensus of the University of Paris and the ecclesiastical synods called during the course of the schism. The other side, which these university defenders considered to be in the wrong, had been governed by ascetic women, who from Gerson's perspective, had damaged their brains through their extreme fasting to the extent that they could no longer differentiate between their delusions and reality.[59] The opponents of the French contingent at Constance, however, blamed the French for "fostering the schism" and hoping to elect a French pope like Pierre d'Ailly.[60] In some respects, then, the late medieval discernment debate might have been shaped as much by the fact that the authentication strategies embraced by the Roman papal claimant and those embraced by the French crown pitted female visionary wisdom against the wisdom of the University of Paris and assembled French church.

Seen from this perspective, the comparative similarities between Gerson and Catherine of Siena with respect to their goals, rhetoric, and political position is striking. Both Catherine and Gerson claimed to desire civil peace and a restored church hierarchy although their visions of this achievement differed.[61] Both worked hard to remain neutral

and to fulfill a mediating role when surrounded by feuding factions.[62] Both framed their political advice in the language of sin, crusade, and nationalism.[63] Both were represented as speaking with the voice of divine wisdom.[64] Both fostered their reputations and influence by carefully circulating their works through an ever-growing circle of family and close associates.[65]

Most significantly, both were controlled by powerful handlers. Catherine's spiritual director had been hand-picked by the pope once she was selected as the visionary who would carry on Bridget's work of authenticating the papacy.[66] Gerson and his university were constantly bribed, bullied, and cajoled into authenticating French policies that they were not really sure that they supported.[67] Catherine was subjected to examination for demonic possession twice, once in 1374 and once in 1376. She survived and the Dominicans in the Roman obedience began an informal canonization inquest for her in 1411, which continued until 1416 but did not produce a formal ruling on her sanctity until 1461.[68] Gerson's most powerful patron, John the Fearless of Burgundy, turned against him after Gerson critiqued John's role in the assassination of Louis of Orléans. John incited a heresy investigation against Gerson at the Council of Constance, ensured that Gerson's writings were proscribed in Paris during the period of Anglo-Burgundian rule, had many of Gerson's friends within the university killed, and caused Gerson to die in exile.[69] In summary, both Gerson and Catherine lived under constant scrutiny, suffered the effects of political turmoil, and found themselves at the center of controversy.

Aggressively misogynist tone

While the general uncertainty that shaped Gerson's intellectual and political context explains why he eventually co-opted a female prophetic subject position for university-trained males, it does not completely explain the aggressive misogynist polemics he deployed in his discernment treatises. For this explanation, it is necessary to turn to particular events and the constantly evolving relationship between the University of Paris and its mendicant members. As JoAnn McNamara noted when reviewing Gerson's role in what she characterized as the relegation of religiously active women to "silence and humility by threats of the stake," Gerson attacked the collaboration of women and mendicant preachers most vigorously in his discernment treatises. McNamara rightly suggested that the "long resentment of the secular against the monastic clergy, particularly the mendicants" encouraged Gerson to see

"the Mendicants and their female friends as more dangerous by far than the heretics they had hitherto been encouraged to contest."[70] Indeed, some of the most aggressive misogynist polemic in Gerson's discernment treatises derives from and evokes a well-established rhetorical tradition that was invented to undermine the mendicant's preaching, teaching, and political authority in the middle of the thirteenth century. The most useful aspect of this tradition was its flexibility. It could be used to undermine the mendicants both by characterizing them as sexual predators with respect to those to whom they offered spiritual care and by characterizing the women for whom they served as spiritual advisers as particularly morally depraved. It is at least in part from this tradition that the focus on the sexual threat that women posed to their confessors in Gerson's treatise *De probatione spirituum* derives.

As a university member Gerson would have been well versed in this tradition. As a result of intense secular-mendicant conflict within the thirteenth-century University of Paris, the secular clergy led by William of St. Amour developed an exegetically based anti-fraternal tradition that identified the mendicants as the false preachers of the apocalypse described in the Pseudo-Pauline Epistle, the *Second Letter to Timothy*. These false preachers, the author of 2 Timothy warned, would appear to be pious but actually would be self-loving, avaricious, proud, deceitful, and disobedient hypocrites, who would work their way into houses where they would "captivate silly women overwhelmed by their sins, who were always being instructed but never arriving at the knowledge of truth." Building upon the double-monstrosity called to mind by these verses, which described individuals who simultaneously undermined the community first through their deceptively disguised self-interest and second through their sexual conquests of undiscerning women, the secular theologians constructed a powerful anti-fraternal trope that became enshrined in literature and could easily be evoked to undermine mendicant claims to religious superiority. The fact that this trope had been used in past centuries to identify heretics only increased its power as its deployment against the mendicants immediately associated them with heretics and nonbelievers, such as Jews and Saracens.[71]

These verses, which Paul used against his competitors, continued to play an important role in competitive authentication practices among different groups of clergy. This tradition was effective because it elicited all of the audience's concerns about female persuasion. The mere persistence of this trope through the fifteenth-century, however, did not require seculars engaged in conflict with the mendicants to deploy it slavishly.[72] For instance, this discourse did not emerge in the 1390s

during the course of the university's conflict with the Dominicans regarding the scandalous statements of the Dominican theologian, Juan de Monzon.[73]

It was by pre-meditated choice that Gerson characterized the mendicants as lustful heretics who sought to lead people astray, take advantage of them sexually, and disturb the established order of the church in his sermon, *Bonus Pastor (The Good Pastor)*, which he delivered before the Church Council at Reims in May of 1408.[74] Warning the assembled bishops to guard the Lord's flock against "the devouring wolf from the lower regions" who would "seize" and "demolish it," he reprimanded them for allowing mendicants or poor theologians to preach in their stead.[75] Such lack of diligence on the part of the bishops, Gerson observed, only caused "the wicked seeds of error" or "the useless and sterile weeds of worthless stories" to be "sown."[76] Moreover, the people were scandalized, he elaborated, when they saw "only the mendicants and contemptible paupers preach the word of God," rather than prelates.[77] In addition to serving as a shabby confirmation of a given bishop's lack of dedication to his flock and overly diligent concern with the protection of his temporalities, an active and unsupervised mendicant presence in a diocese was spiritually dangerous. As Gerson elaborated in the treatise *De visitatione prelatorum (On the Visitation of Prelates)*, which he wrote shortly after the council at Reims, mendicants tended to incorporate old wives' tales into their sermons, associate with women and the excommunicated, and preach against parish priests, parish burial fees and the collection of tithes.[78]

Further proof that Gerson either intended to provoke a new conflict or to contribute to one already underway can be found in the mendicant response. The Franciscan friar Jean Gorrel earnestly defended mendicant privileges and mendicant understandings of ecclesiastical hierarchy before a university audience in the fall of 1408. He vigorously challenged the secular clergy's argument that because bishops are the successors of the twelve apostles and parish priests are the successors of the seventy-two disciples, no pope may infringe on the authority of these church leaders by allowing mendicants to preach in their dioceses and parishes without their permission.[79] He countered this tradition by forwarding the mendicant understanding of church hierarchy, which emphasized that the pope was the Vicar of Christ and as such, in accordance with the order of the celestial hierarchy, could over-ride the apparent jurisdictional authority claimed by any of his subordinates for the purpose of facilitating the mendicant mission.[80] These were dangerous arguments for Gorrel to make within the context of the schism to a group of French

scholars who had been willing to subtract obedience from the pope as a means of protecting their liberties from papal encroachment.[81]

Gorrel's response only intensified hostilities. The university censured Gorrel for supporting the mendicant position.[82] The Franciscan Pope Alexander V, however, struck down the university's censure.[83] In protest, Gerson delivered a sermon in French to the people of Paris that suggested that like Lucifer, the mendicants sought to disrupt the divinely established celestial order by upsetting the established church order. Naming the mendicants as the false brothers of the Antichrist, he warned that they would create a disturbance worse than the schism under the cover of doing good. Moreover, he insinuated that the mendicants established illicit relations with those who sought their pastoral care by purposely hearing confessions in unholy places such as lodgings, "and consequently many bad things often follow."[84] Gerson echoed this concern in his treatise *De statu papae et minorum praelatorum (On the Status of the Pope and Minor Prelates)*, which he concluded with the suggestion that mendicants should be prohibited from hearing the confessions of women and youths in secluded places in addition to being prohibited from hearing the confessions of sins reserved for bishops, particularly the sins of the flesh frequently committed by women and youths.[85] Fed by such polemics and the mendicants' refusal to back down, the conflict lasted until 1417.[86] Gerson, who clearly demonstrated his ability to wield this anti-mendicant tradition, was still actively engaged in this conflict when he attempted to discredit Bridget and her visions in 1415.

This anti-mendicant rhetoric was particularly cutting because of the relationship that the mendicant orders had to ascetic women visionaries, and the way they used this relationship to authenticate their claims to religious and intellectual superiority. According to Andre Vauchez's *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, the Franciscans and Dominicans were experts at promoting the cults of not-yet-canonized saints and they deemed this activity to be a central component of their preaching success. Having recognized that contemporary saints preached better than ancient ones, these orders were actually competing with each other regarding the number of saints they could claim were attached to their order. Although local cults of apparently holy individuals were allowed prior to canonization, the mendicant orders, with their highly-organized, European-wide system of convents, were able to disseminate the cults tied to their order without the need for the formal incorporation of those cults into the church liturgy.[87]

The evidence suggests that the orders were well aware that they were walking a fine line regarding their obedience to the church hierarchy. Vauchez notes that the Dominicans began portraying their not yet

canonized saints on the walls of their chapels with radiant rather than circular halos that could be filled in once a successful canonization was achieved.[88] Moreover, in 1411, when the Dominicans initiated canonization proceedings for Catherine of Siena, the Dominican Inquisitor of Ferrara defended the order's practice of preaching Catherine's cult by suggesting that sanctity could be recognized by the people and did not require the approval of theologians in order to be present.[89] Expressly attacking university-trained theologians like Gerson, he claimed that this practice was just as orthodox as theologizing on the basis of virtues described by pagans and philosophers.[90]

The extent to which the Dominicans were engaged in an epistemological war with the university is illustrated by Sara Poor's recent discussion of the transmission history of the beguine Mechtild von Magdeburg's *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*. Poor suggests that the fact that Mechtild was not a member of a recognized religious order when she began writing down her revelations in 1250 is significant because it allowed her writing to be directed by her Dominican confessor, at whose command she wrote.[91]

According to Poor, Mechtild wrote her original text in the Low German vernacular in part because the use of the vernacular was necessary to legitimate her as an unlearned and therefore appropriate recipient for divine revelation. The fact that Mechtild wrote in Low German was thus emphasized in Latin translations of her text made at the end of the thirteenth century. The Latin translations, *Lux divinitatis* or *Revelationes*, rearranged Mechtild's book so that it followed learned theological topics of discussion. The Latin translation also toned down Mechtild's criticisms of the clergy and her erotic language.[92]

In the mid-fourteenth century Mechtild's text was translated again, this time into High German. The High German translation was directed towards religious women under the care of Dominican confessors and was prefaced by instructions indicating that the women should use the text as a model for writing their own visions. According to Poor, these three editions of the book are evidence of a conscious program on the part of the Dominicans to foster visionary experiences among women, give the women the authority to record their visions, and then use these visions to confound learned theologians. Moreover, she suggests that these efforts cannot be read independently from the political struggles the mendicants were engaged in with the secular clergy regarding the mendicants' rights to preach.[93]

Catherine's canonization process and Poor's findings suggest that the mendicants knowingly appealed to the authority of the women mystics in their care in the course of their struggle against the secular clergy

for authority within the church. Gerson's theological reforms suggest that these appeals were successful and that the type of authority exercised by these women undermined the authority claims of university theologians whose arguments were wholly dependent on scholastic reasoning.[94] In this sense, the mendicants' pastoral care of visionary women exacerbated the epistemological and political challenges university theologians like Gerson faced as they attempted to construct a reliable method of authenticating their politically-engaged truth claims. Gerson responded to the multiple threats posed by Bridget's revelations, Catherine's relationship with the Dominicans, and the existence of a popular alternative source of charismatic authority with a two-fold attack. First, he discredited the visionaries in a manner that resonated with the anti-mendicant tradition he had recently used in response to Gorrel's trial. Second, he equated the preaching of saints' cults with the spreading of heresy.

Gerson was aided in the task of morally compromising the reputation of ascetic women visionaries by the language of bridal mysticism itself, which identified its male and female practitioners as Brides of Christ and often employed erotic imagery as a means of describing momentary experiences of union between the human soul and the divinity. This language was particularly useful for "spiritually ambitious" women because it allowed them to formulate their mystical experience in a manner that protected them from those who would undermine their chastity by claiming that they were already married to Christ.[95]

This language was also useful for the male confessors of these women. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the university-trained spiritual advisors of ecstatic visionary women encouraged this language as a means of emphasizing contemplative women's access to a type of divine knowledge that was no longer available to learned clerics, who sought to protect their authority as dispassionate men guided by reason.[96] Gerson undermined this language by suggesting that the female visionary presented a sexual danger for the confessor because women are lustful, curious and eager to touch their confessors. He warned:

> If it is a woman, in what way does she relate to with her confessors or instructors, if she proposes continual conversations, now under the excuse of frequent confession, now of an obliging narration of her visions, now of any other conversation? Believe those who are experienced, especially St. Augustine and St. Bonaventure. There is scarcely any other plague more harmful or more incurable. Even if nothing more detrimental occurred than an incredibly great waste

> of precious time, it would give abundant satisfaction to the devil. Know that she has something else; she has an insatiable need for seeing and talking, meanwhile, let there be silence concerning touch; and this happened to Dido, according to the poet: "Once implanted, his countenance and his words cleave her breast and the pang gives neither peace nor quiet to her limbs.[97]

This particular attempt to discredit categorically lay women's practice of bridal mysticism is particularly damning because it casts suspicion on the prolonged conversations that these women needed to have with their confessors in order to prove the authenticity of their experiences and communicate their experiences to their followers.[98] Moreover, in this passage, Gerson characterized women as a class as nothing more than personifications of lust. In this sense, he willfully misread the language of erotic mysticism to raise a fear that had already concerned the advisors of these women, namely that they could be suspected of incontinence by their fellow clergy because of the intense relationships they had with women who were constantly recounting their visions.[99] In doing so, Gerson consistently represented the beliefs circulating within the university about the ways that women were physiologically and spiritually less able to control their passions than men. It is significant that he did so, however, in conscious dialogue with a series of interlocking misogynist traditions including Roman suspicions about female instability and persuasion as represented by Dido, monastic reductions of women to symbols of sexual temptation who do the devil's work by their mere presence, his own concerns about female penitents causing arousal in their confessors through the experiences they recounted, and finally, the anti-mendicant polemic which already synthesized all three.[100]

Gerson's activation of these misogynist discourses served two unstated goals. The first was to disrupt the relationship between visionaries and confessors by making confessors feel wary of being associated too closely with women. Gerson accomplished this by both portraying these seemingly pious women as sexual predators and by indicating through his description of them that the mendicant's association with them conformed to the anti-mendicant exegesis of 2 Timothy. Namely, he explicitly identified these same women as the women seduced by the false preachers of the apocalypse, calling them "(s)illy women who are sin-laden and led away by various lusts: ever learning yet never attaining knowledge of the truth."

Gerson's second goal was to discredit the mendicants as impressionable and incompetent preachers of heresy by attacking their role

in the proliferation of saints' cults in line with the critiques made by Henry of Langenstein and Pierre d'Ailly more than twenty years earlier. Recounting several examples of wise desert fathers who recognized diabolical illusion for what it was because their virtuous humility informed them that they were not worthy to receive visions of Christ in this life, Gerson was then able to contrast this behavior to that of well-known ascetic women visionaries.[101] Through this argument Gerson implied that, since the desert fathers deemed themselves unworthy to see Christ in this life, those who claimed to be brides of Christ were foolishly mistaken in their arrogance. This unfavorable comparison furthered Gerson's goals of portraying Bridget as a mistaken innovator and danger to the church, condemning Catherine and her Dominican sponsors by association, and emphasizing how rare the gift of discernment was. In fact Gerson raised the cautious and humble example of the desert fathers twice, once preceding his discussion of how such reported ecstatic experiences should be treated and once immediately following this treatment. Such framing served to place these visionaries outside of the orthodoxy represented by the wiser desert fathers and saintly theologians such as Augustine, Bernard, and Bonaventure, whom Gerson cites as refusing such visions.[102]

Continuing to explore the heretical danger represented by the false visionary, Gerson warned that visionaries who first appear to have good intentions may be hiding a more sinister intent. He suggested:

> And it is possible that the first effect appears good, beneficial, and offered for the edification of others, which in the end will fall into scandal in many ways, either because the ultimate end does not correspond to the first, or because something false and erroneous is discovered about the person which previously had been reported as a sign of holiness and piety. Our age has taught us this about the teachings of Jean de Verrenes and John Hus, and of others like them. Moreover, when something can be accomplished by human endeavor, whether this is in a life or this is in teaching, why is it necessary to seek or to wait for a divine communication from heaven? Certainly this seems more like tempting God than honoring Him.[103]

Gerson's reference to John Hus placed the questions of discernment and sanctity within their wider ecclesio-political context in a manner that directly addressed the intersection of epistemological and political concerns that had motivated many of Gerson's sermons and treatises. In fact, in other works, Gerson likened Hus to Wycliffe and all other

heretics, considering all sources of disorder in the church to be part of the same phenomenon, the collapse of the appropriate hierarchy of which the University of Paris was an integral part.[104] The fact that Gerson had participated in the council's condemnation of Hus, which resulted in Hus's execution on 6 July 1415, only strengthened Gerson's claim that he represented the established church hierarchy.[105] In denouncing the practice of seeking divine communication as a means of answering practical or speculative questions by associating such a practice with the names of these two scholastic heretics, Gerson simultaneously augmented his own authority and effectively blamed Catherine of Siena and Bridget of Sweden for disturbing the hierarchical unity of the church by encouraging the papacy to return to Rome, as it did in 1378 right before the onset of the schism, and then prolonging the schism by adding saintly legitimacy to the Roman claimants. The schism could have ended, as the French had hoped, with the death of Urban VI in 1389 if his cardinals had sought to end the schism by refusing to elect a successor.[106] Then the schism would have been resolved in a manner that agreed both with French expansionist plans in Italy and with the honor of the French crown, which was implicated in Clement VII's cause because Charles V had so readily given the cardinals his support for their decision to abandon Urban, perhaps even before they had made the decision themselves.[107]

Elaborating upon the association between mendicants, ascetic female visionaries, and disorder, Gerson claimed that the followers of these ascetic visionaries "corrupt the Christian religion" with superstitions because "they put greater faith in people not yet canonized and in writings that are not verified, than they do in the saints and in the Holy Gospel."[108] Here Gerson was at least attacking the laity's ability to recognize the apparent holiness of an individual's life, which was the basis for the formation of local cults that then led to formal canonization proceedings at the papal curia.[109] In other words, Gerson discredited the role of popular devotion in the development of saints' cults in addition to those women who arrogantly believed that they were holy enough to receive divinely-inspired visions during their own lifetime. Following Henry of Langenstein, he asserted that "the canonization of so many people should be restricted."[110] In this manner, Gerson directly referred to the mendicants' practice of promoting the cults of seemingly holy but not yet sainted individuals who were associated with their order, particularly, perhaps, the cult of Catherine of Siena.

Once the strong anti-mendicant theme that informs Gerson's polemics becomes apparent, Gerson's criticisms of women who confused

brain injuries with revelatory experiences, which were discussed at the beginning of this chapter, may be read in a different light. Although this criticism dismisses the revelatory experiences reported by visionary women as resulting from brain damage likely caused by immoderate asceticism, the true target of this passage, as Wendy Love Anderson has noted, is the male clergy member who opens himself up to diabolical deception by attempting to learn something curious from these women, rather than placing his faith in scripture and the church hierarchy.[111] This is not to say that Gerson did not attack women in this or his other treatises on discernment or that his misogynist polemics did not contribute to a general suspicion of seemingly pious women in particular and all women more generally. Rather, by emphasizing the connection between Gerson's particular choice of words and the ongoing feud between the seculars and the mendicants, this chapter has demonstrated that Gerson's deployment of gendered discourses did not necessarily reflect his opinions about women as a category. Rather it reflected how gender governed his rhetorical context.

Conclusion

A gendered reading of Gerson's discernment treatises that pays attention to the way that Gerson's deployment of pre-existing gendered tropes forwarded his argument demonstrates the extent to which the act of theorizing about discerning spirits could be used to forward a particular political agenda. Moreover, questioning why Gerson's two later discernment treatises employed much more aggressively misogynist language reveals the way that Gerson's discernment treatises engaged with the proliferation of saints cults by the mendicant orders during a period of intense conflict between the secular and mendicant clergy. Furthermore, by demonstrating how discernment fit into Gerson's theological reform in dialogue with the ways in which opposing sides in the papal schism authenticated their truth claims, this chapter has argued that ascetic women visionaries directly competed with university-trained scholars regarding their perceived authority to discern reliable Christian truths during the crisis of the schism. The extent of this competition is readily apparent not only in the squaring off of the two rival papal obediences, but also in the hagiographic portrayal of Catherine of Siena by her Dominican supporters. Raymond of Capua, for instance, insisted that Catherine's ability to read and write was God-given and reported that her style, if translated into Latin, would rival that of Saints Paul and Augustine.[112] The university could offer no such

dramatic proof of its own authority other than to root out and extinguish heresies and false visionaries. One could argue, however, considering Gerson's preference for the quiet of contemplative study, that it was the need to supply just such dramatic proofs that he wished to remove from serious debates regarding the church hierarchy and church reform. Moreover, considering the difference between Catherine's understanding of her mission and that promoted by her hagiographer, it is likely that she also valued quiet reading and contemplation combined with direct action more than alleviate suffering and end the schism to the miraculous events that her Dominican sponsors recounted as a means of promoting her authority in the sphere of ecclesiastical politics.[113]

Of course, Gerson specialists would rightly protest such a purely political reading of Gerson's discernment treatises. Serious theological issues informed these texts. Most importantly, Gerson's real reluctance to discount particular types of visions or visionaries categorically reflected a very real fear that denouncing extreme behaviors or miracles might call into question the veracity of accounts of similar phenomena found in scripture. This fear is most clearly revealed in *De distinctione verarum revelationum a falsis*, through his belabored defense of the extreme asceticism that characterized the life of John the Baptist.[114] Moreover, it seems that Gerson was not necessarily as concerned that the simple laity would stop believing in the Christian faith as much as he feared that the princes and prelates would continue to approach the schism as an arena for achieving their professional and political goals rather than as a serious crisis in the church. In 1394, for instance, Gerson preached an Easter sermon on the resurrection of Christ that concluded in such a manner that it seemed to ask how anyone who believed in Christ's death and resurrection could be willing to tear the church to pieces for the sake of greed and ambition.[115]

Another serious concern that runs through Gerson's discernment treatises involves the legacy of the desert fathers, who themselves were known for both practicing extreme forms of asceticism and paying careful attention to the movement of the passions through their soul. In fact, the outer performance of asceticism served to break the body of its control over the soul, not to demonstrate the validity of the ascetic's truth claims despite the fact that the monks' asceticism was what proved their holiness in the context of political discourse.[116] Gerson's emphasis on the ways in which these saints refused visions of Christ is misleading to the extent that it implies that extraordinary revelations and ascetic practices did not play a central role in the lives of these figures as they were ensconced in hagiography and understood by

European Christians. It seems that Gerson sought to cultivate the much needed inner practice of discernment as a means of surviving a life as a teacher and church leader in a politically treacherous environment. As he was well aware, this environment was full of temptations and fears that could cause a theologian to lose his moral compass, and as a result, provide the juridical leaders of society and the laity they ruled with the wrong advice.

An awareness of the somewhat artificial opposition Gerson created between the dramatic ecstatic experiences that proved the sanctity of ascetic female contemplatives and the private practice of observing and reflecting upon the interior movements of the soul might provide us with some insight into the influence that Gerson's discernment treatises exercised in late medieval and early modern Europe. For instance, as feminist historians have demonstrated, Gerson's discernment treatises circulated with the infamous *Hammer of Witches*, that at one time was thought to be the foundational text of the European witch hunts, which are now understood to be a much more regionally diverse and complex series of events. As Tamar Herzig has recently demonstrated, Heinrich Kramer, the author of the *Hammer*, preached about the lives of holy ascetic women and hunted witches at the same time. Whereas the circulation of Gerson's discernment treatise with a treatise exposing the crimes of witches has been understood as a sign that Gerson's discernment methods caused aspiring visionaries to be judged witches, the two activities of encouraging female contemplation and hunting witches seem to have been complementary rather than opposed to each other.[117] Similarly, if we look to Spain, where Gerson's works on contemplation and the spiritual life influenced the spiritual practices of Saint Ignatius, we see the Spanish Franciscan friar Martín de Castañega (d. 1551) warning that some women "pretend that they are bound by spirits … because of the great carnal passion they have for someone, or because of the terrible temptations of the flesh that the demons ignite in them."[118] Whether or not Castañega inherited this suspicion from Gerson or from the long tradition of rigorously testing spirits that preceded Gerson would be difficult to determine.[119] The presence of this suspicion, however, did not prevent Spanish clergy members from advising female penitents. Nor did it prevent female penitents from gaining a reputation for the special grace they received through their revelations, as *The Life* and *The Interior Castle* by Teresa of Avila demonstrate. Where Moshe Sluhovsky suggests that Gerson may have been an influence is in the intense focus on interiority that caused the spiritual directors of female penitents to encourage the women under

their supervision to record very carefully all of their inner impulses as a means of discerning their spiritual progress.[120]

In this sense, Gerson's discernment treatises may have had two crucial effects upon women's religious experiences that have not yet been emphasized. The first may have been an intensification on the part of the mendicants to demonstrate their ability to discern spirits by being even more diligent about proving both the trustworthy nature of the women they sponsored and their own keen ability to identify women who were diabolically inspired. The second may be an increased turn towards the interior experience of religious truth, which was already underway among the Modern Devout, who were reading Gerson's works and meditating upon them. This last effect would have conformed to Gerson's focus upon comportment. It also, however, would have conformed to a process of learned and quiet truth-seeking that was practiced not just by Gerson, but also by Christine de Pizan.

Conclusion

This book has examined in detail how Gerson relied upon gendered rhetoric for the purpose of understanding, and also promoting, the authority of learned academic consensus, and failing that, the authority of the solitary contemplative theologian. I have argued that the particular gendered discourses, which Gerson employed in a given moment, were shaped as much by the demands and expectations of his audience as they were by his own professional goals. It is crucial that we remain aware of the fact that Gerson did not invent any of the gendered discourses or discernment methodologies that he employed, even those for which he is most famous. Rather, he creatively synthesized well-established misogynist and otherwise gendered discourses with the university's belief that rational, expert, male consensus produced the most reliable truth claims. Even this innovative project of Gerson's, however, drew upon well-established associations between the University of Paris and divine wisdom.

In fact, as this book has argued, Gerson's use of misogynist polemics and otherwise gendered discourses tells us much more about his environment than his character. To some extent, it may even be possible to say that the unfolding of the schism and the crisis in the monarchy in France pushed Gerson to activate existing gender discourses because there seemed to be no better way to negotiate or even understand his situation. Although Gerson merely activated gendered discourses that were operating within his environment for reasons that were not primarily misogynist, the combined effect of his juxtaposition of misogynist discourses with his idealizations of the pursuit of theological truth and the rationalization of government aggressively discredited women as religious and political agents. Others have demonstrated the ways in which Gerson's use of misogynist discourses contributed to the

European witch hunts and the demise of female mysticism by examining Gerson's influence on John Nider's *Formicarius*, the inclusion of Gerson's *De probatione spirituum* in manuscript editions of the *Malleus Maleficarum*, and the application of Gerson's discernment methods in the trial of Joan of Arc.[1]

Building upon the previous chapters' reading of Gerson's politicized use of gendered language, this conclusion offers some suggestions for a more complex approach to the effects Gerson's gendered discourses had on late medieval and early modern perceptions of female authority. As the evolution of Gerson's creatively gendered construction of a hierarchically endorsed persuasive political authority for the university of Paris suggests, Gerson's concerns about women and discernment were intertwined with his general pursuit of a form of rational authority that could transcend factional politics and ensure peace within the kingdom of France and the wider church. Gerson could not avoid questions of women and gender because these questions played a central role in the semiotic context in which Gerson and the representatives of other collective identities competed for the ability to define authoritative Christian truth.[2] In elaborating upon Gerson's role in this competition, this book has illustrated the limited authority the university exercised within broader movements of ecclesiastical and royal centralization. This conclusion employs this insight for the purpose of reinterpreting Gerson's support of Joan of Arc in a manner that reveals the structural role played by gender in the negotiation of both Gerson's and Joan's authority. It then looks to this structure as lens for evaluating the possible joint effect of Gerson's discernment treatises and his personification of the University of Paris as the Daughter of the king on shaping the attitudes of his contemporaries regarding the political and religious authority of women.

As the previous chapters have argued, Gerson's use of gendered language developed in tension with his understanding of the university's collective, masculine expertise, which in turn was shaped by a confluence of political pressures and the gender tensions that already existed within the university's epistemological, ecclesiastical, and political position. For instance, Pope Gregory IX referred to the University of Paris as "wisdom's workshop" and suggested that it protected the Church from "aerial powers" in his papal bull, *Parens scientiarum*. This bull, which is now thought to be the most important foundational document for the University of Paris, implicitly placed the university in competition with monastic claims to authority.[3] These monastic claims to authority, in turn, were founded upon an ascetic life of prayer and contemplation

and existed in competition and continuity with the example of ascetic desert saints. As early university-trained clergy members found, such traditional monastic modes of authority were easily embodied in the actions of pious laywomen who moved people to penance through their austerities, enjoyed the fruits of divine contemplation, and exorcised demons.[4]

Moreover, Gregory's bull glorified an institution of learning that had emerged within the context of an urban culture that valued debating about the best way to pursue a good Christian life and was characterized by the formation of voluntary, self-regulating associations of like-minded individuals who came together to promote their collective religious, economic, and social well-being.[5] In this sense, the university defined as "wisdom's workshop" occupied a social niche that was religiously, politically, and hierarchically parallel to that occupied by the Parisian beguines and the mendicant orders resident within the city. All three groups sought to demonstrate that Christian perfection and truth could be found outside the monastery. More significantly, the perceived holiness and wisdom of these three groups within Paris reflected well on the king and his court, which responded by encouraging their development through direct patronage, charitable foundations, and legal privileges.[6]

During the thirteenth century, the Parisian master Robert of Sorbonne suggested that pious ascetic women and university theologians pursued the same type of truth when he preached about the holiness and devotion of the beguines as a means of convincing the scholars of Paris to approach their studies with sincere religious zeal and diligence.[7] Although the reputation, status, and visibility of the beguines had suffered during the fourteenth century, the mendicant orders continued to collaborate with beguines, as well as enclosed women, in mutually authenticating relationships. This collaboration allowed the mendicants to be politically active in the world while maintaining an appearance of being strongly connected to authoritative, other-worldly wisdom through their interactions with the contemplative women in their care. Evidence that the mendicants took the truths expressed by the women in their care seriously can be seen in their efforts to circulate Latin versions of Mechthild of Magdeburg's writings within the university context.[8] Exemplified most fully in the career of Catherine of Siena, this relationship allowed the mendicants to shape major political events as much as it allowed them also to prove their worthiness as preachers to the laity.[9] This collaboration with women afforded the mendicants all of the advantages claimed by both male and female subject positions.

They could speak simultaneously from the perspective of learned scholarly authority and devout female humility.[10]

Gerson's contemporaries and role models, Pierre d'Ailly and Henry of Langenstein recognized this important role holy women like Catherine and Bridget could play in justifying the ecclesiastical arguments of their opponents. In an attempt to undermine the role played by these two Urbanist holy women in authenticating the Urbanist cause, and also to prevent any other clerical group from gaining power in the church by promoting the cults of charismatic individuals to the credulous laity, these two university defenders wrote discernment treatises critiquing the seemingly uncontrolled spread of the cult of saints.[11] In fact, Gerson's earliest surviving discernment treatise, written in 1392, affirms the arguments of his teachers, advising church leaders to suspect miracles and revelations which "appear to contradict the faith or good morals," and asserting quite pointedly that "miracles and revelations may or may not have value for declaring someone to have a right to the papacy," and then promoting "theologians learned in scripture" as the best evaluators of revelatory experiences.[12] These responses all suggest that the schism, because of the authenticating strategies employed by the Roman and Avignon obediences, pitted learned theological authority against the revelations of apparently holy individuals, the majority of whom were women. In light of this fact, it is telling that Gerson's treatise directed particular suspicion toward individuals, who like many famous visionary women, believed they were alienated from their senses and in this state of rapture were taught to read sacred texts by angels.[13]

In light of these earlier treatises, Gerson's apparently changed attitudes toward discernment and lay contemplation, which emerged around the year 1400, reveal his desperate institutional, epistemological, and political position in the wake of the subtraction crisis. Having been excluded from the debates regarding France's subtraction of obedience from Pope Benedict XIII between 1395 and 1398, Gerson had also been prevented from withdrawing completely from public life. Although he fled the ecclesiastical corruption he found in Paris to take up the position of dean of the collegiate chapter of Saint Donatian in Bruges, which he held through Philip the Bold's patronage, he was back in Paris by the fall of 1400. Either the cannons' rejection of Gerson's leadership, the political ambitions of his patron Philip, or his own desire to shape France's response to the schism forced Gerson to resume his post as chancellor.[14]

Significantly, during this challenging time when Gerson considered abandoning his university post and then returned to Paris to serve

as chancellor of a university that had supported the subtraction vote against his wishes, he wrote spiritual guides for his sisters and shared his lectures on the discernment of spirits with his brother.[15] At this point, it made sense that he would reach out to his sisters and his brothers, and through them, the laity more generally. Following the subtraction, which Gerson's patron Philip the Bold supported, it is possible that Gerson's influence had shrunk to a small group comprising his family, members of the College of Navarre to whom he addressed his initial letters regarding the need for theological reform, and Parisians of all statuses who were moved by his sermons.[16] It is worth noting that Gerson's practice of circulating works through carefully chosen networks, which also characterized his later publication efforts closely resembled the strategy employed by Bridget of Sweden and Catherine of Siena as they built their own political influence, and then later by those who actively spread their cults through manuscripts illuminated with illustrations of these two holy women delivering their letters to important individuals.[17] In this manner, the subtraction crisis pushed Gerson into a rhetorical position that closely resembled that occupied by these two charismatic female saints.

Gerson's sudden interest in the contemplative lives of laywomen also may have reflected the role that an idealized understanding of mendicant spirituality played in his theological reform. Both Gerson and d'Ailly were graduates of the College of Navarre, which had been planned by its founder Jeanne of Navarre's Franciscan confessor for the purpose of providing a near-monastic life for scholars from the secular clergy.[18] Moreover, both Gerson and d'Ailly admired prominent members of the early mendicant orders.[19] In this sense, the formal exclusion of the Dominicans from the University of Paris in 1389 allowed Gerson to experiment with the authentication strategies that had been most successfully employed by this most powerful group among the mendicants and also to improve upon them. Seen from this perspective, his sisters' decision to adopt a religious way of life may have allowed Gerson to experiment with advising women at a crucial time in his career. He also actively preached to the parishes of Paris at this time and further cemented the reputation he had gained by 1400 of being one of the best preachers in the city.[20]

All of these developments suggest that the immediate context of the schism and the ensuing theological and personal authority crisis it created encouraged Gerson to explore the ways in which fostering and controlling lay piety, especially female piety, might fulfill his role as a theologian and also increase his authority within the wider church. In

fact, through his well-attended sermons and his concern for the laity Gerson crafted his own type of charismatic authority, as demonstrated by the extent to which clerical leaders sought out his advice during his life and a diverse group of individuals distinguished him as particularly authoritative among university theologians immediately following his death.[21] The fact that Gerson offered his spiritual advice in the form of letters and treatises, which he was able to then publish allowed his ideas to reach a much wider audience than those of a preacher who was personally present for each spiritual advisee.[22] More significantly, this somewhat more distant and impersonal mode of providing spiritual direction for the laity realized the idealized role for the university that Gerson imagined in his conclusion to his lectures on theological reform, collected in the treatise, *Against the Curiosity of Scholars*. In this treatise, Gerson imagined that the University of Paris would act as a single fountain of true doctrine that would water the Christian world by evaluating and regulating what could and could not be preached and also by producing handbooks for preachers that would guide them in their instruction of the laity.[23]

Gerson's spiritual writings and pastoral guidelines were received enthusiastically both by the Modern Devout and by the French clergy. In this manner, these writings allowed members of an urban, educated elite to take charge of their spiritual life and pursue their devotion in all seriousness in accordance with the guidance of a learned expert. Again, Gerson was not alone in this project. The mendicants had been circulating their guided meditations on events in the bible as a means of increasing lay piety since the fourteenth century.[24] These devotional writings, moreover, resonated with the urban piety of elite townspeople, as demonstrated by their own proliferation of conduct books regarding proper social and religious behavior.[25] Gerson's claim that this flowering of lay devotion required both encouragement and control, however, was somewhat disingenuous. Lay devotion was already under clerical control. Gerson only sought to bring it under university control. In doing so, he competed with other male clerics whose hierarchically-based claims to authority may have been equal to his own. In this sense, his focus on controlling female piety obscured the importance and authority of his male clerical competition.[26]

The major difference between Gerson's efforts and those of the mendicants and other clerical promoters of lay piety was that his did not allow for the lay practitioner to apply his or her contemplative exercises to the purpose of authenticating a charismatic career of preaching and teaching. The mendicants did allow for such practices, however,

perhaps because their own authority was extra-hierarchical and to some extent charismatic, and also because they understood the extent to which managing aspiring prophets increased their own authority.[27] There was no room, however, in Gerson's idealized understanding of the university's place in ecclesiastical and royal hierarchies for individuals who applied their own contemplative experiences beyond the task of increasing their own piety. Gerson's objection to this type of self-authorizing, which he understood to be narcissistic rather than communally based, was particularly directed at those who either presumptuously argued with theologians about theology or, in a rather disordered fashion, decided to abandon their duties to their family in the pursuit of penitential activities that destroyed their health, and in Gerson's opinion, disordered their mind.[28] These critiques, which activated longstanding tropes regarding the disruptive influence women exercised in society when they refused to accept their hierarchical subordination, served to disguise the fact that Gerson's critique of disorder was aimed as much at other clergy and their powerful aristocratic supporters as at unruly lay people.

In light of his theological and political concerns, it is likely that Gerson, who had read Gregory the Great's *Moralia on Job* approvingly, envisioned the university and its theologians directing each Christian through a life of quiet and obedient contemplation much like an abbot directed a monastery.[29] He hinted at such a vision in the vernacular sermon he delivered in 1410 against the mendicants, *Quomodo stabit regnum*. In addition to likening the mendicants to Lucifer and suggesting that they were attempting to disrupt the divinely-established hierarchical order of the church, Gerson reminded each member of his audience of the laity's responsibility with respect to the schism. According to Gerson, the resolution to the schism and peace of the church required that each individual put his or her personal kingdom in order by subjecting the vices to the rule of reason.[30]

As Gerson explained in the political sermons he delivered before the French royal court, a state governed by reason followed the political advice of the university.[31] Likewise, a soul governed by reason would follow the spiritual advice of university theologians. These assertions were intrinsically connected for three reasons. First, the university's political authority derived from its theologians' expertise on the proper pursuit of a good Christian life. Thus its political authority was predicated upon its religious authority. Second, since Gerson was unable to influence the policy decisions of prelates and princes as he wished, his cultivation of the obedience and devotion of important segments of the

laity offered him a source of authority that he could then apply in political situations. If he appeared to be the authoritative religious leader of the people, princes and prelates would also have to listen to him. Third, as someone who advocated for church reform, Gerson was dependent upon the cooperation of both of these groups, the princes and the laity.

Gerson's conflation of lay obedience with the spiritual health of the church also complemented both Gerson's and the crown's understanding of the place of the University of Paris in French society. The University of Paris, Gerson promised the king in his political sermons, taught the people how to obey the king and the king how to best treat his people.[32] Such a position was a necessary one for a royal institution that relied upon the king to protect its extensive juridical and material privileges in exchange for the service it provided the crown by protecting the realm from heresy and also contributing to the cultural and political pre-eminence of France through its great reputation for learning. Moreover, as the political disorder that plagued France intensified in the wake of the schism and the onset of the mental illness of Charles VI, it was all the more crucial that the university demonstrate both its loyalty to the crown and its role in maintaining royally sanctioned peace and order.[33]

In fact, the university's relationship to the French crown may have played a crucial role in both Gerson's promotion of the university as a hierarchically anointed force for political order and the pressing professional and theological concerns that had been addressed by his predecessors. For instance, by enacting a well-established university tradition that conformed to the rhetoric of *Parens scientiarum*, Gerson's mentor, Pierre d'Ailly, had attempted to establish an extra-hierarchical basis of authority for the university of Paris. D'Ailly made this argument in the 1380s, both in his prosecution of the corrupt chancellor John Blanchard and in his prosecution of the controversial theologian Juan de Monzon. This argument turned upon d'Ailly's characterization of teaching as one of the divinely-given gifts described in Saint Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. Following d'Ailly's argument, Gerson identified theologians as established agents in the Pseudo-Dionysian ecclesiastical hierarchy at the level of extra-hierarchical bishops. In this respect, both Gerson and d'Ailly granted to theologians the right to doctrinally guide the entire church, while conceding jurisdictional authority to their papal superiors and episcopal equals.[34] D'Ailly's arguments, which Gerson adopted, also positioned theologians similarly to those who received another gift mentioned by Paul in his Letter to the Ephesians, namely prophecy.[35]

This implicit juxtaposition of theologians and prophets materialized quite explosively in the debates following the schism, in which French theologians and prelates, who were not at first even sure which pope was the true pope, found themselves needing to find a path to unity that was both politically workable and theologically sound. A politically workable solution, however, could not place blame on the French crown for supporting the cardinals' election of Clement VII despite the fact that they had already elected Pope Urban VI, who still lived and refused to step down from the papal throne. In this context, the visions of perceived holy women who suggested that God approved of Urban's papacy were intolerable and dangerous. This danger was all the more pressing since King Charles V of France had forced the University of Paris to support Clement publicly in 1389 despite the fact that its membership remained divided on this issue. The subsequent exodus of the university's most respected Urbanist members further suggested that the French, who had the most political power, were in the wrong about the schism. Such a suggestion undermined the integrity of the university's remaining members and the deliberative process by which they arrived at collective decisions. This situation was further exacerbated by the crown's subsequent refusal to listen to the university's advice on this matter.[36]

It was in response to this ecclesiastical and political crisis that d'Ailly and Langenstein authored their discernment treatises and d'Ailly aggressively defended the university's authority in its prosecution of John Blanchard and Juan de Monzon. Gerson, whose entire career as a student had taken place in the shadow of this crisis, continued d'Ailly's efforts with his treatise celebrating the university's victory over Monzon, *Gallia quae viris semper*. Determined to circumvent royal resistance, however, Gerson drew upon the long classical tradition of female persuasion and the popularity the deadly sins tradition enjoyed at the French royal court for the purpose of constructing an allegorical identity for the university that would allow him to address the crown in a manner that was simultaneously supplicatory and authoritative.[37]

The method was a success. Gerson enjoyed a long career as a court preacher and maintained the ability to speak out against favored royal policies and the wishes of his most powerful patrons. By the mid fifteenth century, his sermons were being collected on the basis that Gerson had delivered them before the French royal court, and as a result, the challenge the subtraction crisis made to his authority receded to the background. In fact, immediately following the return of Charles VII to power, Gerson's works, which had been proscribed under

the Anglo-Burgundian occupation, were sought out and copied at the Abby of Saint Victor. The desperate determination behind this effort can be seen in the fact that the copying was so focused on recovering all of Gerson's words that the copyists used whatever paper they could find, as is attested by the only manuscript copy of Gerson's sermon, *Estotes misericordes*, which was compiled of a mix of parchment and vellum scraps.[38] Although he represented an institution that had been clearly bullied by the crown with respect the schism and he himself had enjoyed the patronage of the infamous murderer, John the Fearless, Gerson had emerged as an authoritative representative of Christian truth during his own life and maintained that reputation among influential circles after death.

In a university where chancellors could be boycotted out of office, scholars could be arrested and exiled by the crown, and theologians, like Gerson's mentor Pierre d'Ailly, could be accused of determining their ecclesiastical policies on the basis of their career ambitions, Gerson emerged as a voice of neutrality, truth, and authority. In other words, he constructed the appearance of speaking for a unified church community comprised of an orderly church hierarchy supported by an unchallenged French monarch when no such clearly-identified community, hierarchy, or secular power existed on the ground.[39] He did so by skillfully manipulating his own society's understandings about the relationships among gender, truth, and power in a manner that ascetic female visionaries and their clerical advisors had been doing for centuries.

While Gerson specialists tend to explain Gerson's interest in the contemplative life as deriving from his religious upbringing, the personal crisis he suffered during the subtraction of obedience, and his natural tendency towards contemplative devotion, it is crucial for understanding Gerson's use of misogynist and otherwise gendered language that we note that he explicitly identified contemplative authority as a means of gaining control over a corrupt prelacy. As early as 1392, when his faction was still in power within the university, Gerson suggested that only by drawing upon the power of love could theologians successfully convince prelates to abandon their concern for temporalities and begin shaping the church. Moreover, he admitted the parallels between the charismatic affective mode of authority he was promoting and that employed by female visionaries when he admonished that although Saint Paul was motivated by such intense love for every potential convert to Christianity that he was willing to postpone his own death and subsequent arrival in paradise for their sake, he never wished to be damned on their account.[40] Through this statement Gerson explicitly

differentiated theologians from the most doctrinally challenging female visionaries, who requested that God damn them in exchange for releasing sinners from hell. Moreover, he did so in a manner that also demonstrated Gerson's understanding of how their rhetorical positions overlapped.[41]

Seen from the perspective of this long trajectory of Gerson's struggle to develop an independent and authoritative voice for the university, Gerson's prophetic personification of the university as the visionary Daughter of the King in 1405 and 1408 embodies all of the challenges he had been struggling with up to this point, and as a result, functions as much more than a simple rhetorical trope. This visionary Daughter of the King condemned aristocratic violence as cannibalism after sending "the eyes of her consideration all over France" and was only willing to consider peace even when the king's law demanded violent punishment. This politically active Daughter of the King represented Gerson's idealized political university, both in her feminine supplicatory mode of address and the prophetic authority with which she applied the university's broad academic expertise.[42] Her trustworthiness was guaranteed by her feminine gender, which guaranteed her distance from the center of political power. She spoke out of affection for the purpose of advising the very men upon whom she depended for her own safety.[43] The truth of her words was guaranteed by academic consensus. Her authority was charismatic, she answered only to God, kings and princes could choose to listen to her as they wished but would face the same fate of those who refused the advice of wisdom in Proverbs if they did not. She was the ultimate female visionary, wisdom incarnate on earth, and yet the truths she spoke were reasonable, stable, and representative of all interests because they rested on a cumulative scholarly tradition that had been purified through learned debate.[44]

That such a collective personification, made in a time when corporate identities were the rule, would situate Gerson in opposition to the ascetic female visionaries he critiqued at Constance and afterwards is not at all surprising. In fact, the parallel positioning of Gerson's personified university and these women becomes all the more apparent in light of the fact that politically active ascetic female visionaries like Catherine of Siena did not work alone. They represented extended networks of clergy and lay people just like the university. In fact, if we compare Catherine's letter writing strategies, family connections, local concerns about Italian peace, and crusade rhetoric to Gerson's use of these authenticating strategies, the only difference between the two are Catherine's asceticism and Gerson's education. Moreover, if we accept

that Catherine as we know her is the product of a hagiographical tradition which discounted the education of female visionaries, the similarity between the two becomes even stronger.[45] In this sense, it is possible to argue that Gerson critiqued ascetic female visionaries as aggressively as he did because he found himself in direct conflict with them over the explosive topics of both the schism and the uncertain basis of reliable theological truth. This conflict was all the more explosive because it intersected with secular mendicant conflict, as Gerson's deployment of well-established misogynist anti-mendicant rhetoric demonstrates.

Such a conclusion supports the assertion forwarded by Gerson specialists that Gerson was not motivated by a simple hatred of women when he made the misogynist pronouncements for which he has been recently criticized. At the same time, Gerson's strategic deployment of gendered authentication strategies also suggests that he intended the polemics he employed both to restrict the devotional practices of women and to encourage their confessors to distance themselves from them for the purpose of avoiding accusations of sexual impropriety. In this sense, Gerson knowingly created a misogynist effect as he sought to promote his own authority at the expense of his competitors. This willingness to discredit women for the sake of promoting his own authority demonstrates Gerson's understanding of the structural relationship between gender and power in his immediate context.

Gerson's deft negotiation of the symbolic, rhetorical, and political aspects of late medieval gender discourses should caution his modern interpreters against applying more recent and largely essentialist understandings of "male" and "female" in their interpretations of Gerson's polemics. An alternative mode of reading Gerson's use of gendered language may be suggested by Ian Christopher Levy's recent conclusions regarding Gerson's understanding of theological authority. As Levy has argued recently, Gerson and his theological peers generally agreed that the true meaning of Scripture could be found in its literal meaning, which they considered to be the intent of its divine author. Because fifteenth-century theologians considered knowledge of divine intent as necessary for the accurate interpretation of scripture, such interpretations required a sophisticated eye that knew how to read figurative language for its true meaning as well as a morally upright and divinely favored expositor.[46] Such a reading practice would suggest that Gerson and his peers would be much more skilled than us at interacting intellectually with personifications, looking for the fabric of an argument rather than just collecting and organizing its parts, and finding multiple ways to understand and communicate the same idea. In this sense, it is

likely that examining Gerson's references to women in isolation from the texts and historical contexts in which they are deployed might provide distorted results. An example of this difficulty can be found in modern responses to Gerson's support of Joan of Arc.

Most modern scholars have characterized Gerson's support of Joan of Arc's vision-induced military career as an aberration in his otherwise relentless determination to discredit all forms of female religious authority. The general conclusion is that Gerson felt threatened by the charismatic authority of female ascetic visionaries, which he sought to control, but in Joan of Arc's case, his nationalism overwhelmed him to such an extent that he supported her visionary career. As a supporter of the French monarchy, moreover, Gerson had little choice, since by the time he offered his measured approval of Joan, Charles VII had already determined that she was legitimate. While these arguments make sense given Gerson's loyalty to the French crown, they emphasize a similarity between Joan and the other female prophets Gerson criticized that might be false.[47]

Although they were all women, Joan, Bridget, and Catherine did not interact with Gerson's idealized understanding of the relationship between the lay devout, university theologians, and royal authority in the same manner. Significantly, Joan did not challenge French theological authority like Bridget and Catherine. She was neither associated with the opposing obedience, like Bridget, or a rival group of clergy, like Catherine. She did not claim to teach theology.

In fact, rather than challenging theological authority, Joan supported it. In this sense, it is best to remember that multiple masculine genders existed in medieval Europe as we evaluate Gerson's response to Joan. Joan acted like the university personified as the Daughter of the King would have acted if she could have done so. She taught knights their job and in doing so as a woman who cross-dressed, she proved the value of the type of masculinity embraced by the clergy over that embraced by the ruling military elite because she won her battles by faith and virtue. As she motivated French warriors to defend their country, she demonstrated that a virtuous devout woman was more manly than a knight who lacked devotion. In short, she proved the necessity of faith for the exercise of worldly power – an argument that Gerson made tirelessly to little effect in his court sermons.

This juxtaposition of Joan and the Daughter of the King reveals the complexity of Gerson's deployment of gendered language and the implicit connections between his treatment of the deadly sins and the problem of discerning spirits. In fact, in early monastic literature, these two practices

are one and the same. Gerson's portrayal of the kingdom of France beset by the seven deadly sins sent specially by the devil, when considered in conjunction with his warnings against female visionaries who opened themselves up to the influence of the devil by confusing divine and carnal love, provides powerful foundational ideas for witch conspiracy theories about women who have sex with the devil as part of a wider plot to undermine the political and religious order of Christian Europe. Moreover, the confluence of his praise of the cross-dressing manly Joan and the gender hybridity of his personification of the University of Paris as the Daughter of the King worked to exclude all that was feminine from the political sphere. That Gerson may have associated women with the sin, diabolical possession and factional politics all as a result of his own desire to construct a rational form of authority that could guide the church through the schism, suggests that misogynist discourses are often perpetuated in seemingly unrelated contests of authority between men. This is significant for the study of women and gender because it explains the tenacity of misogynist discourses, reveals their normative function and thus suggests that they may not reflect women's actual power and influence in the time in which they are uttered. Rather, they work to mask the partisan, situated, and local nature of claims to transcendent or objective authority.

Notes

Introduction: Gendering Gerson

1. For the most recent biography of Gerson, see Brian Patrick McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation* (University Park, P.A.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).
2. For a summary of the feminist critiques of Gerson's attitudes toward women, see Wendy Love Anderson, "Gerson's Stance on Women," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Leiden, 2006), 307–314. Dyan Elliott has set Gerson's misogynist polemics against female visionaries within the context of a wider crisis in clerical authority. See Dyan Elliott, "Seeing Double: John Gerson, the Discernment of Spirits and Joan of Arc," *American Historical Review*, 107, no. 1 (2002): 26–54. Nancy Caciola interprets Gerson's particularly misogynist response to the interpretative problem raised by female visionaries as reflective of his opposition to the pro-English prophecies of Birgitta of Sweden. See Nancy Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 291–319.
3. For the interdependence of critical gender analysis and the integration of women's history with history as it is more generally understood, see Joan W. Scott, "AHR Forum: Unanswered Questions," *American Historical Review*, 113, no. 5 (2008): 1422–1429.
4. See Chapter 1 below.
5. Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review*, 91 (1986): 1053–1075.
6. This is why using the Virgin Mary to rethink the family and the power of the clergy played a part in the collective response to fourteenth-century religious, health, and political crises. See Miri Rubin, "Europe Remade: Purity and Danger in Late Medieval Europe," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 11 (2001): 101–124.
7. For example, see Carolyn Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1982): 110–262; Jo Ann McNamara, "An Unresolved Syllogism: The Search for a Christian Gender System," in *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West*, ed. Jacqueline Murray (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1999), 1–24; R.N. Swanson, "Angels Incarnate: Clergy and Masculinity from Gregorian Reform to Reformation," in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. D.M. Hadley (London and New York: Longman, 1999), 160–177; and Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Tanya Stabler Miller, "What's in a Name? Clerical Representations of Parisian Beguines (1200–1328)," *Journal of Medieval History*, 33, no. 1 (2007): 60–86.

8. Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: Still a Useful Category of Analysis?" *Diogenes*, 57, no. 7 (2010): 9.
9. Kate Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996); Ruth Mazo Karras, "Thomas Aquinas's Chastity Belt: Clerical Masculinity in Medieval Europe," in *Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives*, ed. Lisa M. Bitel and Felice Lifshitz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 52–67; Maureen C. Miller, "Masculinity, Reform, and Clerical Culture: Narratives of Episcopal Holiness in the Gregorian Era," *Church History*, 72, no. 1 (2003): 25–52.
10. Dyan Elliott, "The Three Ages of Joan Scott," *American Historical Review*, 113, no. 5 (2008): 1390–1403.
11. In this sense, the book both looks at how gender informs politics and politics informs gender. See Scott, "AHR Forum," 1425.
12. Jo Ann McNamara, "The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy," in *Maps of Flesh and Light: The Religious Experience of Medieval Women Mystics*, ed. Ulrike Wiethaus (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 24–27.
13. For Gerson's contributions to concepts of academic authority, see Douglass Taber, "Pierre d'Ailly and the Teaching Authority of the Theologian," *Church History*, 59, no. 2 (1990): 174; Daniel Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity before Print: Jean Gerson and the Transformation of Late Medieval Learning* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); and Yelena Mazour-Matusevich, "Jean Gerson (1363–1429) and the Formation of German National Identity," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 101, no. 3–4 (2006): 963–987. For natural rights, see Brian Tierney, "Dominion of Self and Natural Rights before Locke and after," in *Transformations in Medieval and Early Modern Rights Discourse*, ed. Virpi Mäkinen and Petter Korman (The New Syntheses Historical Library, 59) (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), 173–203. For a summary of scholarship citing the effects of Gerson's conciliar thought on the founders of early modern understandings of constitutional government that suggests that these early modern thinkers and their modern interpreters have misunderstood Gerson, see Cary C.J. Nederman, "Conciliarism and Constitutionalism: Jean Gerson and Medieval Political Thought," *History of European Ideas*, 12, no. 2 (1990): 189–209. For mysticism see Yelena Mazour-Matusevich, *Le siècle d'or de la mystique française: un autre regard: étude de la littérature spirituelle de Jean Gerson (1363–1429) à Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples* (1450–1537) (Milan: Archè, 2004). For pastoral care, see Lee Daniel Snyder, "Gerson's Vernacular Advice on Prayer," *Fifteenth-Century Studies*, 10 (1984): 161–176; D. Catherine Brown, *Pastor and Laity in the Theology of Jean Gerson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); and Larissa Taylor, *Soldiers of Christ: Preaching in Late Medieval and Reformation France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). For church reform, see Steven Ozment, "The University and the Church: Patterns of Reform in Jean Gerson," *Medievalia et Humanistica*, 1 (1970): 111–126, and *Homo Spiritualis: Johannes Tauler, Jean Gerson and Martin Luther, 1209–1216* (Leiden, 1969), 49–83; Louis B. Pascoe, *Jean Gerson: Principles of Church Reform* (Leiden, 1973); G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes, *Jean Gerson – Apostle of Unity: His Church Politics and Ecclesiology* (Leiden, 1999), 21–22; Mary Edsall,

"Like Wise Master Builders: Jean Gerson's Ecclesiology, *Lectio Divina*, and Christine de Pizan's *Livre de la Cité des Dames*," *Medievalia et Humanistica*, N.S. 27 (2000), 33–56.

14. For this position, see D. Catherine Brown, *Pastor and Laity*; Yelena Mazour-Matusevich, "Late Medieval Care and 'Counseling': Jean Gerson (1363–1429) as a Family Pastor," *Journal of Family History* 29 (2004): 153–167, and "Late Medieval Control of Masculinity: Jean Gerson." *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 98, no. 3–4 (2003) 418–437; Brian Patrick McGuire, "Late Medieval Care and Control of Women: Jean Gerson and his Sisters," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 92, no. 1 (1997): 5–37; and Anderson, "Gerson's Stance on Women," 307–314.
15. For this position, see McNamara, "The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy," 24–25; Barbara Newman, "What did it Mean to Say 'I Saw'," 41, Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 285–319. Dyan Elliott and Daniel Hobbins both try to explain Gerson's misogynist polemics with respect to his intellectual, political and pastoral situation but still must admit the misogynist tone and effects of his work. See Elliott, "Seeing Double," and Daniel Hobbins, "Gerson and Lay Devotion," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 41–78.
16. Mazour-Matusevich, "Late Medieval 'Counseling'."
17. Gerson makes these critiques most clearly in two sermons, which he delivered before the French royal court in 1392 and 1405 respectively. These are *Accipietis virtutem* and *Vivat rex*. See Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres complètes*, 10 vols. in 11, ed. Palémon Glorieux (Paris, Tournai, Rome: Desclée, 1960–1973), 7.2: 431–449 and 1137–1185.
18. For Gerson's defense of academic privileges and consensus, see *Gallia quae viris semper* in *Oeuvres*, 10:10. For academic authority, political rights and representative government, see Gerson *Vivat rex*, 7.2: 1137–1185. As Miri Rubin suggests, the pressure for representative and collective decision-making was widespread in the time in which Gerson was working. See Rubin, "Europe Remade," 100. For a discussion of Gerson's *Vivat rex* within the broader context of late medieval communal understandings of rights, Jeannine Quillet, "Community, Counsel and Representation," in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought c. 350–1450*, ed. J.H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 539–540.
19. Gilbert Ouy, "Humanism and Nationalism in France at the Turn of the Fifteenth Century," in *The Birth of Identities: Denmark and Europe in the Middle Ages*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 1996), 107–125 and "Discovering Gerson the Humanist: Fifty Years of Serendipity," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, 79–132.
20. For Gerson's skillful navigation of the available forums for circulating his work, see Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity*. For his conscious adjustment of his arguments for different audiences, see Jean Gerson, *Gerson bilingue: Les deux rédactions, latine et français, de quelques oeuvres du chancelier parisien*, ed. Gilbert Ouy (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998).
21. Yelena Mazour-Matusevich, "Gerson's Legacy," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, 356–399, and "Jean Gerson's Legacy in Tübingen and Strasbourg," *The Medieval History Journal*, 13 (2010): 259–286.
22. Daniel Hobbins, "The Schoolman as Public Intellectual. John Gerson and the Late Medieval Tract," *American Historical Review*, 108 (2003): 1308–1337,

and *Authorship and Publicity*, 140–141. For the nobility's interest in Gerson's sermons, see Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity*, 158–159.

23. Jean Gerson, *De Probatione Spirituum* and *De examinatione doctrinarum*, in *Oeuvres complètes*, 10 vols in 11, ed. Palémon Glorieux (Paris, 1960–1973) [hereafter, *Oeuvres*], 9:184 and 467. For discussion of these texts, see Dyan Elliott, "Seeing Double," and *Proving Women: Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), esp. 273–296. Also, Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 289–315.
24. Newman, *God and the Goddesses*, 283–290, esp. 286 and 289–290. Also, Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary* (New Haven: Yale, 2009), 309.
25. Jean Gerson, *Puer natus est*, 7.2: 958.
26. Ruth Mazo Karras, *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 75–83.
27. Brown, *Pastor and Laity*, 222–224; Mazour-Matusevich, "Late Medieval Care and Counseling" and "Late Medieval Control of Masculinity: Jean Gerson," 418–437; Brian Patrick McGuire, "Late Medieval Care and Control of Women," 5–37; Anderson, "Gerson's Stance on Women," 314–315; Rubin, "Europe Remade," 114–119; Edsall, "Like Wise Master Builders"; and Lori Walters, "The Figure of the *seulette* in the Works of Christine de Pizan and Jean Gerson," in *Desireuse de plus avant enquerre … Actes du VI^e Colloque international sur Christine de Pizan (Paris, 20–24 juillet 2006): Volume en hommage à James Laidlaw*, ed. Liliane Dulac, Anne Paupert, Christine Reno, and Bernard Ribémont (Paris, 2008), 119–139.
28. Most recently, Dyan Elliott, *The Bride of Christ Goes to Hell: Metaphor and Embodiment in the Lives of Pious Women, 200–1500* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).
29. See Caciola, *Discerning Spirits,* 309–319; and Elliott, *Proving Woman*, 284–303.
30. Recent work has argued that medieval women's visionary spirituality persisted, although with Gersonian nuances. See Moshe Sluhovsky, "Discernment of Difference, the Introspective Subject and the Birth of Modernity," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 36, no. 1 (2006): 169–199; and Tamar Herzig, "Witches, Saints, and Heretics: Heinrich Kramer's Ties with Italian Women Mystics," *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 1, no. 1 (2006): 24–55.
31. For the suggestion that Gerson's works be approached as providing a window into his time rather than his personal psychology, see Hobbins, "Gerson and Lay Devotion," 75.
32. For the argument that this crisis reflected the richness and diversity of fifteenth-century spiritual life and need not be seen as a sign of decline, see John van Engen, "Multiple Options: The World of the Fifteenth-Century Church," *Church History*, 77, no. 2 (June 2008): 257–284.
33. The extent of the uncertainty that plagued late medieval theologians has been understudied considering its scale and wide-reaching effects. For an excellent discussion of the epistemological challenges that haunted theologians like Gerson, see Ian Christopher Levy, *Holy Scripture and the Quest for Authority at the End of the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), esp. 1–53.

34. For the role played by allegorical arguments in the politics of the schism and the court of King Charles VI of France, see Virginie Minet-Mahy, *Esthétique et pouvoir de l'oeuvre allégorique à l'époque de Charles VI: imaginaires et discours*. Vol. 68. Honoré Champion, 2005; and Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints, and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378–1417* (College Park: Penn State Press, 2010).
35. For the early modern propaganda aimed at French female regents and the strategies these regents adopted to oppose this propaganda, see Eliane Viennot, "L'Histoire des reines de France dans le débat sur la loi salique (Fin XV^{e}-Fin XVI^{e} siècle)," in *Femmes de pouvoir et pouvoir des femmes dans l'Occident médiéval et moderne*, ed. Armel Nayt-Dubois and Emmanuelle Santinelli-Foltz (Valenciennes: Presses Universitaires de Valenciennes, 2009), 83–95.

1 Gender, University Authority, and the French Royal Court

1. Gerson set off for Paris in 1377. See G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes, *John Gerson, and Apostle of Unity: His Church Politics and Ecclesiology* (Leiden, 1999), 13–15. For a concise account of Gerson's upbringing, membership as a scholarship student in the College of Navarre, financial dependence upon the Duke of Burgundy, and the chaotic political and religious environment in which he worked, see John Morrall, *Gerson and the Great Schism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960), 1–16. Considering that the scholarships for Gerson's college, the royal College of Navarre, were overseen by the king's confessor, it is likely that Gerson was sponsored by someone powerful. For this observation about scholarships, see Alan Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair: University and Chancellor of Paris at the Beginning of the Great Schism*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought, vol. XXIV (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 61. For a detailed history of the College of Navarre, see Nathalie Gorochov, *Le Collège de Navarre: de sa foundation (1305) au début du IVe siècle (1418): histoire de l'institution, de sa vie intellectuelle et de son recrutement* (Paris: H. Champion, 1997).
2. For the political nature of Gerson's works, see Daniel Hobbins, "The Schoolman as Public Intellectual: John Gerson and the Late Medieval Tract," *American Historical Review* 108, no. 5 (2003): 1308–1337. For a detailed account of Gerson's background, life and works, see Brian Patrick McGuire, *John Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).
3. For the text of the sermon, see Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres complètes*, 10 vols. in 11, ed. Palémon Glorieux (Paris, Tournai, Rome: Desclée, 1960–1973), 5: 39–50. For a discussion of the sermon and surrounding events, see Meyjes, *Apostle of Unity*, 192–197.
4. For the suggestion that Gerson belonged to an elite group of university masters who were able to establish individual opinions as "public intellectuals" and "opinion formers", see R. N. Swanson, "Academic Circles: Universities and Exchanges of Information and Ideas in the Age of the Great Schism," in *Religious Controversy in Europe, 1378–1536: Textual Transmission and Networks*

of Readership, ed. Michael Van Dussen and Pavel Soukup, (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2013), 27. For the argument that Gerson purposefully styled himself as a public intellectual by writing most of his theological opinions in the form of occasional and easily disseminated polemical tracts, see Daniel Hobbins, "The Schoolman as the Public Intellectual." For the suggestion that the sermons Gerson delivered at the French royal court played a foundational role in the establishment of his identity as an important intellectual and that his skillful use of the opportunity to circulate his works at the Council of Constance ensured his influence on later generations, see Daniel Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity Before Print: Jean Gerson and the Transformation of Late Medieval Learning*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 158–159 and 193–197. For the material benefits that Gerson enjoyed as a client of the Dukes of Burgundy from 1393 to 1411, and the 200 pounds given to him by Charles VII for the service he had done to the French crown, see McGuire, *The Last European Reformation*, 59 and 289. Gerson's reliance upon aristocratic patronage will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

5. For the translation of crucial Latin works into the vernacular and the competition between courtly discourse and scholastic conclusions, see Serge Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy." La construction d'une identité universitaire en France, XIIIe-XVe siècle* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999), 258.
6. For a discussion of interiority, religious experimentation and Gerson's response, see John Van Engen, "Multiple Options: The World of the Fifteenth-Century Church," *Church History* 77 (2008): 275–282, and Daniel Hobbins, "Gerson on Lay Devotion," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson, (Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition, vol. 3,)* ed. Brian Patrick McGuire, (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006), 41–78. For the challenge that ascetic female visionaries presented to university theologians in the context of the schism see Chapter 5 below and also, Nancy Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 119–124, and Wendy Love Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits: Assessing Visions and Visionaries in the Late Middle Ages* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 124–89.
7. For a broad discussion of the events of Gerson's life in dialogue with the development of his life, see McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last European Reformation*. For a detailed discussion of the development of Gerson's thoughts on the schism in dialogue with the unfolding of that crisis, see Meyjes, *John Gerson, Apostle of Unity*.
8. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, "Writing the History of Women," in *From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints*, ed. Pauline Schmitt Pantel, vol. 1 in *A History of Women in the West*, ed. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot (Cambridge, MA. and London: Belknap Press, 1992), x–xiii. Also, Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991). Of course, gender was not the only means by which medieval Europeans negotiated the relationship between truth and power. Religious difference and purity, for instance, served as another strategy. See R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1989); Kathleen Biddick, "Genders, Bodies, Borders: Technologies of the Visible," *Speculum,*

68, no. 2 (1993): 389–419; David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996); Steven F. Kruger, *The Spectral Jew: Conversion and Embodiment in Medieval Europe*, Medieval Cultures, vol. 40 (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2006); Norman Housley, "The Crusades and Islam," *Medieval Encounters,* 13 (2007): 189–208; and Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "On Saracen Enjoyment: Some Fantasies of Race in Late Medieval France and England," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 1 (2001): 113–146. For the extent to which late medieval political and intellectual responses to the crisis caused by the schism focused on drawing boundaries and looking for purity through the practice of discernment, enforcement of gender and ecclesiastical hierarchies, and a heightening of tension between Christians and Jews, see Miri Rubin, "Europe Remade: Purity and Danger in Late Medieval Europe," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 11 (2001): 101–124.

9. Misty Schieberle, *Feminized Counsel and the Literature of Advice in England, 1380–1500*, Disputatio v. 23 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014).
10. Judith Butler defines gender as a performative sphere in which the individual can affirm or challenge existing gender expectations by either conforming or refusing to conform to them. For a condensed version of Butler's argument, see Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal*, 40, no. 4 (1988): 519–531. Spatial theorists working in the fields of globalization, international media, migration, and the internet have argued that people may develop fragmented and contradictory selves in response to the conflicting social, cultural, and linguistic contexts in which they must function. See Barney Warf and Santa Arias, "Introduction: The Reinsertion of Space in the Humanities and Social Sciences," in *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 6. Gilbert Ouy's careful comparison of Gerson's Latin and French works demonstrates both that Gerson modified his mode of presentation and arguments to suit what he perceived as the needs of particular audiences and then revised works composed for one audience to suit another. See Ouy, *Gerson bilingue: les deux rédactions, latine et française, de quelques oeuvres du chancelier parisien*, Études christiniennes (Paris: H. Champion, 1998). This well documented practice seems to indicate that Gerson actively worked to integrate within himself the different personas he employed across multiple contexts.
11. For a summary of modern evaluations of Gerson's statements about women, see Wendy Love Anderson, "Gerson's Stance on Women," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, 293–315. Two dissenting Gerson specialists have instead characterized Gerson as a particularly woman-friendly pastor when compared to the attitudes that surrounded him. These are Catherine Brown and Yelena Mazour Matusevich. See Brown, *Pastor and Laity in the Theology of Jean Gerson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 209–226, and; Mazour-Matusevich, "Late Medieval 'Counseling': Jean Gerson (1363–1419) as a Family Pastor," *Journal of Family History,* 29 (2004): 153–167.
12. Ruth Mazo Karras, *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 75–83.

13. Jennifer D. Thibodeaux, "Man of the Church, or Man of the Village? Gender and the Parish Clergy in Medieval Normandy," *Gender and History,* 18, no. 2 (2006): 380–399.
14. A woman could be protected by university privileges after 1368 if she worked as a bookseller. See Kibre, *Scholarly Privileges in the Middle Ages: The Rights, Privileges, and Immunities of Scholars and Universities at Bologna, Padua, Paris, and Oxford* (Cambridge, M.A.: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1962), 162. For the contested role played by beguines in the circulation of scholarly texts, see Tanya Stabler Miller, "What's in a name? Clerical Representations of Parisian Beguines (1200–1328)", *Journal of Medieval History,* 33 (2007): 80.
15. Karras, *Boys to Men*, 83–108. Medieval scholastic interpretations of sex differences and the gender roles these differences justified were not monolithic, but did tend toward negative evaluations of women's virtue and intellectual abilities. See Joan Cadden, *The Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages: Medicine, Science, and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). For a detailed discussion of the non-monolithic nature of scholastic evaluations of sex differences and the hierarchies of masculinities and femininities scholastic thinkers created, see Sharon Farmer, *Surviving Poverty in Medieval Paris: Gender, Ideology, and the Daily Lives of the Poor* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2002), 39–73.
16. For the classical and early Christian roots of the rejection of female temptation as a litmus test for intellectual and political leadership, see Louise Vinge, "The Five Senses: Studies in a Literary Tradition", *Acta Regiae Societatis Humaniorum Litterarum Lundensis, 72* (Lund: LiberLëromedel, 1975), 15–46; and Kate Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1999). For the way that this rejection was used in the Gregorian reform to prove that reforming clergy were more manly than laymen, see Maureen C. Miller, "Masculinity, Reform, and Clerical Culture: narratives of Episcopal Holiness in the Gregorian Era," *Church History*, 72, no. 1 (2003): 25–52. Cooper's work would suggest a likely connection between monastic masculinity constructed around fighting demons and the episcopal masculinity discussed by Miller. See Lester K. Little, "Anger in Monastic Curses," in *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. Barbara H. Rosenwein (Ithaca, Cornell University, 1998), 9–35.
17. For the idea that political communities were comprised of male representatives of different households who could deliberate with some sort of equality even if they were of different ranks, see Jeannine Quillet, "Community, Counsel and Representation," in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought c. 350–1450*, ed. J. H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 526–545.
18. M.L. Bellaguet, ed., *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys* (Paris, 1839), [Hereafter RSD] III: 314.
19. Jacques Verger, "L'Université [de Paris] ne represente elle pas tout le royaulme de France, voir tout le monde?" in *Relations, échanges, transferts en Occident au cours des derniers siècles du Moyen Âge, hommage à Werner Paracicini: Actes du colloque de Paris (4–6 décembre 2008)*, ed. Bernard Guenée et Jean-Marie Moeglin (Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 2010), 16.

20. For a recent and thorough summary of the extensive historiography addressing the birth of medieval universities in general and the medieval University of Paris in particular, see Nathalie Gorochov, *Naissance de l'université: Les écoles de Paris d'Innocent III à Thomas d'Aquin (v. 1200–v.1245)*, Études d'histoire médiévale, vol. 14 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2012), 13–32.
21. Guy Fitch Lytle, "Universities as Religious Authorities in the Later Middle Ages and Reformation," in *Reform and Authority in the Medieval and Reformation Church*, ed. Guy Fitch Lytle (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1981), 69–97. For earlier conceptions of this kind of authority for the university, see Peter R. McKeon, "Concilium Generale and Studium Generale: The Transformation of Doctrinal Regulation in the Middle Ages," *Church History,* 35, no. 1 (1966): 24–34.
22. Alexander III, *Quanto Gallicana*, in *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, 4 vols., ed. H.S. Denifle and E. Chatelain, (Paris, 1889–1891) [hereafter CUP], I, no. 4: 4–5.
23. For a summary of the political context of the bull, see Kibre, *Scholarly Privileges*, 92-97.
24. Gregory IX, *Parens scientiarum*, in CUP I, no. 79: 137. For a detailed discussion of this bull in comparison with contemporary monastic ideals of comportment, see Ian Wei, "From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-century Universities: The Disappearance of Biographical and Autobiographical Representation of Scholars, *Speculum* 86, (2011): 72.
25. See Wei, "From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-Century Universities," and the essays collected in John Van Engen, ed. *Learning Institutionalized: Teaching in the Medieval University* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000).
26. Ian Wei argues that the university's corporate nature helped insulate it from monastic critiques about the dangers of the unregulated and agonistic pursuit of knowledge common to the twelfth-century schools prior to the formation of the university. See Wei, "From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-century Universities," 42–78.
27. For a discussion of the university's processions and a map of the most frequent routes, see Antoine Destemberg, "Autorité intellectuelle et déambulations rituelles: les processions universitaires parisiennes (XIV^{e}-XV^{e} siècle)," in *Des sociétés en mouvement: Migrations et mobilité au Moyen Âge: XLe Congrès de la SHMESP (Nice, 4–7 juin 2009)*, ed. Germain Butaurd, Cécile Caby, Yann Codou, Rosa Maria Dessì, Philippe Jansen, and Michel Lauwers (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2010), 337–341.
28. Ian P. Wei, "The Self-Image of the Masters of Theology at the University of Paris in the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 46, no. 3 (1995): 398–431; Jean Leclerq, "L'idéal du théologien au moyen âge: Textes inédits," *Revue des sciences religieuses,* xxi (1947): 142–146; Reuven Avi-Yonah argues that this perception of theologians derived in part from the papal bull *Parens scientarum*, which may have defined the University of Paris so favorably that theology masters began pursuing careers as teachers rather than looking for high ecclesiastical appointment in the generations immediately following the bull. See "Career Trends of Parisian Masters of Theology, 1200-1320," *History of Universities,* VI (1986–1987): 52; Astrik L. Gabriel, "The Ideal Master of the Mediaeval University,"

The Catholic Historical Review, LX (1974): 1–40; Douglass Taber, "Pierre d'Ailly and the Teaching Authority of the Theologian," *Church History,* 59, no. 2 (1990): 163–174; and J.M.M.H. Thijssen, *Censure and Heresy at the University of Paris: 1200–1400* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

29. For Gerson's comparatively severe concern about the dangers emotional attachment to friends and family members and sexual passions and/or actions posed to the soul, see Brian Patrick McGuire, "Jean Gerson and Traumas of Masculine Affectivity and Sexuality," in *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West*, ed. Jacqueline Murray (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1999), 25–43. For slightly different interpretation, which casts Gerson's concerns about friendships, sex, and masturbation as normal for his context, see Yelena Mazour Matusevich, "Late Medieval Control of Masculinity: Jean Gerson," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique,* 98, no. 3–4 (2003): 429–434.
30. For the central role these kinds of questions played in the development of ideas about monastic authority and spiritual purity in late antiquity, see David Brakke, "The Problematization of Nocturnal Emissions in Early Christian Syria, Egypt and Gaul," *Journal of Early Christian Studies,* 3, no. 4 (1995): 419–460. For the extent to which these concerns worked their way into political discourse, see Conrad Leyser, "Masculinity in Flux: Nocturnal Emission and the Limits of Celibacy in the Early Middle Ages," in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. D.M. Hadley (London and New York: Longman, 1999), 103–120. In fact, it is likely that Gerson's thinking was influenced by the ideas of these monastic authors, whom he cited regularly. For a synthesis of Gerson's fears about sexual pollution, the temptation female penitents posed to confessors, his derogatory comments about the nature of women, and his need to defend clerical authority in dialogue with the long Christian intellectual tradition on these see Dyan Elliott, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 14–60. For the complexities of Gerson's approach to nocturnal emissions and female temptation in dialogue with monastic and moral traditions and also the ways in which that tradition intersected with secular understandings of sex and masculinity, see Jacqueline Murray, "Men's Bodies, Men's Minds: Seminal Emissions and Sexual Anxiety in the Middle Ages," *Annual Review of Sex Research* 8, no. 1 (1997): 1–26, and "Hiding Behind the Universal Man: Male Sexuality in the Middle Ages," in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, ed. Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), 125–129.
31. For the challenge the crown's attitude towards the schism presented the university, see Alan Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair: University and Chancellor of Paris at the Beginning of the Great Schism* (Leiden, 1978), 28–59.
32. For the challenges the exile of its most well-known scholars posed to the University of Paris, see Michael H. Shank, *"Unless You Believe, You Shall Not Understand": Logic, University, and Society in Late Medieval Vienna* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988). For the evolution of Gerson's ideas regarding the papal schism and the conciliar solution to the schism, see Meyjes, *John Gerson, Apostle of Unity*. For a detailed account of the political disorder that plagued France, see R.C. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue: Crisis at the Court of Charles VI*, 1392-1420 (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1986).

33. See Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair*, 108–13.
34. For the political logic of the French crown's encouragement and prolongation of the schism, see Howard Kaminsky, "The Politics of France's Subtraction of Obedience from Pope Benedict XIII, 27 July, 1398," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* 115, no. 5 (1971): 366–97.
35. Meyjes, *Apostle of Unity*, 21–22.
36. For the papal and royal reliance upon university pronouncements as a means of authenticating their policies, see Sophia Menache, "La naissance d'une nouvelle source d'autorité: l'université de Paris," *Revue historique* cclxxvii (1982), 305–327; Osmund Lewry, O.P., "Corporate Life in the University of Paris, 1249–1418, and the Ending of the Schism," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 40 (1989), 511–523; and Ian P. Wei, "The Masters of Theology at the University of Paris in the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries: An Authority Beyond the Schools," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester,* 71 (1993), 37–63.
37. William Courtenay, "Learned Opinion and Royal Justice: The Role of Paris Masters of Theology During the Reign of Philip the Fair," in *Law and the Illicit in Medieval Europe*, ed. Ruth Mazo Karras, Joel Kay and E. Ann Matter (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 149–163.
38. Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair*, 28.
39. Ian P. Wei, "An Authority Beyond the Schools," 62.
40. Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy,"* esp. *179–299.*
41. Rubin, "Europe Remade."
42. For D'Ailly's navigation of the schism and Blanchard Affair, see Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair*, 61–81 and 150–188; and Bernard Guenée, *Between Church and State: The Lives of Four French Prelates in the Late Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press), 169–258. For a detailed account of Gerson's position among these navigations, see Meyjes, *Apostle of Unity*, 1–203.
43. For Gerson's defense of the university's tax exemptions after a long sermon elaborating upon the importance of the university to the governance of the realm, see Gerson, *Vivat, rex*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1185.
44. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2, 969–978. For a discussion of the date of the sermon, see Louis Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*, Rijksuniversiteit te Gent. Werken uitg. door de Faculteit van de Wijsbegeerte en Letteren, 113 (Bruges: De Temple, 1952), 55–57. Brian Patrick McGuire also discusses this sermon and notes that it was probably given in the royal chapel of Saint Paul. See McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation*, 47–49.
45. Gerson, *Oeuvres,* 10: 7–24
46. Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair*, 150–188.
47. For a condensed account of the university's strategies, see Nancy McLoughlin, "Personal Narrative and the Systematization of Knowledge in the Thought of Jean Gerson," *Mediaevalia,* 29, no. 1 (2008): 83–107.
48. Gerson, *Gallia quae viris semper*, in *Oeuvres*, 10: 8.
49. For a similar interpretation of the value the university invested in its prosecution of Blanchard, see Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair*, 177–88.
50. Gilbert Ouy has suggested that Gerson never published this text, which was preserved in the library of a Norman lawyer named Simon de Plumetot in

draft form. He did, however, mine it for ideas for his sermon *Dominus regnavit*, which he delivered on 25 August 1392. See Ouy, "Discovering Gerson the Humanist: Fifty Years of Serendipity," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, 96–104. I am using it here as a reflection of Gerson's foundational understanding of the university's authority. For the power enjoyed by Gerson's faction in the wake of the Monzon trial, see Guenée, *Between Church and State*, 169–176.

51. For the importance of the circulation of such texts for the development of a discourse about potential solutions to the schism, see R. N. Swanson, "Academic Circles: Universities and Exchanges of Information and Ideas in the Age of the Great Schism," 17–47.
52. Alexander III, *Quanto Gallicana*, and Gregory IX, *Parens scientiarum*, in CUP I, no. 4: 4–5 and no 79: 136–139. For the university's recourse to earlier papal bulls in their struggle with the corrupt chancellor John Blanchard, see Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair*, esp. 150–188.
53. See Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy*," 225–262.
54. For a discussion of medieval political theorists' treatment of the religious aspect of community, see Quillet, "Community, counsel and representation," 526–545.
55. Gilbert Ouy, "Humanism and Nationalism in France at the Turn of the Fifteenth Century," in *The Birth of Identities: Denmark and Europe in the Middle Ages*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Copenhagen, 1996), 108–11.
56. Stephen C. Ferruolo, "Parisius-Paradisus: the city, its schools, and the origins of the University of Paris," in *The University and the City: From Medieval Origins to the Present*, ed. Thomas Bender (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 32–33.
57. Manuel Alejandro Rodriguez de la Peña, "*Rex scholaribus impendebant*: The King's Image as Patron of Learning in Thirteenth Century French and Spanish Chronicles: A Comparative Approach," *The Medieval History Journal* 5, (2002): 27–28.
58. Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy*," 261–277.
59. Choquart's oration is reprinted in C. E. DuBoulay, *Historia Universitatis Parisiensis*, t. 4 (Paris, 1668), 396–412. For Choquart's discussion of the *translatio studii* and the masters of the sacred page, see pages 408–409. For a discussion of this text, its misattribution to Nicolas Oresme, the wider context of the political use of the *translatio* tradition by the French crown, the establishment of French humanism, and the effects of these events on Gerson's thought, see Gilbert Ouy, "Humanism and Nationalism in France at the Turn of the Fifteenth Century," 108–111, esp. 110–111 and 123, n. 8.
60. For a discussion of the relationship between the fluctuating status of the French crown and the status of the University of Paris in accordance with the *translatio studii* tradition as well as the reaction of Charles V to challenges to the University of Paris' claim to pre-eminence made by the humanists and by English scholars, see Gilbert Ouy, "Humanism and Nationalism," 108–11.
61. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 10: 7–8.
62. Malcolm de Mowbray, "Philosophy as Handmaid of Theology: Biblical Exegesis in the Service of Scholarship," *Traditio*, 59 (2004): 1–37.

63. In fact, Miri Rubin includes Christine de Pizan alongside Gerson in her treatment of intellectual responses to late medieval crises. See Rubin, "Europe Remade," 101 and 116.
64. For an account of the classical allusions Gerson applied in this text, see McGuire, *John Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation*, 42–47.
65. Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy,*" 258.
66. For the importance of allegory in constructing a collective imaginary that informed political discourse in late medieval France and Europe more generally, see Virginie Minet-Mahy, *Esthétique et pouvoir de l'oeuvre allégorique à l'époque de Charles VI: imaginaires et discours* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005), Barbara Newman's *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 2003) and Renate Bluemnfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints, and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378–1417* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006).
67. Gerson, *Gallia quae viris semper,* in *Oeuvres*, 10:10.
68. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 10:10.
69. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 10:10.
70. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 10: 7–24.
71. See Bernstein, *Pierre d'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair*, 177–188. Cary Nederman has shown that early modern constitutional theorists who relied upon Gerson interpreted his theories anachronistically, but the fact that they cited him and were able to use him for their own purposes, demonstrates the significance of his ideas in his own time and after. See Cary J. Nederman, "Conciliarism and Constitutionalism: Jean Gerson and Medieval Political Thought," *History of European Ideas,* 12, no. 2 (1990): 189–209. Of course, Gerson's insistence upon the university's privileges was not unique to him or to the university, but rather was characteristic of all late medieval voluntary associations. See Jeannine Quillet, "Community, Counsel and Representation," 525, and John Van Engen, "Multiple Options," 274.
72. For the symbolic role excluded female students played in medieval university identity-making, see Michael H. Shank, "A Female University Student in Late Medieval Kraków," *Signs,* 12, no. 2 Reconstructing the Academy (1987): 373–380. This narrative performs the same exclusionary function as late antique narratives about women who successfully pretended to be male monks by emphasizing the impossibility of such a category. See Patricia Cox Miller, "Is There a Harlot in This Text? Hagiography and the Grotesque," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33, no. 3 (2003), 419–435. For the intellectual interdependence between thirteenth-century university masters and Parisian beguines, see Tanya Stabler Miller, "What's in a name?" 60–86. On a more concrete level, Pierre d'Ailly justified the authority of theologians with reference to Paul's admonition against women's preaching. See D'Ailly, *Super omnia vincit veritas*, ed. Alan Bernstein in *Pierre d'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair*, 245.
73. For the origins of the title and a summary of Gerson's deployment of this title, see Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy*," 267–270.
74. For a detailed discussion of the manuscript tradition, political context, and thematic emphases of Gerson's French sermons, see Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*.
75. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, "Dramatic Troubles of *Ecclesia*: Gendered Performances of the Divided Church," in *Cultural Performances in Medieval*

France: Essays in Honor of Nancy Freeman Regalado, ed. Eglal Doss-Quinby, Roberta L. Krueger, and E. Jane Burns (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D. S. Brewer, 2007), 181–193.

76. Misty Schieberle, *Feminized Counsel*.
77. Gerson, *Adorabunt eum*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 531–532.
78. Gerson, *Accipietis virtutem*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 448.
79. Gerson *Vivat rex*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1137.
80. Gerson *Oeuvres,* 7.2: 1151–1152.
81. Dyan Elliott, *Proving Woman: Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 2004), 9–84; and Tanya Stabler Miller, "What's in a Name? Clerical Representations of Parisian Beguines (1200–1328), *Journal of Medieval History,* 33 (2007): 60–86.
82. Daisy J. Delogu, "The King's Two Daughters: Isabelle of France, and the University of Paris, Fille du Roy," *Republics of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts,* 3, no. 2 (November 15, 2013): 11–17, accessed 6 June 2014, http://arcade.stanford.edu/rofl/king%E2%80%99s-two-daughters-isabelle-france-and-university-paris -fille-du-roy-0.
83. For a broad discussion of the legal and rhetorical traditions associated with the university's use of this title, see Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy."* 268–281.
84. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 530 and 532.
85. For the popularity of didactic literature at this time, see Van Engen, "Multiple Options," 279.
86. For a detailed discussion of Gerson's skillful political use of the sins in comparison with his pastoral deployment of the tradition, see Nancy McLoughlin, "The Deadly Sins and Contemplative Politics: Gerson's Ordering of the Personal and Political Realms," in *Sin in Medieval and Early Modern Culture: The Tradition of the Seven Deadly Sins*, ed. Richard Newhauser and Susan Ridyard (Woodbridge, Suffolk: York Medieval Press, 2012), 132–156. For a discussion of the use of the sins in confession, see John Bossy, "Moral Arithmetic: Seven Sins into Ten Commandments," in *Conscience and Casuistry in Early Modern Europe,* ed. Edmund Leites (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 214–234. For the incorporation of the sins into a conduct book for housewives, see Georgine E. Brereton and Janet M. Ferrier, eds., *Le Menagier de Paris* (Oxford, 1981), 20–46.
87. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 438.
88. Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses,* 190–244.
89. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1138.
90. Catherine of Siena provides a perfect example of this kind of argument. See Karen Scott, "St. Catherine of Siena, 'Apostola' ," *Church History,* 61, no. 1 (1992): 34–46. For more on this topic, see Chapter 5.
91. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 726.
92. This suggestion conformed to theological understandings of the condition necessary for the accurate understanding of the mystical meaning of scripture, which medieval theologians equated with the intended meaning of the divine author and thus the actual literal meaning of the text. See Ian Christopher Levy, "Holy Scripture and the Quest for Authority among Three Late Medieval Masters," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 61, no. 1 (2010): 40–68, esp. 52–54. For a discussion of Gerson's and D'Ailly's use of biblical

examples of Paul rebuking Peter as a means of justifying the theologian's authority to correct bishops in the wider context of critiques of papal power, see Thomas M. Izbicki, "The Authority of Peter and Paul: The Use of Biblical Authority During the Great Schism," in *A Companion to the Great Western Schism (1378–1417),* Companions to the Christian Tradition, vol. 17, ed. Joëlle Rollo-Koster and Thomas M. Izbicki (Leiden: Brill, 2009) 375–393.

93. For Gerson's financial dependence upon the dukes of Burgundy, see Brian Patrick McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation*, 59 and 165–166. For his elevation to the chancellor as a client of Pierre d'Ailly, see Bernard Guenée, *Between Church and State*, 180.
94. For documentary evidence suggesting an increased role for the university in French politics during the reign of Charles VI and especially after Gerson delivered his sermon, *Vivat rex*, see Charles Gross, "The Political Influence of the University of Paris in the Middle Ages," *American Historical Review,* 6, no. 3 (1901): 440–445.
95. For a comparison of the arguments for royal power Gerson forwarded in *Vivat rex* with those forwarded by King Louis XL of France, see Jacques J. Krynen, "*Rex Christianissimus*": A Medieval Theme at the roots of French Absolutism," *History and Anthropology,* 4 (1989): 88–91.
96. See BnF, fr. 936 of unknown origin. Also, Oliver Delsaux, "Mise au jour d'un nouveau visage du *Vivat rex* de Jean Gerson. Une nouvelle édition critique du texte devient-elle nécessaire?" *Le Moyen Français,* 70 (2012): 137.The manuscript contains *Adorabunt eum* and *Vivat rex*, but not *Accipietis virtutem*.

2 Charity, Pride, and Patronage

1. For the way political agendas informed the crisis about the withdrawal of French obedience, see Howard Kaminsky, "The Politics of France's Subtraction of Obedience from Pope Benedict XIII, 27 July 1398," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 115, no. 5 (1971): 366–397.
2. Bernard Guenée, *Between Church and State: The Lives of Four French Prelates in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 190–192.
3. Kaminksy, "The Politics of France's Subtraction," 377.
4. For a detailed discussion of Gerson's position on the subtraction in dialogue with those of his opponents, see G. H. M. Posthumus Meyjes, *Jean Gerson: Apostle of Unity: His Church Politics and Ecclesiology*, trans. J. C. Grayson (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 51–97.
5. Jacques Verger, "Veniat fama, veniat infamia. Désarrois et certidues de Gerson au temps de la "crise de Bruges" (1399–1400), in *Un Moyen Âge pour aujourd'hui: Mélanges offerts à Claude Gauvard*, ed. Julie Claustre, Olivier Mattéoni, and Nicolas Offenstadt (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2010), 389.
6. For Gerson's Parisian preaching career, see Louis Mourin, *Jean Gerson prédicateur français*, Rijksuniversiteit te Gent. Werken uitg. door de Faculteit van de Wijsbegeerte en Letteren, 113 (Bruges: De Temple, 1952), 55–217.
7. Gerson admits this weakness in a letter written from Bruges in 1400. See *Oeuvres*, 2: 41.

8. See Nancy McLoughlin, "The Deadly Sins and Contemplative Politics: Gerson's Ordering of the Personal and Political Realms, in *Sin in Medieval and Early Modern Culture: The Tradition of the Seven Deadly Sins*, ed. Richard Newhauser and Susan Ridyard (Woodbridge, Suffolk: York Medieval Press, 2012), 132–156.
9. For a discussion of this reform in the context of Gerson's wider church reform, as well as his understanding of spiritual anatomy, see Steven Ozment, "The University and the Church: Patterns of Reform in Jean Gerson," *Medievalia et Humanistica,* 1 (1970): 111–126; and *Homo Spiritualis: Johannes Tauler, Jean Gerson and Martin Luther, 1209–1216* (Leiden, 1969), 49–83.
10. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 3: 248–249.
11. Gerson, *Oeuvres,* 10: 10.
12. As expressed in the Papal Bull issued by Gregory IX in 1231, *Parens scientiarum*. See *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, 4 vols., ed. H.S. Denifle and E. Chatelain, (Paris, 1889–1891) [hereafter CUP] I, no. 79: 137. For a detailed discussion of how this bull framed the work of theologians as preachers, see Ian Wei, "From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-Century Universities: The Disappearance of Biographical and Autobiographical Representation of Scholars, *Speculum,* 86, (2011): 72. For later elaborations on this same theme, see Ian P. Wei, "The Self-Image of the Masters of Theology at the University of Paris in the late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 46, no. 3 (1995): 398–431; Jean Leclerq, "L'idéal du théologien au moyen âge: Textes inédits," *Revue des sciences religieuses,* xxi (1947): 142–146; Astrik L. Gabriel, "The Ideal Master of the Mediaeval University," *The Catholic Historical Review,* LX (1974): 1–40; and Douglass Taber, "Pierre d'Ailly and the Teaching Authority of the Theologian," *Church History,* 59, no. 2 (1990): 163–174.
13. For a late medieval widespread interest in cultivating a consoling relationship with God, see John Van Engen, "Multiple Options: The World of the Fifteenth-Century Church," *Church History,* 77, no. 2 (2008): 282–283.
14. Tanya Stabler Miller, "What's in a Name? Clerical Representations of Parisian Beguines (1200–1328)," *Journal of Medieval History,* 33, no. 1 (2007): 60–86.
15. See Chapter 1.
16. Jacques Verger believes that Gerson wrote this letter for his own use some time during the subtraction crisis, rather than as an official resignation letter. See Verger, "*Veniat fama, veniat infamia*," 389, no.1.
17. For a concise discussion of the ways in which the schism affected Gerson's career, see John B. Morrall, *Gerson and the Great Schism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960). For the suggestion that the schism and the subtraction crisis demonstrated exactly how this process worked, see Kaminisky, "The Politics of France's Subtraction."
18. Gerson referred to this problem frequently. He denounced such scholars as flatterers. See *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 525–526, and 544.
19. *Oeuvres,* 6: 22
20. For example, in his 1392 sermon, *Accipietis virtutem*, he warns that princely wars and the schism will aid in the expansion of the Turkish Empire, perpetuate the division between the Latins and the Greeks, and encourage further war between the English and the French. See Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 442–3. For the way that the schism prevented Byzantine attempts to secure much

needed military aid from Western Europe, see Michael Ryan, "Byzantium, Islam, and the Great Western Schism," in *A Companion to the Great Western Schism (1378-1417)*, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition, ed. Joëlle Rollo-Koster and Thomas M. Izbicki (Leiden: Brill, 2009),: 199–206.

21. See Chapter 1.
22. For a discussion of academic censure cases as negotiations regarding professional expertise and local jurisdiction, see J. M. M. H. Thijssen, *Censure and Heresy at the University of Paris, 1200–1400* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).
23. Gerson, *Oeuvres, 6:22*.
24. Kaminsky, "The Politics of France's Subtraction," 367.
25. Ian Christopher Levy, *Holy Scripture and the Quest for Authority at the End of the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), esp. 1–54.
26. Gerson addressed these concerns after the Council of Constance, implying that individual theologians who were licensed by the university were the most reliable guides regarding church doctrine, provided they enjoyed the gift of spiritual discernment. See Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 9: 458–465.
27. See Chapter 1.
28. For instance, Brian Patrick McGuire treats Gerson's temporary resignation of the chancellorship as a true conversion moment in which Gerson shifts from being a "clever humanist" to "a convinced Christian intellectual." See McGuire, "Jean Gerson's Sermon to the Carthusians," in *Medieval Monastic Preaching*, ed. Carolyn Muessig (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 39.
29. See Thijssen, *Censure and Heresy*, 107–117; and Douglass Taber, "Pierre d'Ailly and the Teaching Authority of the Theologian," *Church History,* 59, no. 2 (1990): 163–174.
30. For instance, see Gerson *Oeuvres*, 10: 12–14.
31. Wenceslaus Sebastian, O.F.M., "The Controversy over the Immaculate Conception from after Scotus to the End of the Eighteenth Century," in *The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception: History and Significance*, ed. Edward Dennis O'Connor, C.S.C. (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1959), 223–227.
32. For a concise summary of how academic censure proceedings reflected the interaction between local concerns and wider political struggles between competing ecclesiastical groups, see Alain Boureau, "La censure dans les universités médiévales: note critique," *Annales HSS,* no. 3 (March–April, 2000): 321.
33. For the separate mendicant educational program, see William Courtenay, "The Instructional Programme of the Mendicant Convents a Paris in the Early Fourteenth Century," in *The Medieval Church: Universities, Heresy, and the Religious Life: Essays in Honour of Gordon Leff*, ed. Peter Biller and Barrie Dobson (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1999), 77–92. For the papal bull requesting that the chancellor of the University of Paris admit Monzon to study theology at Paris in 1376, at the request of the Dominican order, see CUP III: 229, no. 1408.
34. CUP III: 99, no. 1272.
35. CUP III: 487, no. 1557.
36. William J. Courtenay, "Dominicans and Suspect Opinion in the Thirteenth Century: The Cases of Stephen of Venizy, Peter Tarentaise, and the Articles of 1270 and 1271," *Vivarium,* XXXII, no. 2 (1994): 186–195.

37. Willaim A. Hinnebusch, *The History of the Dominican Order*, 2 vols (New York: Alba House, 1966), II: 174. For a more detailed discussion of how attacks upon Monzon's character and expertise allowed the university to construct the false appearance that it was censuring a confused and isolated individual, see Nancy McLoughlin, "Personal Narrative and the Systematization of Knowledge in the Thought of Jean Gerson," *Mediaevalia,* 29, no. 1 (2008): 83–107.
38. For the most concise explanation of the institutional challenges the mendicants posed to the early university, see Alan Bernstein, "Magisterium and License," *Viator,* 9 (1978): 291–309. For a more detailed account, see M. Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour et la polémique universitaire parisienne, 1250–1259* (Paris: Éditions A. Et J. Picard, 1972). The conflict produced an elaborate ecclesiology. See Yves Congar, "Aspects ecclésiologiques de la querelle entre mendiants et séculiers dans la seconde motié du XIII^{e} siècle et le debut du XIV^{e}," *AHDLMA,* 35 (1960): 32–151. For the effects of the conflict on literature and poetry, see Penn Szittya, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton, 1986). For its intensification under Gerson's chancellorship, see R. N. Swanson, "The 'Mendicant Problem' in the Later Middle Ages," in *The Medieval Church: Universities, Heresy, and the Religious Life: Essays in Honour of Gordon Leff*, ed. Peter Biller and Barrie Dobson (Suffolk, 1999), 227–238. For an argument cautioning against reading antimendicant rhetoric and literature as a sign of the popularity of these orders, see Guy Geltner, *The Making of Medieval Antifraternalism: Polemic, Violence, Deviance, and Remembrance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). For the ways the Franciscans and Dominicans used the university as a means of negotiating their own theological disputes with each other, see Andrew G. Traver, "Secular and Mendicant Masters of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Paris, 1505–1523," *The Sixteenth Century Journal,* XXVI (1995): 137–155.
39. Richard Southern, "The Changing Role of Universities in Medieval Europe," *Historical Research,* LX, no. 142 (1987): 133–146.
40. Antoine Destemberg, "Autorité intellectuelle et déambulations rituelles: les processions universitaires parisiennes (XIV^{e}-XV^{e} siècles), *Des sociétés en mouvement: Migrations et mobilité au Moyen Âge: XL^{e} Congrès de la SHMESP (Nice, 4-7 juin 2009)*, ed. Germain Butaurd, Cécile Caby, Yann Codou, Rosa Maria Dessì, Philippe Jansen, and Michel Lauwers (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2010), 337–341.
41. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 39–40.
42. CUP: III, no. 1564. For a more detailed discussion, see McLoughlin, "Personal Narrative."
43. RSD I: 492.
44. Kaminsky, "Politics of the French Subtraction," 377.
45. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 6: 23.
46. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 6: 23.
47. For the expenses attached to the chancellor's office, see Alan Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair: University and Chancellor of Paris at the Beginning of the Great Schism*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought, vol. XXIV (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 131–132.
48. Brian Patrick McGuire, ed. and trans. *Jean Gerson: Early Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1998), 152.

49. Brian Patrick McGuire, *John Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 59.
50. R.N. Swanson, "Universities, Graduates and Benefices in Later Medieval England," *Past and Present,* 106 (1985); Jacques Verger, "Teachers," in *A History of the University in Europe*, 2 vols., ed. Hilde De Ridder-Symoens (Cambridge, England, 1992), 151, and; Ian P. Wei, "The Self-Image of the Masters of Theology at the University of Paris in the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 46.3 (1995): 409–410 and 413–421.
51. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 19.
52. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 19
53. For Gerson's struggles to support himself, see McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation*, 163–166.
54. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 18–20.
55. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 20.
56. Gerson, *Adorabunt eum*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 525–526.
57. William Courtenay, *Parisian Scholars in the Early Fourteenth Century: A Social Portrait*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought: Fourth Series. (Cambridge, U.K. and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
58. For Gerson's absence from the synods, see Meyjes, *Apostle of Unity*, 59–60, 69.
59. Meyjes, *Apostle of Unity*, 61–62.
60. Steven Ozment, "The University and the Church: Patterns of Reform in Jean Gerson," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 1 (1970): 112; and Louis B. Pascoe, *Jean Gerson: Principles of Church Reform* (Leiden, 1973), 1–15 and 99–109. Jacques Verger suggests that he left Paris by April, 1399. See "*Veniat fama*", 389. Verger is following E. Vantenberghe, "Gerson à Bruges," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 31 (1935); 5–52.
61. Taber, "The Theologian and the Schism," 307–308; and Meyjes, *Apostle of Unity*, 71–74.
62. For the suggestion that Gerson was pushed out of office, see Taber, "The Theologian and the Schism," 309–311.
63. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 20–22.
64. Dennis D. Martin, "Trahere in Affectum: Praxis-Centered Theological Education in the Fifteenth Century," *Religious Education,* 85 (1990): 604–616.
65. Ian Christopher Levy, "Holy Scripture and the Quest for Authority among Three Late Medieval Masters," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 61, no. 1 (2010): 53–54.
66. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 22.
67. Peter L. Brown, "Asceticism: Pagan and Christian," in *The Late Empire, AD 337–425,* ed. Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey, (The Cambridge Ancient History) 13 (Cambridge, 2000), 601–631.
68. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 21. For discussion, see McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation*, 112.
69. Gilbert Ouy, "Humanism and Nationalism in France at the Turn of the Fifteenth Century," in *The Birth of Identities: Denmark and Europe in the Middle Ages*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Copenhagen, 1996), 107–125.
70. Meyjes, *Apostle of Unity*, 73–74.
71. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 23.

72. For the kind of authority that Gerson was claiming, see McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation*, 183–184 and 245.
73. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 25. Here Gerson repeats an argument he developed more fully in 1392. See Gerson, *Nimis honorati sunt*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 720–739.
74. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 36, and 10: 8.
75. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 38.
76. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 2: 39.
77. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 3. 224–249, esp. 224–230.
78. Steven Ozment, "The University and the Church," 114.
79. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 3: 224
80. *Oeuvres*, 3: 227–228.
81. Tanya Stabler Miller, "What's in a name?" 60–86.
82. For a concise summary of this argument, see Jo Ann McNamara, "The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy," in *Maps of Flesh and Light: The Religious Experience of Medieval Women Mystics*, ed. Ulrike Wiethaus (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 9–27.
83. Yelena Mazour-Matusevich, "Late Medieval Control of Masculinity: Jean Gerson," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique,* 98, no. 3–4 (2003), 428; and Brian Patrick McGuire, "Late Medieval Care and Control of Women: Jean Gerson and his Sisters," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 92, no. 1 (1997): 35.
84. Lori Walters, "The Figure of the *seulette* in the Works of Christine de Pizan and Jean Gerson," in *Desireuse de plus avant enquerre … Actes du VI^e^ Colloque international sur Christine de Pizan (Paris, 20-24 juillet 2006): Volume en hommage à James Laidlaw*, eds. Liliane Dulac, Anne Paupert, Christine Reno et Bernard Ribémont (Paris, 2008), 119–139; Earl Jeffrey Richards, "Christine de Pizan and Jean Gerson: An Intellectuel Friendship," in *Christine de Pizan 2000: Studies on Christine de Pizan in Honour of Angus J. Kennedy*, ed. John Campbel and Nadia Margolis (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000): 197–208; and "Jean Gerson's Writings to His Sisters and Christine de Pizan's *Livre des trois vertus*: An Intellectual Dialogue Culminating in Friendship," in *Virtue Ethics for Women, 1200–1500*, ed. Karen Green and Constance J. Mews (Dordrecht: Springer: 2011), 81–98.
85. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 10.2, 295. For questions about date and audience, see McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation,* 37. The work was originally thought to be written by the bishop of Reims himself because it appears under his name in the municipal library in Reims; however, Palémon Glorieux, the modern editor of Gerson's work, believed Gerson to be the author of the *Doctrinal aux simples gens*, and an expert on Gerson paleography, Gilbert Ouy, also believes this to be the case. Moreover, Ouy suggests that Gerson was probably among the university masters to approve the text and that the ideas represented in it were in wide circulation in Paris as Gerson composed his other catechetical works. See Ouy, *Gerson bilingue: les deux rédactions, latine et française, de quelques oeuvres du chancelier parisien*, Etudes christiniennes 2 (Paris, 1998), xv.
86. For a detailed discussion of Gerson's upbringing and how it affected his pastoral writings, see McGuire, "Late Medieval Care and Control of Women." 23.
87. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 726. For a description of female contemplatives who sought to suffer eternally for the sake of saving others, see Barbara Newman, *From Virile Woman to Woman Christ: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 108–136.

88. Walters, "The Figure of the *seulette*."
89. Gerson, *Ave Maria*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 538–549, esp. 546–548.
90. Gerson, *Si jurisdictionis*, in *Oeuvres*, 3: 8.
91. F. Thomas Luongo, "Saintly Authorship in the Italian Renaissance: The Quattrocento Reception of Catherine of Siena's Letters," *Journal of the Early Book Society* 8 (2005): 1–46.

3 Inspired by Princess Isabelle

1. For a detailed treatment of the university's struggles to protect its privileges, see Pearl Kibre, *Scholarly Privileges in the Middle Ages: The Rights, Privileges, and Immunities of Scholars and Universities at Bologna, Padua, Paris, and Oxford* (Cambridge, MA, 1962), 85–226. For a full account of this particular struggle, see Laurent Tournier, "L'Université de Paris et Charles de Savoisy: Une affaire d'honneur et d'état," *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Ile-de-France,* 122–124 (1995–1997): 71–88.
2. For the origins of the title and a summary of Gerson's deployment of this title, see Serge Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy." La construction d'une identité universitaire en France, XIIIe-XVe siècle* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999), 267–270.
3. *Estote misericordes* was preserved in a single manuscript originating from the abbey of Saint Victor in Paris. The manuscript also preserves the only surviving copy of several of Gerson's political sermons. For a discussion of the manuscript, see Louis Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*, Rijksuniversiteit te Gent. Werken uitg. door de Faculteit van de Wijsbegeerte en Letteren, 113 (Bruges: De Temple, 1952), 24. The text of the sermon has been printed Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres complètes*, 10 vols. in 11, ed. Palémon Glorieux (Paris, Tournai, Rome: Desclée, 1960–73), 7.1: 326–340.
4. This reading is inspired by Joan Scott's "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," The *American Historical Review,* 91, no. 5 (Dec. 1986): 1053–1075. It is equally informed, however, by the rich literature on medieval understandings of gender.
5. For a detailed discussion of the king's illness and the political difficulties that arose as a consequence, see R.C. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue: Crisis at the Court of Charles VI*, 1392–1420 (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1986).
6. *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 327-–329 and 332.
7. See for instance, Carolyn Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1982), 110–169; David G. Hunter, "The Virgin, the Bride, and the Church: Reading Psalm 45 in Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine," *Church History,* 69, no. 2 (2000): 281–303; and Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, "Dramatic Troubles of *Ecclesia*: Gendered Performances of the Divided Church," in *Cultural Performances in Medieval France: Essays in Honor of Nancy Freeman Regalado*, ed. Eglal Doss-Quinby, Roberta L. Krueger, and E. Jane Burns (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D. S. Brewere, 2007), 181–193.
8. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, "Writing the History of Women," in *From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints*, ed. Pauline Schmitt Pantel, vol. 1 in *A History of Women in the West*, ed. Georges Dugy and Michelle Perrot (Cambridge, MA. and London: Belknap Press, 1992), x–xiii. Also, Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

9. Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy*," 268.
10. Allegorical personifications exist in a balanced tension between the abstract principles or collective entities they represent and the concrete characteristics that create the rhetorical appearance of a personality. Personifications that are too abstract lack rhetorical force and in those that are too concrete, the connection between the detailed presentation and the abstraction breaks down. See Jon Whitman, *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 4.
11. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal de Nicolas de Baye, greffier du Parlement de Paris, 1400–1417*, ed. A. Tuetey, 2 vol. (Paris: 1885 and 1888),1: 93.
12. For the meaning of medieval processions, see Kathleen Ashley, "Introduction: The Moving Subjects of Processional Performance," in *Moving Subjects: Processional Performance in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. Kathleen Ashley and Wim Hüsken (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 2001), 7–34. For a discussion of the university's participation in processions and also in royal funerals, see Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy*," 280–291.
13. For a discussion of the university's processions and a map of the most frequent routes, see Antoine Destemberg, "Autorité intellectuelle et déambulations rituelles: les processions universitaires parisiennes (XIV^{e}-XV^{e} siècle)," in *Des sociétés en mouvement: Migrations et mobilité au Moyen Âge: XL^{e} Congrès de la SHMESP (Nice, 4–7 juin 2009)*, ed. Germain Butaurd, Cécile Caby, Yann Codou, Rosa Maria Dessì, Philippe Jansen, and Michel Lauwers (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2010), 337–341.
14. Tournier provides a sequence of events based upon his assumption that the account provided by the chronicler of Saint Denis is the most objective. See Tournier, "L'Université de Paris et Charles de Savoisy," 72–73. For the problems with relying upon this pro-Burgundian and occasionally inventive chronicle for an objective account, see Tracy Adams, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 124–140.
15. For the dwellings of lesser nobles, and Savoisy in particular, as containing tavern-like establishments that might draw in immoral and dangerous individuals, who were not necessarily associated with the nobles' households, see Claude Gauvard, "La violence commanditée: La criminalisation des 'tueurs à gages' aux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge," *Éditions des l'EHESS I, Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 5 (2007): 1021–1022.
16. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal de Nicolas de Baye*, 1: 107.
17. For the university's arguments, see Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 100–105; and Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 326–340.
18. Antoine Destemberg, "Morts violents et lieux de mémoire. Les réparations faites à l'université de Paris à la fin du Moyen Âge", *Traverse. Zeitschrift für Geschicte/Revue d'histoire,* 2 (2008): 37–49 <10.5169/seals-99639>, <hal-00348424>.
19. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 3: 240–248.
20. See Chapter 2 and William J. Courtenay, *Parisian Scholars in the Fourteenth Century: A Social Portrait* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
21. See note 1 above.
22. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 100.
23. Ashley, *Moving Subjects*, 15–17.
24. Ashley, *Moving Subjects*, 17.

25. For the religious charge that intersected with economic and political struggles for control over medieval urban space, see Sharon Farmer, *Communities of Saint Martin: Legend and Ritual in Medieval Tours* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), 261–298; David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 200–230; and Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Sacred and the Body Social in Sixteenth-century Lyon.", *Past and Present,* 90 (1981): 40–70. For a royal attempt to control the intersection of religious and urban space, see Elizabeth A. R. Brown and Nancy Freeman Regalado, "La grant feste: Philip the Fair's Celebration of the Knighting of His Sons in Paris at Pentecost of 1313," in *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*, Medieval Studies at Minnesota vol. 6., ed. Barbara Hanawalt and Kathryn Reyerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 56–88. For the way these dynamics affected reactions to the violence the university suffered, see Tournier, "L'Université de Paris et Charles de Savoisy," 76–77.
26. Gerard J. Campbell, "Clerical Immunities in France During the Reign of Philip III," *Speculum,* 39, no. 3 (1964): 404–424.
27. See note one above and Destemberg, "Morts violents," 37–38.
28. Gerson, "Diligite justiciam," *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 598–615. For the context of the sermon, see Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*, 181–187.
29. Destemberg, "Morts violentes," 40.
30. Destemberg, "Morts violentes," 38–40.
31. Destemberg, "Morts violentes," 38.
32. Jacques LeGoff is very critical of Gerson's obsession with defending university privileges, which he likens to a caste system. See "How did the Medieval University Conceive of Itself?" in LeGoff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago and London, 1980), 122, 132, and 134.
33. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 110–111.
34. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 105.
35. Lusignan, "*Vérité garde le roy*," 277–281.
36. Kibre, *Scholarly Privileges*, 3–17.
37. Destemberg, "Morts violentes," esp. 37–38.
38. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 100.
39. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal,* 1: 102.
40. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 100–101.
41. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 102.
42. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 102–103
43. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 102.
44. For this characterization of scholastic masculinity, see Ruth Mazo Karras, *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 75–83.
45. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 105–107.
46. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 107.
47. Jeffrey J. Cohen, *Medieval Identity Machines*, 45–77.
48. M.L. Bellaguet, ed., *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys* (Paris, 1839), [Hereafter RSD] III: 314.
49. RSD III: 185–195.

50. RSD III: 186. As Karras suggests was common within the university milieu. See *From Boys to Men*, 67–108.
51. RSD III: 186.
52. RSD III: 187.
53. Tournier identifies this account as the one objective account of this event. For Tournier's reconstruction of events based upon this account, see "L'Université de Paris et Charles de Savoisy," 74–75. Considering the divide between the clergy and nobility regarding clerical privileges and the feuding happening at Paris at the time, finding any objective account of this event is unlikely.
54. RSD III: 187–189.
55. Gerson repeatedly accused rulers of being confused by their pride into thinking that their subjects were dogs rather than fully human Christians destined for salvation. For instance, see *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 437.
56. Lester K. Little, "Pride Goes before Avarice," *American Historical Review,* 76, no. 1 (1971): 16–49.
57. See Chapter 1.
58. For the university's belief that its privileges required the king's physical presence during its appeals, see Lusignan, "Verité garde le roy," 45, 213–223, 277–281. For examples of the king hearing high profile cases of close family members in private, see Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 68.
59. For instance, see Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1173–1174.
60. For a detailed account of Louis of Orléans increasing influence over the mentally unstable Charles VI, as well as Charles VI's fluctuating mental health and attitude regarding Isabeau's power, see R.C. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue: Crisis at the Court of Charles VI*, 1392–1420 (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1986), 23–37.
61. For a different perspective regarding the relative power of Louis and Isabeau that focuses upon her mediating role and the need for constant negotiation among the members of the king's council, see Adams, *Life and Afterlife*, 92–112.
62. Tournier, "L'Université de Paris et Charles de Savoisy," 78.
63. Tournier, "L'Université de Paris et Charles de Savoisy," 78–9.
64. For the relationship between the University of Paris and John the Fearless, see Adams, *Life and Afterlife*, 172.
65. Tournier suggests that the queen and Duke of Orléans had handed this case over to Parlement to avoid having to make a judgment against Savoisy. See "L'Université de Paris et Charles de Savoisy," 78.
66. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 112 and Tournier, "L'Université de Paris et Charles de Savoisy," 86.
67. RSD III: 193.
68. RSD III: 316–322.
69. Tournier, "L'Université de Paris et Charles de Savoisy," 72, note 5 and Lusignan, "Verité garde le roy," 204–206.
70. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 109–111.
71. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1137–1138.
72. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 10: 10–24.
73. For the suggestion that Gerson wrote all of his treatises to meet specific political goals, see Daniel Hobbins, "The Schoolman as Public Intellectual.

John Gerson and the Late Medieval Tract," *American Historical Review,* 108 (2003): 1308–1337; and *Authorship and Publicity before Print* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 140–141. For a discussion of how he revised his work in dialogue with what he had done before, see Gilbert Ouy, *Gerson bilingue: les deux rédactions, latine et française, de quelques oeuvres du chancelier parisien*, Études christiniennes, 2 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998).

74. See Chapter 2.
75. In this sense he would be operating in a similar manner to the court philosophers of the later Roman Empire discussed. See Peter Lamont Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison, W.I.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992). For a discussion of similar strategies from the fourteenth century, see *Misty Schieberle, Feminized Counsel and the Literature of Advice in England, 1380–1500* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2014); and Virginie Minet-Mahy, *Esthétique et pouvoir de l'oeuvre allégorique à l'époque de Charles VI* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005).
76. Tracy Adams, "Christine de Pizan, Isabeau of Bavaria, and Female Regency," *French Historical Studies,* 32, no.1 (Winter 2009): 7.
77. For an extensive treatment of the relationship between the University of Paris and the Parlement of Paris, especially regarding the university's attempt to be more like the Parlement of Paris, see Lusignan, "Verité garde le roy."
78. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 94.
79. Gerson, *Oeuvres* 7.1: 331.
80. For a summary of the legal use of the title Daughter of the King by the University of Paris and the University of Orléans, see Lusignan, "Verité garde le roy," 277–281.
81. For a detailed discussion of these two incidents, see Lusignan, "Verité garde le roy," 279–280.
82. Nicolas de Baye, *Journal*, 1: 105 and 108.
83. For Savoisy's connections, see Tournier, "L'Université de Paris et Charles de Savoisy," 78–85.
84. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 330.
85. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 330–301.
86. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 331.
87. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 327.
88. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 329.
89. For the use of images in Christian rhetoric, see Erin Ronsse, "Rhetoric of Martyrs: Listening to Saints Perpetua and Felicitas," *JECS* 14, no. 3 (2006): 283–327. Also, Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).
90. *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 330.
91. Gerson, *De probatione spirituum* in *Oeuvres*, 9: 180.
92. *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 330.
93. For instance, the university processed in support of John the Fearless when John entered Paris with at least 800 men during the summer of 1405. See Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*, 171. For the regularity and frequency of university processions, see Lusignan, "Verité garde le roy," 282–283.
94. *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 332.

95. Although Gerson does not employ the term "raptus," which referred to abduction, or "esforcier," which came to denote rape in the fourteenth century, he does evoke a picture of a sexualized attack. Moreover, since word use was not consistent, this picture and the following warning about the king's honor is enough to create the impression that Savoisy's attack was of a sexual nature. For a discussion of the term "esforcier", see Kathryn Gravadale, *Ravishing Maidens: Writing Rape in Medieval French Literature and Law* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 2–5. For the depiction of the public shaming, as well as, torture of virgin martyrs and the institutional meanings that violence had for the authority of the church, see Sarah Salih, "Performing Virginity: Sex and Violence in the Katherine Group," and Kathleen Coyne Kelly, "Useful Virgins in Medieval Hagiography," in *Constructions of Widowhood and Virginity in the Middle Ages*, ed. Cindy L. Carlson and Angela Jane Weisl (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 95–112 and 135–164.
96. *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 327.
97. See Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.
98. Charles VI promised Isabelle in marriage to the son of Louis of Orléans on June 5, 1404. See R.C. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 36.
99. This argument was forwarded by the king's former tutor. See Philippe de Mézières, *Letter to King Richard II: A Plea Made in 1395 for Peace between England and France*, ed. and trans. G.W. Coopland (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1975).
100. Fiona Harris Stoertz, "Young Women in France and England: 1050–1300," *Journal of Women's History* 34 (2001): 22–46.
101. Froissart, Jean. *Oeuvres de Froissart. Chroniques*, ed. Joseph-Marie-Bruno-Constantin Kervyn de Lettenhove 26 vols. (Osnabrück, Germany: Biblio Verlag, 1967), 16: 1–19, esp. 8, 15, and 19.
102. Froissart, *Chronicles* 16: 189–190.
103. Froissart, *Chronicles* 16: 219–221 and 366–78.
104. RSD III: 2.
105. RSD III: 4–6.
106. For French concerns during the Hundred Years War about the wombs of the daughters of the king as sites of foreign invasion through the offspring they produce, see Daisy J. Delogu, "The King's Two Daughters: Isabelle of France, and the University of Paris, Fille du Roy," *Republics of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts,* 3, no. 2 (November 15, 2013): 11–20, accessed June 6, 2014, http://arcade.stanford.edu/rofl/king%E2%80%99s-two-daughters-isabelle-france-and-university-paris -fille-du-roy-0, 8–10.
107. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 338.

4 Co-opting Royal Women's Authority

1. For a discussion of the role of the figure of the Daughter of the King within this broader attempt to forward the political authority of a reformed university, see Nancy McLoughlin, "Jean Gerson as Secular Priest and University Master," In *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2006), 249–291. Serge Lusignan also argues that

by focusing on its title of Daughter of the King, the university was able to present itself as a counselor to the king who could be trusted because her feminine identity prevented her from exercising real power. See "Vérité garde le roy," 270. For the ways in which this portrayal of the university as the king's daughter intersected with royal, corporate, and spiritual ideas about kinship and government, see Daisy J. Delogu, "The King's Two Daughters: Isabelle of France, and the University of Paris, fille du roy," *Republics of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts* 3, no. 2 (November 15, 2013): 11–20, accessed June 6, 2014, http://arcade.stanford.edu/rofl/king%E2%80%99s-two-daughters-isabelle-france-and-university-paris-fille-du-roy-0. Recent scholarship on queens and noblewomen has demonstrated that aristocratic women actually exercised considerable formal and informal authority. See Theresa Earenfight, "Without the Persona of the Prince: Kings, Queens and the Idea of Monarchy in Late Medieval Europe," *Gender and History,* 19, no. 1 (April, 2007): 1–21; Kimberly A. LoPrete, "Women, Gender and Lordship in France, c. 1050–1250," *History Compass,* 5/6 (2007): 1921–1941. Lusignan's characterization of the way the university's title shaped its political role, however, is consistent with the responses this title elicited from the Parlement of Paris and the king's officers as would be expected from the way Earenfight characterizes contemporary ecclesiastical and juridical discourse. See "Without the Persona," 12.

2. The gender complexity embraced by Gerson's construction mirrors that demanded of successful female lords. See LoPrete, "Women, Gender and Lordship," 1929. For a discussion of the relationship between allegory and lived experience and the extent to which too much concrete information collapses the allegory, see Jon Whitman, *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, rpt., Bridgewater, N.J.: Replica Books, 1999), 1–11.
3. Theresa Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe* (Palgrave, 2013), 18–19. For the extent to which the misogynist polemics of bureaucratic writers and members of the clergy existed in dialogue with other discourses celebrating certain aspects of queenly power and also were limited in their ability to restrict queenly power because of the diffuse nature of monarchy itself, see Earenfight, "Without the Persona of the Prince," *Gender and History,* XIX, no. 1 (April 2007): esp., 2–3 and 8–10.
4. For the proliferation and destabilizing nature of alliances based upon marriage, compacts between brothers in arms, and baptisms in the reign of Charles VI of France, see Bernard Guenée, *Un Meurtre une société: l'assassinat du duc d'Orléans 23 novembre 1407* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 107–112.
5. This strategy was also adopted by late-fourteenth-century English poets, such as Gower and Chaucer. See Misty Schieberle, *Feminized Counsel and the Literature of Advice in England, 1380–1500* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2014).
6. For the five senses, see L. Vinge, *The Five Senses: Studies in a Literary Tradition*, Acta Regiae Societatis Humaniorum Litterarum Lundensis, 72 (Lund, 1975). For the interaction between early Christian discourses about female persuasion and the roles open to early Christian Women, see Kate Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999). For the contrast between the deadly sins

and the opposing virtues, see Richard Newhauser, *The Treatise on the Vices and Virtues in Latin and the Vernacular*, Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental 68 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1993). For complicated ways clerical discourses about sinful and virtuous female persuasion developed in the wake of Gregorian Reform and the commercial revolution, see Sharon Farmer, "Persuasive Voices: Clerical Images of Medieval Wives," *Speculum,* 61, no. 3 (1986): 517–543.

7. Wisdom, which was associated with divine authority, and also for theologians, with the text of Scripture, was not accessible through the actions of human reason alone. See Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 2003), 1–50 and 190–244. The human intellect, however, when properly illuminated by divine grace subjected the vices to the virtues and thus also allowed the individual to come to the correct moral and religious decisions. See Steven Ozment, *Homo Spiritualis: Johannes Tauler, Jean Gerson and Martin Luther, 1209–1216* (Leiden, 1969), 49–83. For the way this theology expresses itself in Gerson's political sermons on the deadly sins, such as his sermon *Vivat rex*, see Nancy McLoughlin, "The Deadly Sins and Contemplative Politics: Gerson's Ordering of the Personal and Political Realms," in *Sin in Medieval and Early Modern Culture: The Tradition of the Seven Deadly Sins*, ed. Richard Newhauser and Susan Ridyard (Woodbridge, Suffolk: York Medieval Press 2012), 132–156.
8. Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride* and Farmer, *Persuasive Voices*.
9. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 525–526.
10. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 438–441 and 443–448.
11. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 445.
12. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 447–448.
13. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 526.
14. For a discussion of the tension created by clerical traditions based upon Jerome and Ambrose's characterization of all women as sources of sexual temptation in dialogue with secular valorization of men's sexual prowess, see Jacqueline Murray, "Hiding Behind the Universal Man: Male Sexuality in the Middle Ages," in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, ed. Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1996), 123–152. For a discussion of high and late medieval interpretations of women and women's voices as offering the same temptation that Eve offered Adam both to clerical men and married men, see Farmer, "Persuasive Voices," 519.
15. For the very possible violent effects of such discourses, see Helen Solterer, "Making Names, Breaking Lives: Women and Injurious Language at the Court of Isabeau of Bavaria and Charles VI," in *Cultural Performances in Medieval France: Essays in Honor of Nancy Freeman Regalado*, ed. Eglal Doss-Quinby, Roberta L. Krueger, and E. Jane Burns (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), 203–217. For the early modern propaganda aimed at French female regents and the strategies these regents adopted to oppose this propaganda, see Eliane Viennot, "L'Histoire des reines de France dans le débat sur la loi salique (Fin XVe-Fin XVIe siècle)," in *Femmes de pouvoir et pouvoir des femmes dans l'Occident médiéval et moderne*, ed. Armel Nayt-Dubois and Emmanuelle Santinelli-Foltz (Presses Universitaires de Valenciennes, 2009), 83–95.

16. Michel Pintoin, the chronicler of Saint Denis, reports that Louis of Orléans deemed it prudent for his wife to return to their own lands in light of the accusations, which Pintion, who considered the king's illness as punishment for the excesses of his youth, did not believe. See M.L. Bellaguet, ed., *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys* (Paris, 1839), [Hereafter RSD], 2: 404–406. Froissart, on the other hand, seems to have believed the accusations and reported that Valentina tried to kill the king so she could be queen, but also used this event to explain Charles VI's decision to break off his treaty with Valentina's father, which he had to do in order to make peace with England. See Jean Froissart, *Oeuvres de Froissart. Chroniques*, ed. Joseph-Marie-Bruno-Constantin Kervyn de Lettenhove 26 vols. (Osnabrück, Germany: Biblio Verlag, 1967), 15: 352–355. For a discussion of this accusation in dialogue with Valois interests regarding Italy, the schism, and England, see Tracy Adams, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2010), 2–9 and 262, no. 34. For the political use of witchcraft and sorcery accusations during the reign of Philip IV, see Edward Peters, *The Magician, the Witch, and the Law* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978), 119–125. For the political use of witchcraft and sorcery accusations by the Dukes of Burgundy against Louis of Orléans and his associates, including Valentina, see Jar R. Veenstra, *Magic and Divination at the Courts of Burgundy and France: Text and Context of Laurens Pignon's* Contre les devineurs, *1411* (Leiden, Brill: 1998), 59–96. For a discussion of a similar phenomenon in England, see Alastair Bellany, "Mistress Turner's Deadly Sins: Sartorial Transgression, Court Scandal, and Politics in Early Stuart England," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 58, no. 2 (1995): 179–210.
17. In this sense, I am suggesting that Gerson contributed to the framing of witchcraft by elite intellectuals, which has been understood as a crucial component in the transition between understanding popular magical practices as misguided superstition and understanding them as attacks upon the religious and political order. See Peters, *The Magician, the Witch, and the Law*, 138–181; Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) and "The 'Gendering' of Witchcraft in French Demonology: Misogyny or Polarity," in *Gender and Witchcraft, New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology*, vol. 4, ed. Brian P. Levack (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), 54–56; John Bossy, "Moral Arithmetic: Seven Sins into Ten commandments," in *Conscience and Casuistry in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Edmund Leites (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988): 214–243; Michael M. Bailey, "The Medieval Concept of the Witches Sabbath," *Exemplaria*, 8, no. 2 (1996): 419–439; "The Feminization of Magic and the Emerging Idea of the Female Witch in the Late Middle Ages," *Essays in Medieval Studies,* 19 (2002): 120–134; and "From Sorcery to Witchcraft: Clerical Conceptions of Magic in the Later Middle Ages," *Speculum,* 76, no. 4 (2001): 960–990.
18. As clergy members had already done through their reliance upon pious women's encounters with divine and diabolical forces in their struggles for legitimacy against heretics and within the context of new urban economies. See Jo Ann McNamara, "The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy: Clerical Authority and Female Innovation in the Struggle with Heresy," in *Maps of Flesh and Light: the Religious Experience of Medieval Women*, ed. Ulrike Wiethaus (Syracuse,

NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993): 9–27, and Dyan Elliott, *Proving Woman: Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

19. For the significance and availability of *The Pilgrimage of Human Life* among writers and poets associated with the court of Charles VI, see Marco Nievergelt and Stephanie A. Viereck Gibbs Kamath, eds., *The Pèlerinage Allegories of Guillaume de Deguileville: Tradition, Authority and Influence*, (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2013).
20. See Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints, and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378–1417* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2010) and Virginie Minet-Mahy, *Esthétique et pouvoir de l'oeuvre allégorique à l'époque de Charles VI* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005).
21. Theresa Earenfight, "Preface: Partners in Politics," in *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington, V.T.: Ashgate, 2005), xvi–xix.
22. André Poulet, "Capetian Women and the Regency: The Genesis of a Vocation," *Medieval Queenship*, ed. John Carmi Parsons (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1998), 93–116.
23. *Les Ordonnances des rois de France de la troisième race*, ed. Denis-François Secousse et al. 21 vols. (Paris: L'Imprimerie national, 1723–1849), 7: 530–538. For a detailed discussion of this ordinance, see Adams, "Christine de Pizan," 8–9.
24. Tracy Adams, "Christine de Pizan, Isabeau of Bavaria, and Female Regency," *French Historical Studies,* 32, no. 1 (Winter 2009): 7.
25. For a summary of the political situation created by the struggles for power among the French magnates, see R.C. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue: Crisis at the Court of Charles VI, 1392-1420* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1986), 23ff. For a summary of these struggles for power from the perspective of Isabeau of Bavaria, see Adams, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria*, 1–37.
26. Tracy Adams, "Christine de Pizan," 7–9; and R. C. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue,* 25–29.
27. Louis Claude Douët-d'Arcq, *Choix de pièces inédites relatives au règne de Charles VI*, 2 vols. (Paris: Renouard, 1863), I, 227–229.
28. Douët-d'Arcq, *Choix*, I, 240–243, esp. 242.
29. *Ordonances*, VIII: 579–83.
30. *Ordonances*, 12: 222–223.
31. RSD III: 334.
32. Famiglietti argues, for instance, that the 1403 ordinances severely limited Isabeau's power by ensuring that the majority of the council would make decisions regardless of her opinions. See Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 28–30.
33. Adams, *Life and Afterlife*, 73–112.
34. Adams, "Christine de Pizan," 11–12; Earenfight, "Without the Persona," 8–14, and *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, 10–12.
35. For Christine's relationship with Gerson, see Mary Agnes Edgsall, "Like wise master builders: Jean Gerson's Ecclesiology, *'Lectio Divina,'* and Christine de Pizan's *Livre de la Cité des Dames*," *Medievalia et Humanistica,* 21 (2000): 33–57; Lori Walters, "The Figure of the *seulette* in the Works of Christine de Pizan and Jean Gerson," in *Desireuse de plus avant enquerre … Actes du VI^e^ Colloque international sur Christine de Pizan (Paris, 20–24 juillet 2006): Volume*

en hommage à James Laidlaw, ed. Liliane Dulac, Anne Paupert, Christine Reno et Bernard Ribémont (Paris, 2008), 119–139: Earl Jeffrey Richards, "Christine de Pizan and Jean Gerson: An Intellectuel Friendship," in *Christine de Pizan 2000: Studies on Christine de Pizan in Honour of Angus J. Kennedy*, ed. John Campbel and Nadia Margolis (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000): 197–208; and "Jean Gerson's Writings to His Sisters and Christine de Pizan's *Livre des trois vertus*: An Intellectual Dialogue Culminating in Friendship", in *Virtue Ethics for Women, 1200–-1500*, ed. Karen Green and Constance J. Mews (Dordrecht: Springer: 2011), 81–98.

36. For the dedication and manuscript tradition, see Charity Cannon Willard, "The Manuscript Tradition of the *Livre Des Trois Vertus* and Christine de Pizan's Audience," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 27, no. 3 (1966): 433–434, esp. 437.
37. Christine de Pizan, *Le livre des trois vertus*, eds. Charity Cannon Willard and Erick Hick (Paris, Champion, 1989), 33-35. For a discussion of this text in relation to Isabeau, see Tracy Adams, *Life and After Life of Isabeau*, 82.
38. For a detailed discussion of this chronicle account, see Chapter 3.
39. Gerson, *Nimis honorati sunt*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 734 and 736. For the date of the sermon and a summary of Gerson's argument, see Brian Patrick McGuire, *John Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 57–58; and Louis Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*, Rijksuniversiteit te Gent. Werken uitg. door de Faculteit van de Wijsbegeerte en Letteren, 113 (Bruges: De Temple, 1952), 62–65. For a more detailed discussion of this sermon, see Chapters 1 and 2.
40. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 729. For comparison, see *Oeuvres*, 10: 8.
41. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.1: 333.
42. For Gerson's reliance upon Bernard, see McGuire, *Last European Reformation*, 24. For Bernard's experimentation with maternal imagery and roles, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 110–169.
43. As expressed most clearly in the oaths taken by all parties at the time Charles VI issued the first ordinances about guardianship and regency. See *Ordonnances*, 7: 530–538.
44. Gerson, *Vivat rex*, 7.2: 1138. Famiglietti characterizes Gerson's sermon as unreasonably Aristotelian. See *Royal Intrigue*, 51–52. Gerson's concerns were actually equally informed by university-based ideology and Christian theology. For a summary of the contents of this sermon, see McGuire, *The Last European Reformation*, 186–189.
45. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1144.
46. *Ordonances*, 8: 580–581.
47. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 29–31. Famiglietti indicates that Isabeau was not happy with Charles's ordinance.
48. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1137–1138.
49. Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*, 173.
50. For the identification of Gerson's speech form as clamor, see Valerie V. Jouët, "Et un temps pour parler: La communication orale sous le règne de Charles VI: le témoignage de la *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*." Thèse de doctrat d'histoire, Université Paris, 1992, 109–110.
51. Farmer, "Persuasive Voices," (see endnote 7 above).

52. Christine de Pizan, *Une epistre a la roÿne de France*: *Manuscrit Paris, B.n.f. fr. 580; La lamentacion Cristine de Pizan: Manuscrit Paris, B.n.f. fr. 24864*, ed. Jean-François Kosta-Théfaine (Clermont-Ferrand: Éditions Paleo, 2010), 21. For a detailed discussion of this letter, see Adams, *Life and Afterlife*, 183–190.
53. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 46–47, and Adams, *Life and After Life*, 168–171.
54. Katherine Tachau, "Seeing as Action and Passion in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 346–347.
55. Queens began their roles as mediators between two powerful families, their natal and married families, which often represented different cultures. See Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, 6. As Isabeau's case demonstrated, the queen's vulnerability also required her to make concessions and create alliances of her own for the sake of pursuing her own goals at court and merely surviving. See Adams, *Life and Afterlife*, 88–92 and 175–183.
56. Adams, *Life and Afterlife*, 5. For the discourse on queens being sexual temptresses who confuse their husbands, see Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, 22–27.
57. For the extent to which classical sources could use this discourse to critique powerful men, see Sandra R. Joshel, "Female Desire and the Discourse of Empire: Tacitus's Messalina," *Signs* 21, no. 1 (1995): 50–82. Also, Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, 23.
58. Gerson *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1167.
59. Gerson *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 526.
60. Wayne Craven, "The Iconography of the David and Bathsheba Cycle at the Cathedral of Auxerre," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*. 34 (1975): 226–237. For the University of Paris as a fountain of knowledge, see Chapter 2.
61. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1148.
62. *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1149.
63. *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1149–1151.
64. *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1151 ff.
65. Jean Gerson, *Puer natus est*, in Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 948–968. For a discussion of the sermon's date, see Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*, 60–62.
66. For Gerson's critique of Shrine Madonnas, see Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 963–964. For a discussion of Gerson's position, see Newman, *God and the Goddesses*, 269–273. Also, Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 309.
67. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 953.
68. Katherine L. French, *The Good Women of the Parish: Gender and Religion After the Black Death* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 62. Elizabeth L'Estrange, *Holy Motherhood: Gender, Dynasty and Visual Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Manchester and New York: 2008), 76–109.
69. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 958.
70. Adams, "Christine de Pizan," 5.
71. See, for instance, Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker, "Jeanne of Valois: The Power of a Consort," in *Capetian Women,* ed. Kathleen Nolan (New York and Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), 258–259; and Earenfight, *"Without the Persona of the Prince*," 12–13.

72. See Helen Solterer, "Making Names, Breaking Lives," and Eliane Viennot, "L'Histoire des reines de France dans le débat sur la loi salique (Fin XV^{e}-Fin XVI^{e} siècle)," cited above.
73. Pierre D'Ailly, *Super omnia vincit veritas*, edited by Alan Bernstein in *Pierre d'Ailly and the Blachard Affair*, 245. Douglass Taber, "Pierre d'Ailly and the Teaching Authority of the theologian," *Church History* 59, no. 2 (1990): 163–174.
74. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 959.
75. For a discussion of Gerson's theological reform, see Chapter 2.
76. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1138.
77. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1137.
78. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1138.
79. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1138.
80. He did so in contrast to his more devotional writings where he celebrated the contemplative experiences of the solitary pious soul. For the suggestion that members of the French royal court were so familiar with Gerson's portrayal of the solitary soul that Christine de Pizan adopted this figure to her advantage, see Lori Walters, "The Figure of the *seulette* in the Works of Christine de Pizan and Jean Gerson," 119–139.
81. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1144–1145.
82. R.N. Swanson, "Angels Incarnate: Clergy and Masculinity from Gregorian Reform to Reformation,"; and P.H. Cullum, "Clergy, Masculinity and Transgression in Late Medieval England," in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. D.M. Hadley (London and New York: Longman, 1999), 160–196.
83. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1149.
84. Delogu, "The King's Two Daughters," 20.
85. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1146.
86. Proverbs 8.10. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1145.
87. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1145.
88. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1148.
89. For the extent of the destruction and frequency of aristocratic wars in this period, as well as a discussion of the crown's involvement in this violence as a mediator or arbitrator see Justine Firnhaber-Baker, *Violence and the State in Languedoc, 1250–1400* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
90. For a more detailed treatment of this sermon, see Nancy McLoughlin, "Silencing the Widow with a Prayer for Peace," *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae*, 19 (2014): 1–22.
91. Since Valentina's oldest son was a minor, she was the natural leader of the group demanding justice for Louis' death. See K.A. LoPrete, "Women, Gender and Lordship in France, c. 1050–1250," 1921–1941.
92. Isabelle married Louis's son Charles on 29 June 1406. The marriage had been arranged in 1404 during the course of a complicated competition between the warring dukes to marry royal children into their families. See Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 32–33 and 55.
93. For a contemporary chronicler's account of Valentina's procession and petition, see Nicolas de Baye, *Journal de Nicolas de Baye. Greffier du Parlement de Paris 1400–1417*, ed. A. Tuetey, (Paris 1885), 238–239, 241–242; For an overview of events, see Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 63–73; and A. Coville, *Jean Petit. La question du tyrannicide au commencement du XV^{e} siècle*, (Paris 1932, repr. Geneva 1974), 225–232.

94. For Gerson's sermon, see Jean Gerson, "*Veniat pax*", in Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1100–1123. Louis Mourin suggests 4 November 1408 as the date of delivery. See Mourin, *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*, 187–196. Bernard Guenée suggests a February date of delivery, indicating that Gerson's plea for peace directly preceded the crown's pardon of John. See Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société. L'assasinat du duc d'Orléans 23 novembre 1407* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 215–220.
95. For Gerson's acknowledgement of the difficulty of the case, see *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1108–1110.
96. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1100–1110, esp., 1110.
97. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1110–1111.
98. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1108–1109.
99. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1111–1112.
100. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1112.
101. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1114.
102. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1115.
103. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1120.
104. See Adams, *Life and Afterlife*, 77–78. Also, Lois L. Huneycutt, "Intercession and the High-Medieval Queen: The Esther Topos," in *Power of the Weak: Studies on Medieval Women,* ed. Jennifer Carpenter & Sally-Beth MacLean (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 126–146.
105. Adams, *Life and Afterlife*, 250–253.
106. BnF Fr. 926/MF 15953, containing *Vivat rex*, was copied for Marie de Berry in 1406. For a detailed discussion of this manuscripts contents, see Lori J. Walters, "La thème du livre comme don de sagesse dans le ms. Paris, BnF fr. 926," in *La recueil au Moyen Âge: La fin du Moyen Âge*, ed. Tania Van Hemelryck and Stefania Marzano (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010). For a general discussion of the audience for Gerson's works and this particular manuscript, see Daniel Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity Before Print: Jean Gerson and the Transformation of Late Medieval Learning*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 147–151 and 158–165, esp. 159. For a Gerson manuscript in the library of Margaret of York, see Sharon Michalove, "Women as Book Collectors and Disseminators of Culture in Late Medieval England and Burgundy," in *Reputation and Representation in Fifteenth Century Europe: The Northern World*, ed. David C. Biggs (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 76. For a possible diffuse influence of Gerson's work on the education of young girls, see Kathleen Sewright, "An Introduction to British Library MS Lansdowne 380," *Notes,* 65, no. 4 (2009): 633–736, esp. 52 and 64–67.
107. See Oliver Delsaux, "Mise au jour d'un nouveau visage du *Vivat rex* de Jean Gerson. Une nouvelle édition critique du texte devient-elle nécessaire?" *Le Moyen Français* 70 (2012): 137. For Gerson's reliance upon the Carthusians and Celestines as copyists, see Hobbins, *Authorship and Authority*, 197–203.
108. Jean Gerson, *Harengue faicte au nom de l'universite de Paris, devant le roy Charles sixiesme, & tout le conseil, contenant les remonstrances touchant le gouvernement du roy & du royaume: avec les protestations du Treschrestien roy de France, Charles VII sur la determination du Concile de Basle* (Paris: Gilles Corrozet, 1561), and Jean Gerson, *Harengue faicte au nom de l'Université de Paris devant le roy Charles Sixiesme et tout le conseil en 1405: contenant les*

remonstrances touchant le gouvernement du roy et du royaume, ed. Antoine Marie Henri Boulard (Paris: Debeausseaux, 1824).

109. For this collection of Gerson's sermons, see BnF, fr. 936 of unknown origin. Also, Oliver Delsaux, "Mise au jour d'un nouveau visage du *Vivat rex* de Jean Gerson. Une nouvelle édition critique du texte devient-elle nécessaire?" *Le Moyen Français,* 70 (2012): 137. The manuscript contains *Adorabunt eum* and *Vivat rex*, but not *Accipietis virtutem*. For Gerson's influence on later political arguments and pageantry, see Daniel Eppley, *Defending Royal Supremacy and Discerning God's Will in Tudor England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 67; Lawrence M. Bryant, *The King and the City in the Parisian Royal Entry Ceremony: Politics, Ritual and Art in the Renaissance* (Geneva: Librairi Droz S.A., 1986), 92, 135–137, and 191; and Jacques J. Krynen, "'*Rex Christianissimus*': A Medieval Theme at the Roots of French Absolutism," *History and Anthropology,* 4 (1989): 79–96.
110. Roger Mason, "Kingship, Tyranny and the Right to Resist in Fifteenth Century Scotland," *The Scottish Historical Review,* 66, no. 182 (1987): 125–151.
111. For the pervasiveness of this phenomenon, see Stuart Clark, Clark, *Thinking With Demons*.
112. Charlotte Wells, "Leeches on the Body Politic: Xenophobia and Witchcraft in Early Modern French Political Discourse," *French Historical Studies,* 22, no. 3 (1999): 351–377.
113. Elsa Guyot, "Étude iconographique de l'épisode biblique 'Bethsabée au bain' dans les livres d'heures des XV^{e} et XVI^{e} siècles," *Reti Medievali Rivista*, 14, no. 1 (2013): 263–287; Clare L. Costley, "David, Bathsheba, and the Penitential Psalms," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 57, no. 4 (2004): 1235–1277; Thomas Hoving, ed., *David and Bathsheba: Ten Early Sixteenth-Century Tapestries from the Cluny Museum in Paris, May 14-September 2, 1974, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1974); and Guy Delmarcel, *Flemish Tapestry*, trans. Alastair Weir (Tielt, Belgium: Lannoo Publishers, 1999), esp. 75.

5 Gerson, Mystics, and Witches?

1. This is in part because texts by Gerson and Nider circulated with manuscript copies of the *Malleus Maleficarum*. See Nancy Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages*. Conjunctions of Religion & Power in the Medieval Past (Ithaca: Cornell, 2003), 315. Dyan Elliott suggests that any contribution that Gerson's works might have made to the European witch-hunts was an 'unintended' effect of his attempt to negotiate prevailing concerns regarding the veracity and meaning of women's mystical experiences. See Elliott, *Proving Woman: Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 269–303. According to Michael David Bailey, Nider's concern about witches derived from his contact with rural populations as a part of an attempt to quell heresy in the countryside rather than the influence of Gerson's critiques of women visionaries, although he does note that Gerson's theology exerted a strong influence on Nider's thought. See Bailey, *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy,*

and Reform in the Late Middle Ages (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010).

2. Gerson, *De examinatione doctrinarum*, in *Oeuvres,* 9: 467. Both Caciola and Elliott discuss this passage at length. See Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 306; and Elliott, *Proving Woman*, 269–272.
3. Although many noble and bourgeois women could read in the vernacular, women were excluded from the universities of Northern Europe. See Rainer Christoph Schwinges, "Student Education, Student Life," in *Universities in the Middle Ages*, ed. Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, vol. 1 of *A History of the University in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 202. Women who admitted that they were familiar with theological writings risked calling their claims to spontaneous inspiration into question. See, Barbara Newman, "Hildegard of Bingen: Visions and Validation," *Church History,* 54, no. 2 (1985): 163–175; and Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker, "The Metamorphosis of Woman: Transmission of Knowledge and the Problems of Gender," *Gender and History,* 12, no. 3 (2000): 642–664. Barbara Newman has suggested also that Gerson's contribution to the discourse on the discernment of spirits was part of a larger clerical project to discount any visionary experiences that might have been scripted or influenced by reading to the extent that by the eighteenth century only the humblest of individuals could claim to have had visionary experiences. The effects of these visions could then easily be controlled by the Church because the individuals receiving them would not have the theological background necessary to explain what the visions meant in any meaningful way. See Barbara Newman, "What Did it Mean to Say 'I Saw'? The Clash between Theory and Practice in Medieval Visionary Culture," *Speculum,* 80, no. 1 (2005): 1–43.
4. See Elliott, *Proving Woman*; Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*; and Jo Ann McNamara, "The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy," in *Maps of Flesh and Light: The Religious Experience of Medieval Women Mystics*, ed. Ulrike Wiethaus (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 9–27. As Daniel Hobbins has demonstrated, the majority of Gerson's writings, including his discernment treatises, were written in the form of a political tract and in response to a particular problem. See Hobbins, The Schoolman as Public Intellectual: Jean Gerson and the Late Medieval Tract," *American Historical Review,* 108, no. 5 (2003): 1308–1377. A careful reading of *De examinatione doctrinarum* demonstrates that it is a polemical tract rather than a systematic treatise. See Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres complètes*, 10 vols. in 11, ed. Palémon Glorieux (Paris, 1960–73), 9: 458–475. Wendy Love Anderson observes that Gerson may have written this "long and somewhat rambling treatise" to explain the religious and political turmoil that followed the conclusion of the Council of Constance. See "Gerson's Stance on Women," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Leiden, 2006), 307–308.
5. For the identification of this treatise as particularly misogynist, see Dyan Elliott, "Seeing Double: John Gerson, the Discernment of Spirits and Joan of Arc," *American Historical Review,* 107, no. 1 (2002): 29–30; and *Proving Woman*, 269–273 and 280–284. Also, Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 304–306. For connections between Gerson's arguments in *De examinatione doctrinarum* and Nider's, see Elliot, *Proving Woman*, 301–303. Caciola, who notes that Gerson's discernment treatises were copied and circulated with less frequency than those

written by Henry of Langenstein, suggests that it was "the broad cultural influence of these works," which contributed to Nider's ideas. See *Discerning Spirits*, 312–319. However, she also notes that it was Gerson's works that circulated with those of Nider and Kramer. See *Discerning Spirits*, 319. Some Gerson scholars have suggested that the strong language in this and other discernment treatises by Gerson reflected his concern about the influence that misguided visionaries exercised over the Church rather than clerical misogyny. See Catherine Brown, *Pastor and Laity in the Theology of Jean Gerson* (Cambridge, 1987), 222. Wendy Love Anderson argues that although this treatise does at points negatively characterize women as a category, that Gerson's main concern was the problem of discernment in general, as it applied both to men and women, and that his rare misogynistic expressions reflected the values of his time, particularly Gerson's belief that women should not presume to teach men. Moreover, she suggests that some instances where modern scholars have indicated that the treatise makes derogatory comments about important women visionaries that the text itself refers to both men and women. See "Gerson's Stance on Women," 307–314, esp. 309–313.

6. Elliott suggests that Gerson's discernment treatises created a discernment "machine" used to prosecute Joan of Arc despite the fact that Gerson supported her. See "Seeing Double," and 40, 43–54. Caciola suggests that the trial of Joan of Arc actually represents Gerson's lack of influence at the time, noting that Joan, whom Gerson supported, was burned and Catherine of Siena and Bridget of Sweden, whom Gerson denounced, were canonized. See *Discerning Spirits*, 310–311. Joan's career and end, however, were much more politicized than those of equally famous visionaries such as Catherine of Siena and Bridget of Sweden, because Joan led troops to war and fell into the hands of her enemies, who, needless to say, were Gerson's enemies as well. He might have met a similar fate if he had abandoned his exile and returned to Anglo-Burgundian Paris. See Daniel Hobbins, "Jean Gerson's Authentic Tract on Joan of Arc: *Super facto puellae et credulitate sibi praestanda* (14 May 1429)", *Mediaeval Studies,* 67 (2005): 120.
7. I am using 'charisma' following Clifford Geertz, "Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power". See Geertz, *Local knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 121–146. For an explicit discussion of the performance aspect of possession, see Barbara Newman, "Possessed by the Spirit: Devout Women, Demoniacs, and the Apostolic Life in the Thirteenth Century," *Speculum,* 73 (1998): 733–770, and Nancy Caciola, "Discerning Spirits: Sanctity and Possession in the Later Middle Ages," 2 vols. (Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Michigan, 1994). Caciola most clearly investigates the way in which Gerson's discernment treatises undermined the performance of sanctity by ascetic women visionaries by focusing upon comportment. See *Discerning Spirits*, 216 and 293–300. With respect to the related case of exorcism, see *Discerning Spirits*, 251–256 and 267–273. Elliott observes that in addition to using discernment treatises to undermine the authority of ascetic women visionaries, Gerson also authored "several treatises discrediting the sensory visions that were the cornerstone of female mysticism.," See *Proving Woman*, 274.

8. In other words, when looking at how Gerson's arguments contributed to a misogynist discourse, which is an important part of understanding how this discourse evolved, recourse to Gerson's intent, defense of other women, and case-by-case inconsistency, although crucial to any attempt to understand Gerson's character or motivations, is not relevant in the manner implied by his defenders. For such a defense of Gerson, see Anderson, "Gerson's Stance on Women," cited above.
9. The underlying assumption of a unified Church hierarchy is most clear in Caciola's suggestion that discernment treatises arose from the fear of church leaders that an effeminate age of leadership, represented by Brigit of Sweden and Catherine of Siena's influence over popes, although she does note that internal tensions within the Church, such as the secular-mendicant conflict and The Hundred Years War, may have influenced the discernment treatises of Pierre d'Ailly and Jean Gerson. See Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession*, 274–314, esp. 301–303. McNamara also suggests that Gerson's criticism of ascetic women visionaries resulted from their collaboration with the mendicant orders and "(t)he long resentment of the secular against the monastic clergy, particularly the mendicants." McNamara, however, notes that the mendicants also distanced themselves from these women and characterizes Gerson's efforts as "advancing the revived claims of hierarchy." See McNamara, "Rhetoric of Orthodoxy," 24–26. For a discussion of the challenges Gerson faced in promoting his own authority and a detailed discussion of the effects of secular-mendicant conflict on Gerson's thought and criticism of women visionaries, see Nancy McLoughlin, "Jean Gerson as Secular Priest and University Master", in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Leiden, 2006), 249–291; and "Universitas, Secular-Mendicant Conflict, and the Construction of Learned Male Authority in the Thought of John Gerson (1362–1429)," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2005).
10. Dyan Elliott has examined Gerson's critiques of women visionaries in relation to the broader intellectual questions raised by the use of inquisition procedures in the canonization of saints, the similarities between the medieval academic *disputation* and inquisition, and the uncertainty about religious knowledge in the aftermath of William of Ockham. She still suggests, however, that Gerson's discernment treatises circled "the wagons of clerical prerogative." See *Proving Woman*, esp. 272.
11. For connections between the university's claims to self-government and its claims to authority within the church and state see Alan Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair: University and Chancellor of Paris at the Beginning of the Great Schism*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 24. (Leiden: Brill, 1997).
12. For a vivid portrayal of how this context impinged upon the life of a single university leader, Gerson's mentor, Pierre d'Ailly, see Bernard Guenée, *Between Church and State: The Lives of Four French Prelates in the Late Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press), 169–258. For the ways in which feuding between the royal princes determined the ecclesiastical policy of the frequently mentally incapacitated King Charles VI, see Howard Kaminisky, "The Politics of France's

Subtraction of Obedience from Pope Benedict XIII," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 115, no. 5 (1971): 366–397.

13. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 726.
14. For the ways in which the subtraction crisis isolated Gerson and his allies within the university see, Guenée, *Between Church and State*, 189–201. For a discussion of Gerson's strategy for overcoming this isolation, see Chapter Two. For the suggestion that Gerson's discernment treatises partook in "a hostile male take-over" of women's space, see Elliott, *Proving Woman*, 275.
15. For the extensive nature of the claims d'Ailly made, see Douglass Taber, "Pierre d'Ailly and the Teaching Authority of the theologian," *Church History,* 59, no. 2 (1990): 163–174. Also, J.M.M.H. Thijssen, *Censure and Heresy at the University of Paris*, 1200–1400 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 107–112.
16. For the argument that Gerson's theological reform of the university emphasized contemplation over speculation as a means of addressing the political and epistemological crises the university faced, see Chapter 2. For the ways in which Gerson promoted the quiet reflective experiences of the isolated contemplative as a basis for trustworthy truth, see Lori Walters, "The Figure of the *seulette* in the Works of Christine de Pizan and Jean Gerson," in eds. *Desireuse de plus avant enquerre … Actes du VI^e^ Colloque international sur Christine de Pizan (Paris, 20–24 juillet 2006): Volume en hommage à James Laidlaw*, eds. Liliane Dulac, Anne Paupert, Christine Reno et Bernard Ribémont (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2008), 119–139.
17. Yelena Mazour-Matusevich, "Late Medieval 'Counseling': Jean Gerson (1363–1419) as a Family Pastor," *Journal of Family History,* 29 (2004): 153–167, and "Late Medieval Control of Masculinity: Jean Gerson," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique,* 98, no. 3–4 (2003): 418–437. This depiction of Gerson conforms to Barbara Newman's depiction of pastors of demoniacs acting as communally important counselors who helped disturbed individuals fit into their communities. See Newman, "Possessed by the Spirit," 740–749. It also conforms to Miri Rubin's portrayal of Gerson as someone concerned with mitigating the schism's effects on the practical concerns of everyday living. See Miri Rubin, "Europe Remade: Purity and Danger in Late Medieval Europe," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 11 (2001): 101–116.
18. For an earlier example of a brother benefiting from his role as spiritual advisor to a contemplatively minded sister, see Anne L. Clark, "Holy Woman or Unworthy Vessel? The Representations of Elisabeth of Schönau," in *Gendered Voices: Medieval Saints and their Interpreters*, ed. Catherine M. Mooney (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 35–51. For the classical roots of this tradition, see Kate Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA, 1996). For the various ways that the influential early Christian leaders Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome mobilized this tradition, see David G. Hunter, "The Virgin, the Bride, and the Church: Reading Psalm 45 in Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine," *Church History,* 69, no. 2 (2000): 281–303. For medieval uses of this tradition and the clerical tendency to become suspicious of those being advised, see Dyan Elliott, *Proving Woman*, and more concisely, "Women and Confession: From Empowerment to Pathology," in *Gendering the Master Narrative: Women and*

Power in the Middle Ages, ed. Mary C. Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 31–51.

19. Gerson, *De distinctione verarum revelatione a falsis*, in *Oeuvres* 3: 36–56.
20. Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 284.
21. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 3: 36–56. For Gerson's criticisms of foolish women, see 42–42, for the schism, see 43, for Gerson's encouragement towards the contemplative life, see 54–56. For additional support for this reading, see Dyan Elliott's reading of Gerson's second letter against Ruusbroec and the treatises he wrote about sensory visions at the Council of Constance. See Elliott, *Proving Woman*, 273–274.
22. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 3: 37 (*curiosus investigator*), 3: 54 (*mundani sapientes*), and 3: 56 (*saeculares saeculariter viventes*).
23. As discussed in Chapter 1. Also, see Ruth Mazo Karras, *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 75–83.
24. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 3: 38, 52, and 43.
25. Elliott, *Proving Woman*, 268.
26. Dyan Elliott, "Authorizing a Life: The Collaboration of Dorothea of Montau and John Marienwerder," in *Gendered Voices: Medieval Saints and their Interpreters*, ed. Catherine M. Mooney (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 168–191, esp. 90.
27. Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 296.
28. For Gerson's belief that the university should direct pastoral care for the rest of the church, see *Contra curiositatem studentium*, in *Oeuvres*, 3: 248–249, discussed in Chapter 2. For Gerson's assertion that obedience to the clergy indicated an absence of the deadly sin pride, see *Doctrinal aux simples gens*, in Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 10.2: 300–301. For a more detailed discussion of this text, see Nancy McLoughlin, "The Deadly Sins and Contemplative Politics: Gerson's Ordering of the Personal and Political Realms," in *Sin in Medieval and Early Modern Culture: The Tradition of the Seven Deadly Sins*, ed. Richard Newhauser and Susan Ridyard (Woodbridge, Suffolk: York Medieval Press, 2012), 132–156.
29. See Brian Patrick McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last European Reformation* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 291–295 and 316.
30. See Yelena Mazour-Matusevich, "Gerson's Legacy," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 371–375.
31. Jean Gerson, *Early Works*, ed. and trans., Brian Patrick McGuire (New York: Paulist Press, 1998), 455–456, no. 1.
32. Brian Patrick McGuire, "Jean Gerson and Traumas of Masculine Affectivity and Sexuality," in *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West*, ed. Jacqueline Murray (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1999), 51-–58.
33. Peter Brown, "Asceticism: Pagan and Christian", in *The Late Empire, AD 337–425*, ed. Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey, The Cambridge Ancient History vol. 13 (Cambridge, 2000), 601–631.
34. Mary Edsall, "Like Wise Master Builders: Jean Gerson's Ecclesiology, *Lectio Divina*, and Christine de Pizan's *Livre de la Cité des Dames*," *Medievalia et Humanistica*, N.S. 27 (2000), 33-–56
35. This seems to be especially true for these early works, such as Gerson's *Contra curiositatem studentium*, written at the same time as Gerson's treatise

on true and false revelations. See Daniel Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity before Print: Jean Gerson and the Transformation of Late Medieval Learning* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 197–203, and 287, no. 28; and Gilbert Ouy, "Le Célestin Jean Gerson: Copiste et éditeur de son frère," in *La colaboration dans la production de l'écrite médiéval* (Actes du XIIIe Colloque international de paléographie latine, Weingarten, Septembre 22–25, 2000), ed. Herrad Spilling (Paris, 2003), 281–308 and plates 71–79.

36. This dependence might explain the desperate tone of Gerson's letters to his brother Nicolas, who left Gerson in Paris to join the Celestine order in 1401, right as Gerson was trying to re-establish his authority and beginning to promote his innovative mystical reform of theology. For an analysis of Gerson's struggle with Nicholas's absence, see McGuire, "Jean Gerson and Traumas," 51–54. For the reason why I am portraying Gerson as much less secure at the time of writing this treatise than has usually been the case, see Chapter 2. Compare, Brian Caiger, "Doctrine and Discipline in the Church of Jean Gerson," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 41, no. 3 (1990): 396.
37. Gerson was opposed to the other candidates for canonization put forward by the Swedish delegation and also to the canonization of Catherine of Siena. See Brian Caiger, "Doctrine and Discipline in the Church of Jean Gerson," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 41, no. 3 (1990): 391.
38. For the admission that Bridget's visions have already gained enough support to make censuring them a dangerous proposal for the council, see Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 9: 179. For the controversy surrounding her visions and canonization, see Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 278 & 310, no. 90.
39. Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 284–309.
40. Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 298.
41. Pierre d'Ailly, *Super omnia vincit veritas*, ed. Alan E. Bernstein in *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair: University and Chancellor of Paris at the Beginning of the Great Schism* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 244-–245. For Bernstein's discussion of this passage, see pages, 159–160. Douglass Taber suggests that d'Ailly emphasized the hierarchical ordination of theologians through the granting of the license because the issue his treatise addressed was the university chancellor's authority to license students to teach. See Taber, "Pierre d'Ailly,"167.
42. Bernstein, *Pierre D'Ailly and the Blanchard Affair*, 150–176, esp. 159.
43. D'Ailly, *Super omnia vincit veritas*, 246.
44. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 3: 42.
45. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 9: 178.
46. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 9: 175–180.
47. Monica Green, Women's Medical Practice and Health Care in Medieval Europe, *Signs* 14, no. 2 Working Together in the Middle Ages: Perspectives on Women's Communities (1989): 447–448.
48. Gerson, *Adorabunt eum*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 531–532.
49. Gerson, *De probatione spirituum*, in Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 9:180–185. For a detailed analysis of this method see Nancy Caciola, "Discerning Spirits: Sanctity and Possession in the Later Middle Ages," 345–361. Also see William Christian, *Apparitions in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 192–201.
50. Gerson, *De probatione spirituum*, in Glorieux, *Oeuvres complètes*, 180–185.
51. Elliott, "Seeing Double," 33–34.

52. Gerson, *Vivat rex*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1138
53. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1144–1145.
54. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2. 1169. For the connection between finery and immorality made by contemporary sources as well as a catalogue of Queen Isabeau's expensive accessories, see Rachel Gibbons, "Isabeau of Bavaria, Queen of France (1385–1422): The Creation of an Historical Villainess: The Alexander Prize Essay," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, 6 (1996): 64–65. For the external pressures that encouraged the queen to value such finery, see Rachel Gibbons, "The Queen as 'social mannequin'. Consumerism and expenditure at the Court of Isabeau of Bavaria, 1393-1422," *Journal of Medieval History*, 26, no. 4 (2000): 371-395.
55. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1112.
56. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 9: 180.
57. See note 23 above.
58. Gerson, *De examinatione spirituum*, in *Oeuvres*, 9: 458–475, esp. 465ff.
59. See *De distinctione verarum visionionem a falsis*, in *Oeuvres*, 3: 43.
60. Caiger, "Doctrine and Discipline," 396.
61. For Gerson see previous chapters. For Catherine, see Karen Scott, "St. Catherine of Siena, 'Apostola'," *Church History,* 61, no. 1 (1992): 34–46.
62. For Catherine's ability to negotiate in the War of Eight Saints, see F. Thomas Luongo, *The Saintly Politics of Catherine of Siena* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006).
63. For Gerson's use of sin, see "The Deadly Sins and Contemplative Politics: Gerson's Ordering of the Personal and Political Realms," in *Sin in Medieval and Early Modern Culture: The Tradition of the Seven Deadly Sins*, ed. Richard Newhauser and Susan Ridyard. (Woodbridge, Suffolk: York Medieval Press, 2012), 132–156. For his nationalism, see Daisy J. Delogu, "The King's Two Daughters: Isabelle of France, and the University of Paris, Fille du Roy," *Republics of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts,* 3, no. 2 (November 15, 2013): 11–20, accessed June 6, 2014, http://arcade.stanford.edu/rofl/king%E2%80%99s-two-daughters-isabelle-france-and-university-paris -fille-du-roy-0. Gerson's crusade rhetoric has not yet been addressed, but can be found in several of his sermons on the schism. For instance, see Gerson, *Adorabunt eum*, *Accipietis virtutem*, and *Vivat rex*, in Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 442, 532, and 1182–1183. For Catherine's use of crusade rhetoric and appeals to an Italian identity, see Luongo, *Saintly Politics*, 157–202.
64. Catherine's confessor, Raymond of Capua, represented her as Wisdom. See Karen Scott, "'Io Catarina': Ecclesiastical Politics and Oral Culture in the Letters of Catherine of Siena," *Dear Sister: Medieval Women and the Epistolary Genre* (1993): 94–95.
65. For Catherine, see Luongo, *Saintly Politics*, 63–89; and Karen Scott, "'Io Catarina'," 87–121.
66. Luongo, *Saintly Politics*, 69–71.
67. See Howard Kaminsky, "The Politics of France's Subtraction of Obedience from Pope Benedict XIII, 27 July, 1398," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* 115, no. 5 (1971): 366–397.
68. Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 281–283.

69. For the actions John the Fearless took to punish Gerson for denouncing his excuse for having Louis of Orléans killed, see McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation*, 252–258 and 267.
70. McNamara, "The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy," 24–25.
71. 2 Timothy 3: 1–7. For the author of 2 Timothy's use of this phrase against competitors, see Dennis MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983), 57–77. For the tradition of womanly influence which establishes the sexual insinuations this type of argument carried, see Kate Cooper, "Insinuations of Womanly Influence: An Aspect of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy," *Journal of Roman Studies* 82 (1992): 151–164. Also see Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride,* 50–52 and 110. For Jerome's use of this tradition against his competitors see Jerome's *Epistle 22*, in *Select Letters of St. Jerome*, ed. and trans. Frederick Adam Wright, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1933), 52–159. For a discussion of this letter in relation to 2 Timothy, see Daniel Caner, "Nilus of Ancyra and the Promotion of a Monastic Elite," *Arethusa,* 33 (2000): 400–410. For Hildegard's use of this tradition to prophesize about heretics that would come to Cologne, see Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, "Prophecy and Suspicion: Closet Radicalism, Reformist Politics, and the Vogue for Hildegardiana in Ricardian England," *Speculum,* 75, no. 2 (2000): 318–341; and Penn Szittya, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986). Marc M. Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint–Amour et la Polemique Universitaire Parisienne: 1250–1259* (Paris, 1972), 6–9.
72. For a summary of the conflict, see R.N. Swanson, "The 'Mendicant Problem' in the Later Middle Ages," in *The Medieval Church: Universities, Heresy, and the Religious Life: Essays in Honor of Gordon Leff*, ed. Peter Biller and Barrie Dobson (Suffolk, 1999), 217–238. For a summary of the conflict's role in the formation of the university and the alliance between the university and the Northern French prelates see Alan Bernstein, "Magisterium and License," *Viator,* 9 (1978): 291– 309. For the effects of the conflict on medieval ecclesiology, see Yves Congar, "Aspects Ecclésiologiques de la querelle entre mendiants et séculiers dans la seconde moitié du XIIIe siècle et le debut du XIVe," *AHDLMA,* 35 (1960): 32–151. For the effects of the secular-mendicant conflict on the portrayal of mendicants in medieval literature and poetry, see Szittya, *The Antifraternal Tradition*.
73. See Chapter 2.
74. Brian Patrick McGuire suggests the sermon was delivered 29 April 1408 at a diocesan synod in Reims. See McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation*, 358.
75. Gerson refers to the synod itself in this quote, but this pastoral imagery remains consistent throughout the sermon. See Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 5: 123.
76. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 5: 127.
77. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 5: 143.
78. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 8: 54.
79. Decima L. Douie, *The Conflict between the Seculars and the Mendicants at the University of Paris in the thirteenth Century. A paper read to the Aquinas Society of London on 22nd June, 1949*, (London: Blackfriars, 1954), 9.
80. Douie, *Conflict between the Seculars and Mendicants*, 15.

81. The issue of partial subtraction advocated by the university in 1395 concerned the preservation of clerical immunities from papal taxation. See Kaminsky, "The Politics of France's Subtraction," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* 115, no. 5 (1971): 366–397. Also, the renewed interest in subtraction derived from Benedict's determination to tax the university along with the rest of the clergy. See Guenée, *Between Church and State*, 201–202.
82. Gorrel's retraction has been published in the collected works of Jean Gerson as "Erreurs de John Gorrel," in Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 10, 32–34. Other documents pertaining the censure and ensuing conflict include: H.S. Denifle and E. Chatelain, ed., *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1889–1891) [hereafter CUP] IV:161–178, nos. 1863, 1864, 1868, 1871, 1874, and 1880.
83. For the papal decree, *Regnans in excelsis*, see CUP IV: 165–168, no.1868.
84. 2 Tim 3:1–7. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7b: 991.
85. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, *De statu papae et minorum praelatorum*, in Glorieux, *Oeuvres complètes*, 9: 35.
86. For a discussion of the Gorrel affair and its consequences, see R.N. Swanson, "The 'Mendicant Problem' in the Later Middle Ages," in *The Medieval Church: Universities, Heresy, and the Religious Life: Essays in Honour of Gordon Leff*, ed. Peter Biller and Barrie Dobson, Studies in Church History 11 (Woodbridge, NY:, Suffolk and Rochester, NY, 1999), pp. 231–232. For a more detailed discussion of Gerson's involvement in this conflict as part of his promotion of the university's authority, see McLoughlin, "Gerson as Secular Priest" 281-–291; and "Personal Narrative and the Systematization of Knowledge in the Thought of Jean Gerson", *Mediaevalia,* 29, no. 1 (2008): 83–107.
87. Vauchez, *Sainthood in the later Middle Ages*, 85–123.
88. Vauchez, *Sainthood in the later Middle Ages*, 85–103.
89. P.C. Catherine of Siena, ed. M.H. Laurent, *Il processo castellano* (Milan, 1942), 9
90. P.C. Catherine of Siena, 9–10
91. Sara Poor, "Mechtild von Magdeburg, Gender, and the 'Unlearned Tongue'," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies,* 31,: 2 (2001),: 213–230.
92. Poor, "Mechtild von Magdeburg, Gender, and the 'Unlearned Tongue'," 230–232.
93. Poor, "Mechtild von Magdeburg, Gender, and the 'Unlearned Tongue'," 232–238.
94. See Chapter 2.
95. The term "spiritually ambitious women" is Dyan Elliott's. See *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality and Demonology in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), Chapter 2. For the language of 'brides of Christ,' see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1992); Barbara Newman, "La mystique courtoise: Thirteenth-century Beguines and the Art of Love," in *From Virile Woman to Woman Christ* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 137–167; and Elizabeth Robertson, "The Corporeality of Female Sanctity in the Life of Saint Margaret," in *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe*, ed. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), 268–287.

96. John Coakley, "Friars as Confidants of Holy Women in Medieval Dominican Hagiography," in *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe*, 222–246; and "Gender and the Authority of Friars: The Significance of Holy Women for Thirteenth-Century Franciscans and Dominicans," *Church History,* 60 (1991): 445–460. For a broader examination of the collaboration between contemplative women and clerical advisers that occurred throughout the Middle Ages and also across different types of clergy, see John Wayland Coakley, *Women, Men, and Spiritual Power: Female Saints and their Male Collaborators*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006). Also see the essays included in Catherine M. Mooney, *Gendered Voices*.
97. Gerson, *De probatione spirituum*, in *Oeuvres*, 9: 184.
98. Both Dyan Elliott and Nancy Caciola come to the same conclusion about Gerson's treatment of the fasting housewife from Arras in *De distinctione verarum revelationum a falsis*. See note Elliott, *Discerning Spirits*, 268 and 296. The difference here, however is that Gerson discredited women as a class in *De probatione spirituum*. Moshe Sluhovsky, "Discernment of Difference, the Introspective Subject, and the Birth of Modernity," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 36, no. 1 (2006): 180-1. Nancy Caciola follows my reading here. See Caciola, *Discernment of Spirits*, 301, n. 69 and 305.
99. For example, Margaret of Cortona's spiritual advisor fell under suspicion from his fellow Franciscans and the entire order distanced itself from her after the public performances of Christ's passion undertaken by this woman, who had a questionable sexual past, became too extreme. See Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 98-–113.
100. For Gerson's concerns regarding the sexual temptation female penitents presented to their confessors, see Dyan Elliott, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 14-–60.
101. Gerson, *De probatione spirituum*, in Glorieux, *Oeuvres complètes*, 9: 181–182.
102. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 9: 182–184.
103. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 9: 182–183.
104. Pascoe, *Principles of Church Reform*, 11.
105. G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes, *Jean Gerson Apostle of Unity: His Church Politics and Ecclesiology*, trans. J.C. Grayson (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 317–318.
106. Catherine and Bridget may have been denounced by Gregory IX during his deathbed lament regarding his unsuccessful return to Rome at the beginning of the schism. See Jo Ann McNamara, "The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy: Clerical Authority and Female Innovation in the Struggle with Heresy," in *Maps of Flesh and Light: The Religious Experience of Medieval Women Mystics*, ed. Ulrike Wiethaus (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 25.
107. Kaminsky "The Politics of France's Subtraction," 367.
108. Gerson, *De probatione spirituum*, in Gerson, *Oeuvres complètes*, 182.
109. Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*.
110. Gerson, *De probatione spirituum*, 9.
111. Wendy Love Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits: Assessing Visions and Visionaries in the late Middle Ages* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 207.
112. See Karen Scott, 'Io Catarina', 91–94.
113. See Karen Scott, "Mystical Death, Bodily Death: Catherine of Siena and Raymond of Capua on the Mystic's Encounter with God," in *Gendered Voices*, 136–167.

114. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 3: 44–45.
115. Gerson, *Pax vobis*, 779–793. For a discussion of this sermon in the context of the schism, see Meyjes, *Apostle of Unity*, 37–38. Also, see Mourin *Jean Gerson, prédicateur français*, 91–100.
116. See Brown, "Asceticism: Pagan and Christian," and Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride*.
117. Tamar Herzig, "Witches, Saints, and Heretics: Heinrich Kramer's Ties with Italian Women Mystics," *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft,* (2006): 24–55.
118. Moshe Sluhovsky, "Discernment of Difference, the Introspective Subject, and the Birth of Modernity," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies,* 36, no. 1 (2006): 181.
119. For this long tradition and the problems of communal truth claims that it addressed, see Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*.
120. Sluhovsky, "Discernment," 182–189.

Conclusion

1. For the argument that Gerson's discernment treatises always produced a negative result as demonstrated by the execution of the visionary he supported, Joan of Arc, see Dyan Elliott, "Seeing Double: John Gerson, the Discernment of Spirits, and Joan of Arc," *American Historical Review,* 107 (2002): 40, 43–54. For the argument that Joan's execution was political and that those who executed her were also Gerson's enemies, see Daniel Hobbins, "Jean Gerson's Authentic Tract on Joan of Arc: *Super facto puellae et credulitate sibi praestanda* (14 may 1429)," *Mediaeval Studies,* 67 (2005): 120.
2. Alain Boureau, "La censure dans les universités médiévales: note critique," *Annales HSS,* no. 3 (March–April, 2000): 321.
3. Gregory IX, *Parens scientiarum*, in CUP I, no. 79: 137. For a detailed discussion of this bull in comparison with contemporary monastic ideals of comportment, see Ian Wei, "From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-century Universities: The Disappearance of Biographical and Autobiographical Representation of Scholars, *Speculum* 86, (2011): 72.
4. For an excellent discussion of how theologians grappled with the tension between learned and revealed authority, see Ian Christopher Levy, *Holy Scripture and the Quest for Authority at the End of the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), esp. 1–53. For a concise discussion Augustine's views on this subject, see Margaret Miles, "Vision: The Eye of the Body and the Eye of the Mind in Saint Augustine's *De trinitate* and *Confessions*," *The Journal of Religion,* 63, no. 2 (1983): 125–142. For the widespread, learned, and hierarchically sanctioned emergence of twelfth-century female visionary asceticism, see Dyan Elliott, *Proving Woman: Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), esp. 49–84. For the Cistercian encouragement of laywomen's visionary culture, see Barbara Newman, "What Did it Mean to Say ''I Saw''? The Clash between Theory and Practice in Medieval Visionary Culture," *Speculum,* 80, no. 1 (2005): 25–26.
5. Ian P. Wei, "From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-century Universities: The Disappearance of Biographical and Autobiographical Representation of

Scholars," *Speculum,* 86, (2011): 42–78; and Nathalie Gorochov, *Naissance de l''université: Les écoles de paris d'Innocent III à Thomas d'Aquin* (v. 1200–v.1245). Also, Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1982), 82–109.

6. Lester K. Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978); William Courtenay, "The Instructional Programme of the Mendicant Convents a Paris in the Early Fourteenth Century," in *The Medieval Church: Universities, Heresy, and the Religious Life: Essays in Honour of Gordon Leff*, ed. Peter Biller and Barrie Dobson (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1999), 77–92; Tanya Stabler Miller, *The Beguines of Medieval Paris: Gender, Patronage, and Spiritual Authority* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); and Nathalie Gorochov, *Le Collège de Navarre: de sa foundation (1305) au début du IVe siècle (1418): histoire de l'institution, de sa vie intellectuelle et de son recrutement* (Paris: H. Champion, 1997).
7. Tanya Stabler Miller, "What's in a Name? Clerical Representations of Parisian Beguines (1200–1328), *Journal of Medieval History,* 33 (2007): 60–86.
8. Sara Poor, "Mechtild von Magdeburg, Gender, and the 'Unlearned Tongue'," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies,* 31: 2 (2001),: 213–230.
9. F. Thomas Luongo, *The Saintly Politics of Catherine of Siena* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006).
10. See Anne L. Clark, "Holy Woman or Unworthy Vessel? The Representations of Elisabeth of Schönau," in *Gendered Voices: Medieval Saints and their Interpreters*, ed. Catherine M. Mooney (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 35–51, and John Wayland Coakley, *Women, Men, and Spiritual Power: Female Saints and their Male Collaborators*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).
11. For a detailed discussion of these treatises focusing on the theological problem of prophecy, see Wendy Love Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits: Assessing Visions and Visionaries in the late Middle Ages* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 159–189. For a discussion of these treatises from the perspective of the communal problem raised by female prophets that pays attention to the complex ways that gender intersects with power structures and shapes experiences, see Nancy Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages*. Conjunctions of Religion & Power in the Medieval Past (Ithaca, Cornell University Press: 2003), 284–309.
12. Gerson, *Factum est*, in *Oeuvres*, 5: 319, cited in Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits*, 183.
13. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 5: 315.
14. For the idea that Gerson resumed his post as chancellor because the canons of the Cathedral in Bruges did not cooperate with his reform plans, see Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits*, 179. Gerson blamed Philip the Bold for his return to Paris. See McGuire, *Last Medieval Reformation*, 113.
15. Also, G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes, *Jean Gerson Apostle of Unity: His Church Politics and Ecclesiology*, trans. J.C. Grayson (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 69–94; Brian Patrick McGuire, "Late Medieval Care and Control of Women: Jean Gerson and his Sisters," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 92, no. 1 (1997): 5–37; Yelena Mazour-Matusevich, "Late Medieval ''Counseling'': Jean Gerson (1363–1419) as a Family Pastor," *Journal of Family History,* 29 (2004): 153–167.

16. For the extent of the political isolation imposed upon the supporters of Pope Benedict XIII during the subtraction of obedience, see Bernard Guenée, *Between Church and State: The Lives of Four French Prelates in the Late Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press), 178–201.
17. See F. Thomas Luongo, *The Saintly Politics of Catherine of Siena* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006); Karen Scott, "'Io Catarina': Ecclesiastical Politics and Oral Culture in the Letters of Catherine of Siena." in *Dear Sister: Medieval Women and the Epistolary Genre,* ed. Karen Cherewatuk and Ulrike Wiethaus, (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 87–121; and Joan Isobel Friedman, "Politics and the Rhetoric of Reform in the Letters of Saints Bridget of Sweden and Catherine of Siena," in *Livres et lectures de femmes en Europe entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance*, ed. Anne-Marie Legaré (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007), 279–294.
18. Gorochov, *Le Collège de Navarre,* 125–144.
19. For d'Ailly's admiration of Saint Dominic, see Guenée, *Between Church and State*, 160. For Gerson's admiration of the Franciscan theologian, Saint Bonaventure, see Brian Patrick McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 29.
20. For the crucial role played by Gerson's experiment with advising laywomen in his theological reform, see Chapter 2. For the popularity of his sermons, see Daniel Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity Before Print: Jean Gerson and the Transformation of Late Medieval Learning*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 158.
21. For examples of how Gerson was consulted on matters of pastoral care during his life, see Daniel Hobbins, "Gerson on Lay Devotion," in *A Companion to Jean Gerson*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 41–78. For a detailed discussion of the extent to which Gerson influenced later European religious and political thought, see Yelena Mazour-Matusevich, "Gerson's Legacy," 357–399. For a discussion of how individual thinkers and printers promoted the circulation of his works in Germany, see Yelena Mazour-Matusevich, "Jean Gerson (1363–1429) and the formation of German national identity," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 101, no. 3–4 (2006): 963–987. For the popularity of his sermons, see Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity Before Print,* 158.
22. For the extent that Gerson's writings shaped late medieval lay piety, see Hobbins, "Gerson on Lay Devotion," 70.
23. Gerson, *Contra curiositatem studentium*, in Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres complètes*, 10 vols. in 11, ed. Palémon Glorieux (Paris, Tournai, Rome: Desclée, 1960–1973), 3: 248–249.
24. Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity Before Print*, 40–45, 55, 116–119, 184–185; and Newman, "What Did it Mean to Say ''I Saw''?" *Speculum,* 80, no. 1 (2005): 25–33.
25. For instance, a popular medieval conduct book expresses the husband's concern with how his wife performs her confession in accordance with the deadly sins as well as how she performs her household duties. See Georgine E. Brereton and Janet M. Ferrier, eds. *Le Menagier de Paris* (Oxford, 1981), esp. 20–46. For a discussion of the urban attempt to control women as a means of

constructing masculine bourgeois authority, see Roberta L. Krueger, "Identity Begins at Home: Female Conduct and the Failure of Counsel in *Le Menagier de Paris*," *Essays in Medieval Studies,* 22 (2005): 21–39.

26. For a detailed discussion of how Gerson's concerns about lay devotion sought to order and place under clerical supervision an uncontrolled flowering of lay devotion, see Daniel Hobbins, "Gerson on Lay Devotion."
27. André Vauchez, *Sainthood in the later Middle Ages*, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 85–123.
28. Gerson, *Puer natus est*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 958; and *De distinctione visionem verarum a falsis*, in *Oeuvres*, 3: 32.
29. For this reading of Gregory, see Carole Straw, "Gregory, Cassian, and the Cardinal Vices," in *In the Garden of Evil: The Vices and Culture in the Middle Ages. Papers in Medieval Studies* 18, ed. Richard Newhauser (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2005), 48–50.
30. Gerson, *Quomodo stabit regnum*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 978–992.
31. See Chapters 1 and 4.
32. Gerson, *Vivat rex*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1146.
33. See Chapter 1 and Chapter 4.
34. Douglass Taber, "Pierre d'Ailly and the Teaching Authority of the theologian," *Church History,* 59, no. 2 (1990): 163–174. For the intersection of Pseudo-Dionysian ecclesiology and secular-mendicant conflict, see Yves Congar, "Aspects Ecclésiologiques de la querelle entre mendiants et séculiers dans la seconde moitié du XIIIe siècle et le debut du XIVe," *AHDLMA,* 35 (1960): 32–151; Marc M. Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour et la Polemique Universitaire Parisienne: 1250–1259* (Paris: Picard, 1972);
35. Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity*, 45–49 and 58; Jean Gerson, *De examinatione spirituum*, in *Oeuvres*, 9: 458–475.
36. Howard Kaminsky, "The Politics of France's Subtraction of Obedience from Pope Benedict XIII, 27 July, 1398," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* 115, no. 5 (1971): 366–397; and Guenée, *Between Church and State*, 169–258.
37. Wendy Love Anderson suggests this opposition but does not fully explore its consequences. See Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits*, 125–224.
38. Paris, BnF. ms. fr. 24841. For a discussion of this manuscript and the collection of Gerson's works in the Abby of Saint Victor, see Danièle Calvot and Gilbert Ouy, *L'oeuvre de Gerson à Saint-Victor de Paris: Catalogue des manuscrits* (Paris: CNRS, 1990).
39. For the multiple challenges late medieval theologians faced in attempting to construct a solid basis of authority, see Levy, *Holy Scripture and the Quest for Authority at the End of the Middle Ages*, esp. 1–53.
40. Gerson, *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 726.
41. For a discussion of how visionaries expressed a willingness to be damned for the sake of saving other Christians or even demonstrating how much their love of God had overcome their love of self, see Barbara Newman, *From Virile Woman to Woman Christ: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 158–167.
42. See Gerson, *Vivat rex* and *Veniat pax*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1137–1185, esp. 1138, and 1100–1123.
43. See Gerson, *Vivat rex*, in *Oeuvres*, 7.2: 1138.

44. For a detailed discussion of other such figures that pulled together disparate identity characteristics with the effect of authenticating a new political or social reality, see Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Medieval Identity Machines* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2003).
45. For the general tendency for medieval women to express truths they might have learned in books as revelations as a means of avoiding censure from male clerical authorities, see Barbara Newman, "Hildegard of Bingen: Visions and Validation," *Church History,* 54, no. 2 (1985): 163–175 and Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker, "The Metamorphosis of Woman: Transmission of Knowledge and the Problems of Gender," *Gender and History,* 12, no. 3 (2000): 642–664. For hagiographical efforts to portray Catherine as less intelligent and learned than she actually was, see Karen Scott, "'Io Catarina'," 91–94
46. Ian Christopher Levy, "Holy Scripture and the Quest for Authority among Three Late Medieval Masters," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 61, no. 1 (2110): 40–68.
47. For the argument that Gerson's approval of Joan reflected his French patriotism, see Jo Ann McNamara, "The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy," in *Maps of Flesh and Light: The Religious Experience of Medieval Women Mystics*, ed. Ulrike Wiethaus (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 26.

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