

Allegories of Power

The Tournament of Vices and Virtues in the *Roman de Fauvel* (BN MS Fr. 146)*

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Abstract

While mythological characters of ancient history and legend glorify the medieval prince, the female figures of Classical personification allegory carry the weight of moral exhortation and political advice in medieval political discourse. The Tournament of Vices and Virtues staged by Chaillou de Pesstain in the expanded version of the *Roman de Fauvel* in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr. 146 (ca. 1317) is a showy political *admonitio* addressed to Philip V. Music, miniatures, and text are manipulated within the spatial values of a dynamic nine-folio page layout to represent a moral and political spectacle within a well-delineated framework of space and time. Details of jousting protocol and armor appealed to contemporary taste for chivalric feats while the armed female Virtues and Vices recall other representations of women knights. Inversion of gender roles, moreover, takes on moral meaning in the context of the *Fauvel*, where hybrid forms symbolize the opposition of right and wrong. Represented as despicable figures in other sections of the Paris fr. 146 *Fauvel* through stock images of moral discourse, the Vices are recast in the tournament as impressive chivalric warriors to convey political counsel. Historical reference is suggested by selection of specific vices and contextualization of the Tournament of Vices and Virtues in Paris and in 1316; it is confirmed by compilation in Paris fr. 146 of the *Fauvel* with topical poems by Geoffroi de Paris and an anonymous metrical chronicle for the years 1300–1316. Personification allegory thus joins historical circumstance to moral generalization to display the legitimate foundations of political power.

Political eloquence often seeks to engage and convince its hearers by casting its principles in the great drama of right against wrong and investing contemporaries with the mantle of mythological heroes. When medieval political discourse sought to express its aims and to bring its force to bear on events, it adopted a strongly moral configuration, appropriating to its own use exemplary figures from the past, especially those that had the resonance of grandeur, the prestige of ancient mythology. The Middle Ages inherited from Classical antiquity three types of mythological characters: there were the heroes and gods of its pagan legends—Apollo, Venus—and there were the historical individuals of heroic stature—Alexander, Caesar. No ancient myths, how-

ever, spoke more vividly to the medieval imagination than the pantheon of ancient personification allegories, conceived within a Christianizing context, the great female presences that spring not from legend or history but from language itself: the goddess Fortuna, Boethius' noble Philosophy, the epic women warriors in Prudentius' *Psychomachia*.

These three types of myth, however, served rather different functions within medieval political discourse. Poets and painters often drew comparisons with the mythological male heroes of legend and history when they composed panegyrics to contemporary princes.¹ Images of Clovis, Charlemagne, and Louis IX were manipulated in manuscript illustrations to legitimize dynastic claims to the French crown.² However, a medieval moralist charged with composing a piece focussed on political issues of right and wrong rather than celebrating the prince was more apt to turn to the feminine figures of Classical personification allegory. This is because mythological gods and heroes are something like politicians; they have glory, but they come with particular stories whose moral value is often dubious. The gods of Greece and Rome cannot be so easily separated from tales of divine hanky-panky that often required intensive "moralization" to yield a meaning satisfactory to medieval readers. Heroes of imperial Greece and Rome such as Caesar are splendid, but their stories are complex and often morally indeterminate.

The figures of Classical allegory, on the other hand, offer no such difficulties: they are inseparable from their high-minded moral definition. They have no troublesome story requiring interpretation; their characters have no inconvenient flaws to transcend. The graceful female characters of personification allegory carry philosophical debate and moral exhortation with equal ease. The moral meaning of personifications remains stable (and therefore useful to political discourse) because it is inseparable from the concepts embodied, the words personified. Moreover, Prudentius' *Psychomachia*, the battle of Vices and Virtues for the soul, offered medieval authors a prestigious Classical model for staging the struggle of good versus evil. Such figures, therefore, were central to the discourse of moral and political admonition that counseled the prince in the principles of right reign. It is the political use of these myths of allegorical

personification in medieval France that is examined here, glorious myths not of legend, but of language, and whose figures of power were not male but female.

The Tournament of Vices and Virtues staged in the version of the early fourteenth-century satirical *Roman de Fauvel* contained in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale ms fr. 146 is a spectacularly showy example of a political *admonitio* where allegorical personifications are used to present lessons in kingship.³ Paris fr. 146, compiled around 1317, also contains eight poems of topical political commentary by Geffroi de Paris in French and Latin,⁴ a collection of French love lyrics by Jehannot de Lescurel,⁵ and an anonymous *Chronique métrique* of the Kingdom of France between 1300–1316.⁶ A popular allegorical satire, the *Roman de Fauvel* tells of the evil horse of hypocrisy, Fauvel, the beast enthroned, who rules over the world of men who reveal their greed and falseness by currying him—whence our modern expression “to curry favor.” Extensively reworked in Paris fr. 146 by a member of the royal administration named “mesire Chaillou de Pesstain,”⁷ the satirical romance was transformed into a festive processional piece by the insertion of 169 musical compositions with Latin and French texts, the whole illustrated by 77 miniatures closely integrated with the narrative satire and its musical interpolations. Most importantly, Chaillou de Pesstain interpolated a lengthy narrative addition dated 1316 to the second of the two original books of the *Roman de Fauvel* dated respectively 1310 and 1314 and written (at least Book II) by Gervès du Bus, a notary in the royal court. Chaillou’s narrative addition describes the pageantry celebrating the marriage of Fauvel to Vainglory. There is an allegorical banquet of prim Virtues and unruly drunken Vices and a noisy rude parade or charivari to salute the wedding night. The main event of the festivities, however, is the splendid allegorical Tournament of Vices and Virtues which provides a dramatic climax to what Chaillou called his *additions* to the *Roman*.

Spectacular shows such as tournaments, royal entries, and festive banquets were by no means limited to live performance. Medieval festive processions were “composite art forms” whose program of parades, feasting and entertainments could also be conceived and executed as a fresco, tapestry, or painting, or recounted as a narrative in a chronicle or romance.⁸ Political power, moreover, has always been inseparable from such festive display, for parades are political discourse in a processional form. Moreover, allegorical personifications were easily integrated into such processional performances, for these are not mere abstractions but figures who could be imagined or represented as characters in fictional settings or even represented by individuals wearing costumes in real spectacles and ceremonial cortèges. Contemporary tournaments were thus often costumed with the fables and characters of romance fictions or ancient myth:⁹ participants acted out Arthurian legends at

the great tournament at Le Hem-sur-Somme in 1278, where the brother of Louis IX, Robert II of Artois, was costumed as the Knight with the Lion;¹⁰ in 1326 joustiers in Hainaut dressed as the Nine Worthies and in 1362 seven knights jostled dressed as the Seven Deadly Sins.¹¹ The allegorical tournament in Paris fr. 146 thus reflects the popularity of such costumed pageants while it exploits for political purposes the potential for moral drama inherent in the agonistic structure of the tournament.

The Tournament of Vices and Virtues is one of the most voluminous elements in Chaillou’s narrative additions; it fills nine rectos and versos (fol. 37–41), some ten percent of the expanded version of the *Roman de Fauvel* in Paris fr. 146. It is also the most profusely illustrated: there are thirteen scenes, eight of which are grouped in large-format ensembles that increase in size from one quarter to one third to three quarters of the page surface. These paintings, together with the text and musical pieces that accompany them, represent the sights, sounds, and movements of a great spectacle within a well-delineated framework of space and time while they develop its moral significance.

Painted images of onlookers and an active narrator-witness in the text link the reader’s gaze to the spectacle that unfolds on facing pages. On fol. 36v (Fig. 1) can be seen the last raucous rhythms of the nocturnal charivari protesting the infernal marriage of Fauvel with Vainglory.¹² The triple registers of this large miniature create an impression of throngs of revelers wearing grotesque animal masks, shaggy costumes or cavorting in obscene nakedness. Images of loud noise, described in verse earlier in the text accompany the procession: drums beat in every compartment, three in the center alone, while a bell clangs top left and wheelbarrows groan (La. vv. 705–34).¹³ Immediately after the final lines of the melodious lai, “En ce dous temps” (p. mus. 90), which spreads across two columns at the upper left, boisterous *sotes chançons* (foolish songs) erupt above and below the illustration and continue into the right column C: “Sus, sus, a la dance d’Ermenion; Nous ferons des prelaz gorpiz et des larrons mestres; Si ie n’i aloie ie n’iroie mie, etc.” (SC 10–12; Up and away to Ermenion’s dance; We’ll make prelates of foxes and masters of thieves; If I didn’t go I wouldn’t go, etc.).¹⁴ The essential role of parade spectators is filled by niche figures in the architectural frame who, in Paris fr. 146, appear only in the processional miniatures of the charivari and tournament scenes. The dress of the female spectators brings out by contrast the disguise of women’s clothing worn by two maskers (the second figure from the left in both the top and bottom bands); the calmly stylized gestures of these onlookers contrast with the wild antics of the passing parade, whose text description ends with a statement that Fauvel enjoyed his wedding night undisturbed by the rowdy charivari (La. vv. 761–70).

Temporal progression from night to day—and moral movement from evil towards good¹⁵—is suggested by a



FIGURE 1. *End of the charivari*. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale ms fr. 146, fol. 36v (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

description of dawn in col. C, a pretty *reverdie* where the skylark and goldfinch trumpet the break of day earlier than the minstrels to celebrate the fair season of *amour loial* (La. vv. 771–98; faithful love). Dimensions of urban space are amplified by images of large edifices and by the movements of the clerical narrator who steps to the foreground on fol. 37 (Fig. 2). Throughout the allegorical tournament the narrator is an active and responsive inscribed spectator who even appears in the first scene.¹⁶ In the text he scurries around Paris, taking the ferry back and forth across the Seine to view the lists constructed for the tournament in the great meadow that lies, as he tells us, before Saint-Germain-des-Prés between the city walls and the river. There he meets the Vices emerging from their all-night vigil, mounted and ready to joust. In the upper miniature of col. A and the preceding text (La. vv. 799–816), the narrator himself is pictured trembling as he gazes at the armed warriors whose black shields and caparisons are emblems of evil: “Par regart estoient si fiers / Que je les tieng pour



FIGURE 2. *Narrator meets the Vices; angels over dwelling of the Virtues*. Paris ms fr. 146, fol. 37 (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

forsenez” (La. vv. 810–11; They appeared so fearsome / I take them to be enraged). The narrator then tells of crossing to the right bank of the Seine where he marvels at the miracle represented in the lower painting of col. A, the ladder of angels rising from the Virtue’s dwelling place to the heavens. The text (but not the image) portrays the narrator as an amazed witness to the wonder: “Au devant dit hostel, la vi, / Se je ne fui en l’er ravi, / Merveilles, onc ne furent teles” (La. vv. 823–25; At that lodging I saw / if I was not mistaken, / a marvel such as never was seen). The two antiphons and a prose that fill the rest of the leaf are represented by juxtaposition with verbal and pictorial narrative in col. A and by a rubric in col. B¹⁷ as songs sung by the angels to praise the Virtues and urge them on to battle: “Filie Iherusalem, nolite timere”; “Estote fortes in bello”; “Virgines egregie” (p. mus. 91–93; Daughters of Jerusalem, fear not; Be strong in battle; Illustrious virgins).

As a pair, folios 36v and 37 and those that follow illustrate the remarkable spatial integration of the *Fauvel* of



FIGURE 3. *Procession of Virtues: appearance of the Virgin*, Paris ms fr. 146, fol. 37v (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

Paris fr. 146, whose layout constructs visual patterns representing moral conflict as well as narrative and temporal linearity. The juxtapositions of text, songs, and miniatures are tightly coordinated to develop both a dynamic processional movement and a program of moral values. Thus the right-facing charivari parade of protest on fol. 36v appears to be aimed at the menacing figures of the Vices who ride leftward towards them on fol. 37. The struggle between good and evil is engaged by the contrast between the two miniatures in col. A on fol. 37 and confirmed by the martial strains of the musical pieces that accompany them. The somber hues and pale ink washes of the paintings on facing fols. 36v and 37, symbolic of danger and evil, are challenged by brilliant colors on the succeeding pair of facing fols. 37v and 38 which are dominated by the procession of Virtues and a gleaming vision of the Virgin (Figs. 3–4). In the painting of col. A, fol. 37v, the Virtues, who advance always and symbolically towards the Right, are dressed in bright oranges and yellows, beneath lines of praise that fall just above the miniature:



FIGURE 4. *Fauvel gazes at the Virtues*, Paris ms fr. 146, fol. 38 (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

Diex! ell' ont harnois et tuniques
 Et tretoutes choses si friques,
 Si riches, si parans, si beles,
 Bonnes, faitices et nouveles,
 Que merveilles en a tout homme.
 Dame sainte Marie! comme
 Sont et bons et biaux leur destriers!
 Fors, faitiz, seürs et legiers. (La. vv. 863–70)

Lord, their harness and tunics and all are so fresh, so rich, so showy, so beautiful, good, elegant and new that all men marvel. Holy Lady Mary! how good and handsome are their steeds, strong, well-trained, sure-footed and swift.

Although the painting represents a stylized group of armed knights, the text emphasizes the identity of the Virtues as *dames*, noble women: "... d'aler aus dances / N'estoit pas leur entencion; / Chascune a cuer de lyon" (La. vv. 880–82; they have no thought of dances; each lady has

a lion's heart). A burst of song toward the top of col. B emphasizes the forward movement illustrated in the miniature, for it marks the start of the parade of Virtues with the responsory "Properantes autem veniunt" (p. mus. 94; Hastening they come). Processional rhythm is developed by six antiphons and responsories in col. C, which spill onto facing fol. 38 (Fig. 4): "Sicut mirra; Dignare nos laudare te; Hodie nobis de celo pax; Illuminare, illuminare Iherusalem; Facta est cum angelo multitudo celestis exercitus; Verbum caro factum est" (p. mus. 95-100; Like choice myrrh; Deem us worthy of praising you; Today your peace descends on us from the sky; Shine, shine Jerusalem; Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host; The Word has been made flesh). These pieces are attributed to the Virtues who sing in celebration of a second marvel illustrated in the miniature set above them in col. C, a vision of the Virgin from whose tent, the text tells us, falls a loaf of bread and barrel of wine, served by the Angel Gabriel to the Virtues in a miraculous communion to fortify them for battle. Signaling his training as a cleric, which befits him to speak of spiritual matters, the narrator-witness says he will outdo a minstrel in his account of the cortège of the Virtues ("en clerjais en parleré" [v. 988; I'll speak as a cleric]).

The verses under the miniature in col. C, fol. 38 signals that time has passed while the virtuous virgins have sung: "Li solaus, qui terre enlumine, / Droitement sus tierce chemine" (La. vv. 989-90; The sun which lights the earth has made its way right to terce [9:00 AM]). Fauvel has at last risen from his marriage bed to see the tournament; he is shown peeking from his palace window at the clustered Virtues who appear to advance from left to right across the facing leaves. The antiphon above this miniature marks with an ironic musical flourish the arrival of the dawn and the royal spectator: "Dum ortus fuerit sol de celo, videbitis regem regum procedentem a patre tanquam sponsus de thalamo suo" (p. mus. 101; In the skies hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber).

No miniatures illustrate the next pair of facing folios (38v-39) which are entirely filled by a symmetrical layout of alternating columns of music and narrative that describe the moralized heraldry of the sumptuous trappings of Vices and Virtues. Before the richly bejeweled Virtues ride the Vices who bear emblems of evil:

Faux escuz ont o noires armes,
 Pourtraities d'ames qui de larmes
 Se fondent en feu et en flamme.
 Leur banieres sont de diffame,
 Pourtraictes a grans serpenteles,
 Qui les costez et les mameles
 De gens dampnez rungent adès . . .
 Leur lances et leur pannonceaus
 Sont pourtrais de petis deableaus
 De pure ordure fretelez,

D'orgueil et venim burelez. (La. vv. 1035-41, 1047-50)

Shields of falseness with black arms, painted with weeping souls melting in flames and fire, banners of shame, painted with great serpents gnawing on the ribs and breasts of the damned, . . . lances and pennants adorned with little devils encrusted with filth, striped with pride and poison.

On the three pages that follow (fols. 39v-40v, Figs. 5-7), miniatures articulate the tournament into a crescendo by a progressive increase in the size and number of miniatures and by reiterated representations in images and text of jousts and tournament protocol. In a two-part miniature on fol. 39v (Fig. 5) Virginité overthrows first Carnality then Adultery; on facing fol. 40 (Fig. 6) three scenes closely illustrate the detailed account of the proper conduct of this ceremonial tournament described in the adjacent narrative. The text says "Choisie l'a, si s'apareille, / Et Fornicacion s'esveille. / Chascune de eus son heaume lace / Et vienne pour jouter en place" (La. vv. 1265-68); [Chastity] spies her and makes ready, and Fornication rouses; each laces her helmet and takes her place for jousting). In the miniature at top left, the illustrator follows this temporal progression, showing first Chastity above, with visor raised, accompanied by a group of unhelmeted Virtues; in the next scene below, Chastity and all the Virtues have laced on their helmets. Moreover, these motifs in the multiple panels are maneuvered to emphasize shifts in visual perspective. The top compartment shows "la presse" (v. 1306), the crowd of Virtues waiting to joust and who appear to address the spectator in the frame. The crowd motif is repeated in a most interesting way in the compartment below where Chastity unhorses Fornication: there the crowd of Virtues is shifted to the extreme right edge of the painting and rotated so that they face the reader directly, gazing out through the slits in their helmets. Thus the joust is viewed from three angles: that of the reader, that of the spectators in the niches, and that of the watching Virtues who are positioned beyond the combatants from the reader's perspective. The effect of spatial continuity and temporal duration is enhanced by the third miniature in col. C where Humility humbly yields her turn to Patience who topples Pride, as the text tells us, "taking the best of the game when it comes in its time and place" (La. vv. 1321-22; De prendre le meilleur du jeu / Quant en vient en temps et en lieu).

The multiplication of jousting scenes that accompany the successive encounters described in the text creates an effect of a complex event unfolding around the reader-spectator as well as a sense of temporal extension and of mounting excitement. The climactic encounter between Abstinence and Gluttony is represented in a huge triple miniature that fills almost the entire writing space of fol. 40v



FIGURE 5. *Virginity unhorses Carnality and Adultery*, Paris ms fr. 146, fol. 39v (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

(Fig. 7): it is the largest painting in Paris fr. 146. The distribution of action of this joust over three panels stretches its duration: on the top, Gluttony charges darkly; she is unhorsed by Abstinence in the center, rescued by the Vices at the bottom.

Manipulations and arrangements of song, story and painting thus emphasize upon the flat surface of the parchment the tumultuous din and commotion and the sumptuous magnificence of the tournament. Only one musical piece complements depiction of the actual tournament, however: the verse celebrating Virginity's victory over Carnality under the miniature on fol. 39v, col. A (Fig. 5): "Virgineus sensus qui superat / et bene census. Carnales superat / nam deus hinc aderat, / cassat adulterium, / luxus abat vicium" (p. mus. 111; The virginal sense which conquers—and [is] well advised (esteemed)—defeats the carnal senses for God was here present, vanquishes Adultery, and strikes down the vice of Lust).¹⁸ Song is replaced on these pages by representation of the clamor and noisy shouts of the tournament itself. The heralds cry out "Saint Denis Monjoie" (v. 1216); "Arenes sonnes, trompeurs trompent" (v. 1334;

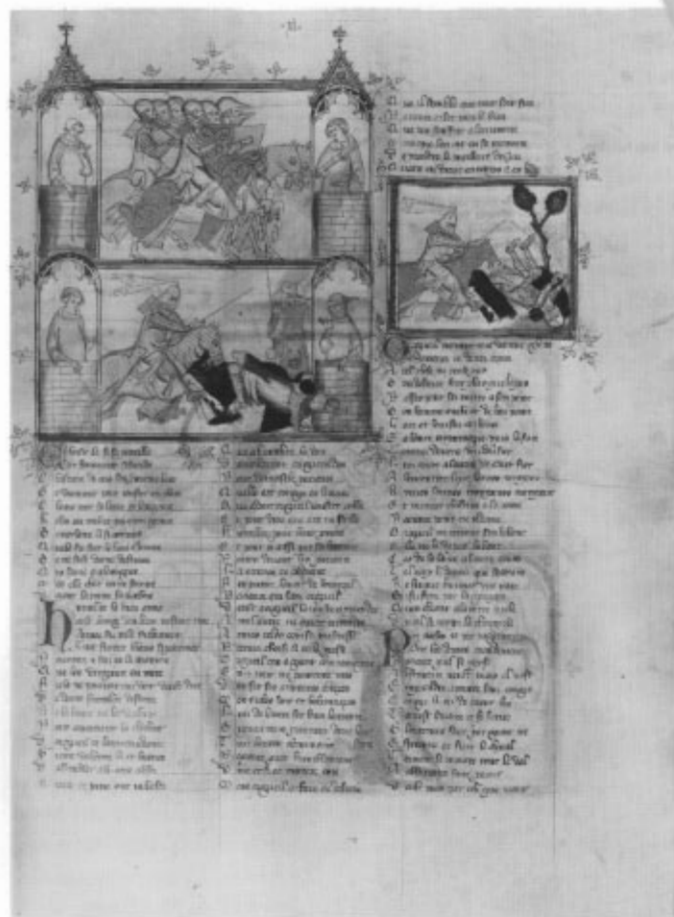


FIGURE 6. *The press of the Virtues; Chastity defeats Fornication, Patience overthrows Pride*, Paris ms fr. 146, fol. 40 (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

Horns sound, trumpeters trumpet). The challenges and groans of the jousters themselves are cleverly juxtaposed with the miniatures on these pages. The words of the *serventois*, the satirical song Virginity is said to sing to Carnality as she unhorses her are inscribed just above the top panel of col. A, fol. 39v (Fig. 5): "Chevauche, garce deputaire" (v. 1179; Ride, you wanton evil wench!). Adultery, toppled by Virginity, cries out as he crashes to the ground: "'Ci a pou paille'" (Ouch! There's not much straw here [to land on]) in a line that falls in col. C just at the lower right corner of the miniature. Juxtaposition of text and miniature brings out the weight of blows: just above the miniature in col. A, fol. 40v (Fig. 7) can be read "[Abstinence] A l'autre cours par la baniere / Ataint dame Gloute que lourde" (La. vv. 1372–73; In the next course by the banner [Abstinence] smites Dame Gluttony such a heavy blow, that stunned). The sentence continues at the top of col. C: "En devint et nou tint a bourde" (v. 1374; she is and she thinks it no joke). The text thus gives sound to the movements of the visual spectacle. In turn the paintings further the moral program of the text: the triumph of the

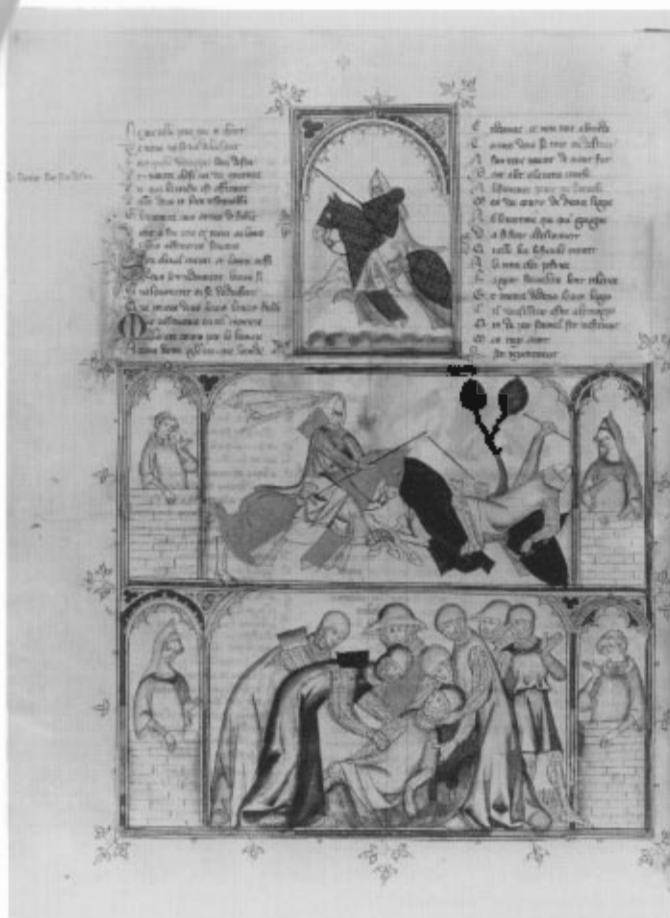


FIGURE 7. *Abstinence defeats Gluttony*, Paris ms fr. 146, fol. 40v (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

Virtues is repeatedly confirmed, as Mühlethaler has noted, by their position in the foreground of the miniatures in front of the vanquished Vices.¹⁹

The chivalric splendor of the tournament's motifs is further expressed by the enriched pictorial treatment of the Vices and Virtues on fols. 37v–40v. The pale color washes of Paris fr. 146 are thickened for the brilliant yellows and vermilions of the Virtues' trappings and the somber but decorative blacks and grays of the Vices'. Here, and only here in the Paris fr. 146 miniatures, scrollwork patterns of thick raised lines are painted under the colors of the trappings of horses and riders; these underlays, together with ornamental overlaid lines of crosshatching, create exceptionally rich textures that suggest sumptuous designs of brocade and metal work.

Both text and paintings of the tournament in Paris fr. 146 have a strongly chivalric cast. The description appeals to contemporary taste for heraldry and for fictional representations of tournaments (as well as for real tournaments costumed like romance).²⁰ Overall, Chaillou devotes more than 600 verses—one-third of his narrative *additions* to the

Roman de Fauvel—to an account evenly divided between of the chivalric procession of Vices and Virtues and the jousts that follow. The various jousting protocols and encounters are recounted in detail as if to please a public experienced in knightly exercises. Although the five combats vary in length from eighteen verses (Chastity against Fornication, La. vv. 1259–76) to fifty-four (Virginity against Carnality, La. vv. 1153–206) they follow a similar pattern: the Virtue spies (*choisit*) a Vice; there is further description of arms or preliminary movements of adversaries as when Gluttony makes an arrogantly intimidating show of force: “Gloutonnie saut par grant ire, / Esperonne et fiert le cheval, / Forment se moure tout le val” (La. vv. 1352–54; Gluttony leaps forward enraged, spurs and whips her horse, makes a fierce display around the field). Finally one, two, or even three runs follow as in the decisive contest between Abstinence and Gluttony, where lances are splintered, blows thud, and the unhorsed wounded Vice thumps to the ground. Vices and Virtues joust in the full panoply of armor: they wear hauberks and coifs of chain mail under the great helm; when the Vices are unhorsed they toss their legs in the air, showing off greaves of jointed metal plates, the latest fashion in jousting armor.²¹

While in many earlier representations of the *psychomachia* the allegories are figured as women carrying only symbolic arms—a lance or a shield²²—the *Fauvel* painter plays up both the chivalric display of arms and the incongruity of women acting as knights. Vices and Virtues in the tournament are portrayed in male jousting armor until the final and largest bottom panel of fol. 40v (Fig. 7): there feminine identity is abruptly and amusingly recalled as the Vices bend gracefully to raise their fallen comrade Gluttony. Their sleeveless surcoats take on long flowing feminine lines; their chain-mail coifs now give the effect of wimples, pleasantly contrasted with their various metal skull caps and hats.

These paintings of women armed as knights recall images from the lyric and narrative versions of another poetic genre, the curious *Tournaments of Ladies*, known only from a handful of lyric pieces that celebrate the names and coats of arms of a group of real noble ladies who are represented parading and jousting as knights.²³ Close to the Parisian production of Paris fr. 146 and most likely to be familiar to Chaillou de Pesstain was a late thirteenth-century version by Pierre Gencien, a wealthy bourgeois and member of the royal court, who displayed the names and coats of arms of women from the great bourgeois families of Paris, in his *Torneiement as dames de Paris* (ca. 1292), known in a single lavishly illustrated manuscript (ms Vatican, Reg. 1522).²⁴ While authentic armorial devices such as fleurs-de-lis and lions rampant on the arms of Chaillou's Virtues (La. vv. 1089–92) may point to the houses of real princes, the heraldic identity of his female Vices is entirely moral, as is that of the women jousting in *Li Tournois des dames ou les paraboles de verité* (1327) by Watriquet de Couvin where



FIGURE 8. *Carnality, Covetousness and Idolatry, Paris ms fr. 146, fol. 12v* (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

the combat of the soul against the temptations of the flesh is represented by a window painted with a picture of knights fighting fiercely with their wives, who are armed only with shields.²⁵ In Chaillou's *Tournament of Vices and Virtues*, as in all these poems, the woman knights move from their usual place in the manuscript margins to take center stage.²⁶ In contrast with Watrquet's *Tournois*, however, the moral value of female knights in the Paris fr. 146 *Fauvel* is double, for they represent both good and evil.

Such reversal of gender roles takes on added meaning in the Paris fr. 146 *Fauvel* where hybrid forms combining Latin and French, music and speech, human and animal forms have a central moral value: the metamorphosis of the horse *Fauvel* into human shape parallels the degradation of man into beast through greed and hypocrisy. Moreover, in her "Women on Top" Natalie Davis has shown how gender inversion figures social order and disorder and can serve to express social conflicts and clarify social structures.²⁷ It is indeed *feminine* personifications that carry the burden of moral consideration in *Fauvel*, whose eloquently majestic Lady Fortune is conceived in the tradition of impressive female counselors such as Boethius' *Philosophy* and Jean de Meun's *Reason and Nature*.

It is, however, the dynamically chivalric character of the *Virtues and Vices* in this allegorical tournament that directs us towards its political meaning. These armed figures of the *Vices* stand in marked contrast to their static, emblematic representation in an earlier section of the Paris fr. 146 narrative where they appear as *Fauvel's* courtiers. On fol. 12v (Fig. 8) *Carnality* appears as one of three worldly maidens; she gazes into her mirror next to *Covet-*



FIGURE 9. *Gluttony, Drunkenness and Greed, Paris ms fr. 146, fol. 13v* (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

ousness who clutches her purse and *Idolatry* who worships the small yellowish creature she holds. On fol. 13v (Fig. 9) *Gluttony* vomits next to *Drunkenness* and *Greed*. Here *Gluttony* is a standard figure of moral discourse; her repulsive image is intended to inspire disgust and aversion, while *Gluttony* charging in the tournament (top compartment of fol. 40v, Fig. 7) is an impressive sight. The stock figures of ordinary moral allegory have thus been transformed in the tournament by means of gender reversal and by representations of an elegantly courtly and chivalric inspiration into political discourse, into a festive *admonitio*, political advice fit for the king.

The political value of the *Fauvel* pageantry is further constructed by contextualization of these allegorical personifications selected from the moral tradition within the historical world. The whole allegorical celebration in the Paris fr. 146 *Fauvel* including the tournament is explicitly set into a historical context from the first on fol. 30v where Chaillou's own narrative *addicions* begin (Fig. 10). In the miniature of col. A, *Fortune* presents *Fauvel* to his bride *Vainglory* whom he weds in an unconsecrated, "left-handed" union.²⁸ The painting in col. B represents *Fauvel's* Palace of "Desespoir" (Despair) as the actual *palais* of Philip the Fair, newly rebuilt by his minister Enguerran de



FIGURE 10. *Fortune bestows the hand of Vainglory on Fauvel, Paris ms fr. 146, fol. 30v* (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

Marigny between 1308 and 1314.²⁹ Narrative and paintings emphasize historical context further by describing both what the reader sees on the page and also, even more interesting, what is seen by those shown gazing out from the rooftop in col. C. The lines that frame this miniature say: “Des creniaus en haut remire on / Le douz païs et la contree / Qui douce France est appelee” (La. vv. 14–16: From the battlements one can look out over the fair land and country which is called Fair France). The poem continues with an encomium of Paris: “Il siet en la meilleur cité / Qui dessouz ciel compaignie siege: / . . . / La riviere porte navie: / Par son droit nom Sainne est nommee” (La. vv. 18–19, 22–23; [the palace] sits in the best city under the heavens. . . . Fleets of ships sail its river, rightfully called *Sainne* [Healthy]). The musical interpolations that frame the palace echo the praise of Paris: above, “Ha Parisius, civitas Regis magni” (p. mus. 74; Hail Paris, city of the great king), and below, “Iste locus dat nobis gaudium” (p. mus. 74; This place gives us joy) which celebrates the relics of the Pas-

sion venerated in Paris. In the context of such a specific setting, is it possible that contemporaries might have read the encomium of the Parisian host of the Virtues (whose dwelling is represented on fol. 37, Fig. 2) as an homage to Philip V, regent then king of France in 1316? The host’s four names are attributes of the good king—“Large, Courtois, Sage, Benigne” (La. v. 277; Generous, Courtly, Wise and Beneficent)—and his spouse is “dame Constance,” bearer of the banner of Loyalty, Pity, Sweetness, Friendship, Honor, Goodness and Wisdom (La. vv. 279–84).³⁰ The Parisian setting is maintained throughout the tournament which is held before Saint-Germain-des-Prés, the very location of the end of a great municipal parade which celebrated the knighting of Philip the Fair’s three sons in 1313 and which is described at length in the *Chronique métrique* of Paris fr. 146 (vv. 5066–77). Fauvel’s late rising on the morning of the tournament signals an unmistakable intertextual (and perhaps topical allusion) to the Pentecost feast of 1313, for the account in the metrical chronicle says that Edward II of England overslept on the morning of the Parisian’s parade because of his pleasure in dalliance with his wife Isabelle, the daughter of Philip the Fair (vv. 5057–65). At the end of the *Roman*, the narrator laments that Fauvel and his minions are still trampling “le jardin de douce France” (v. 1577; the garden of fair France).

The Parisian scene is given temporal specificity by the date 1316 inscribed within the description of the Virtues’ armor where the narrator declares,

En mil .ccc. dis et sis ans
 Ne fu veue tele noblesce
 En valeur, beauté et richesce
 Com de leurs armes et cointises. (La. vv. 1064–67)

In one thousand three hundred and sixteen years, there has never been seen such magnificent value, beauty and richness as in their arms and ornaments.

We have learned from the historian Elizabeth A. R. Brown, that such dates are often more factional than factual in intent.³¹ Dates invited contemporary readers to make connections between allegory and ideology. “1316” may thus be seen as a tag that connects this parade of Vices and Virtues to the political issues of the moment: the troubled succession to the throne consequent to the 1314 adultery scandal of Philip the Fair’s three daughters-in-law: the suspiciously convenient death of Margaret of Burgundy, first wife of Louis X in the spring of 1315, and, in that same year, the hanging of Philip’s once-powerful minister Enguerran de Marigny; Louis’s marriage to Clemence of Hungary in August 1315, his death on 4 June 1316, and the months awaiting the birth and death of his posthumous son Jean I in November 1316; the exoneration of Jeanne de Bourgogne and the accession of her husband Philip V instead of his

niece Jeanne de Navarre, daughter of Louis X and the disgraced Queen Margaret.³³

Other works included in Paris fr. 146 with the *Roman de Fauvel*—the topical, political poems by Geoffroi de Paris³⁴ and the *Chronique métrique*—amply confirm all these political references. It is a collection united not in genre but in political outlook; it presents partisan views on good government from a conservative administrative perspective, the view from the palace that is shown literally in the miniature in col. C, fol. 30v (Fig. 10).

The political perspective of Paris fr. 146, in turn, explains the significance of the selection of Vices and Virtues Chaillou de Pesstain made from the principal source for his Tournament of Vices and Virtues: the *Torneiment Anticrist* (*The Tournament of the Antichrist*), a chivalric moral allegory composed by Huon de Méry in 1235.³⁵ Chaillou borrowed extensively from Huon, actual verses as well as the overall design of his narrative *additions*: banquets, miracles, and the idea of heraldic descriptions of allegorical armor within a tournament of Virtues and Vices. Yet in contrast to the thirty-seven combats described by Huon de Méry, Chaillou staged only five jousts: Virginity versus Carnality and Adultery, Chastity versus Fornication, Patience versus Pride and Abstinence versus Gluttony. These combats point to virtues of immediate political significance in 1316: sexual continence (virginity) to ensure dynastic succession; patience and abstinence to guard against the pride and greed of royal advisers, the "Fauvels" hungry for power.

Whatever specific topical references are signaled by dates and place names (and glossed by the political poems and metrical chronicle compiled with *Fauvel* in Paris fr. 146 and which comment explicitly on the historical events of 1314–1316), in Chaillou's *Fauvel* these references are expressed principally through the figures of the Vices and Virtues. Such personification allegories can both allude to events and at the same time abstract from the world of history the most general considerations about the moral nature of political power. They figure the qualities of the ideal prince and of his opposite, the tyrant, who in works of fourteenth-century political theory, is said to sacrifice public good for private pleasure, an attribute personified as Gluttony.³⁶ It is thus these overarching principles of kingship that determine the order and layout of the Tournament of Vice and Virtues and explain its ending with the great three-part painting of the defeat of the tyrant "Gloutonnie aus armes de sable" (v. 1364; Gluttony with sable arms; fol. 40v, Fig. 7).

Myths of personification allegory thus enabled Chaillou to bend his materials closely around historical circumstances while forcing them towards moral generalization where they could serve their political purpose of advising and admonishing the king.³⁷ The mythological Vices and Virtues of the *Fauvel* tournament are splendid signifying forms that exhibit, in magnificent display, the moral attributes of the good king. But they also imply a warning to those who fail in vir-

tue. When Gluttony falls, the evil king Fauvel flees into exile with Vainglory under his great cape, mocked by the heralds who cry out "Car widez. / Contre vous est changé il dez" (La. vv. 1405–6; Beat it! Your luck has changed).

Here, then, is the special significance of mythological personifications in medieval political discourse. The gracious feminine figures of Classical allegory speak not of the prince but of the legitimate foundations of political power. The mythical male heroes of legend and history exalt the power of the prince as a person, but the myths of allegory celebrate the pact of the prince with his people, and the power of language over us all.

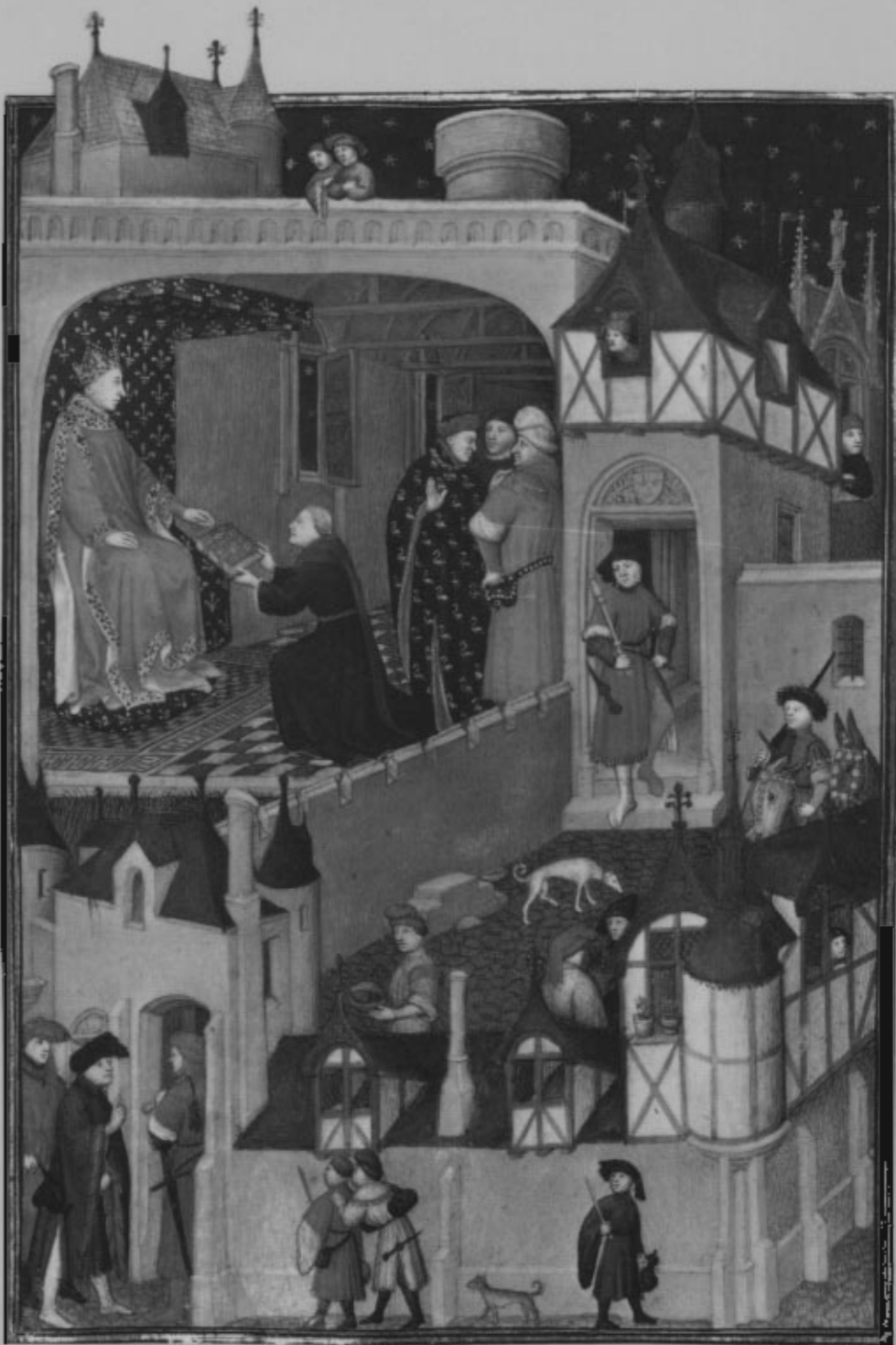
NOTES

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1. Charles of Anjou, brother of Louis IX, is compared to Alexander in the *Chronique métrique* compiled with the *Roman de Fauvel* in Paris fr. 146 (*La Chronique métrique attribuée à Geoffroy de Paris*, ed. Armand Diverrès [Paris, 1956], vv. 4613–18). In his contemporary panegyric *Dis des .iiii. sieges* (1319) Watriquet (minstrel to Guy de Châtillon, count of Blois) represents Charles of Valois, Count Guillaume of Hainaut, Gauchier de Châtillon and Count Robert de Béthune of Flanders through a metaphoric vision of four noble thrones, those of Arthur, Alexander, Naimes and Girard de Fraite, i.e., heroes of romance, antiquity and epic (*Dits de Watriquet Brasseniex de Couvin*, ed. Auguste Scheler [Brussels, 1868], 162–85, No. XV). On medieval historiographers' use of exempla for "legitimizing present political life," see Gabrielle M. Spiegel, "Political Utility in Medieval Historiography: A Sketch," *History and Theory*, XIV (1975), 321–22 and Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, "Historiography and *Matière Antiqua*: The Emperor Henri VII as a New Alexander in the Fourteenth-Century *Voeux de l'Épervier* [ca. 1313]," *Medievalia et Humanistica*, n.s., XIV (1986), 17–35.
2. Anne D. Hedeman, *The Royal Image: Illustrations of the "Grandes Chroniques de France," 1274–1422* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford, 1991), *passim*.
3. The satirical text was edited by Arthur Långfors, *Le Roman de Fauvel par Gervais du Bus*, Société des Anciens Textes Français (Paris, 1914–1919). The manuscript is reproduced in *Le Roman de Fauvel in the Edition of Mesire Chaillou de Pesstain*, a Reproduction in Facsimile of the Complete Manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Français 146. Introduction by Edward H. Roesner, François Avril and Nancy Freeman Regalado (New York, 1990).
4. *Six Historical Poems of Geoffroi de Paris. Written in 1314–1318*, ed. Walter H. Storer and Charles A. Rochedieu, University of Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures (Chapel Hill, 1950); William Pierce Shepard, "Un débat inédit du quatorzième siècle," *Mélanges de linguistique et de littérature offerts à M. Alfred Jeanroy* (Paris, 1928), 371–81.

5. *The Works of Jehan de Lesceurel*. Corpus mensurabilis musicae, ed. Nigel E. Wilkins (American Institute of Musicology, 1966).
6. Diverrès, *Chronique*.
7. Noting that "Chaillou de Pesstain" is known only in Paris fr. 146, Elizabeth A. R. Brown believes this may be a screen name concealing the author's identity.
8. Margaret McGowan, "The Spectacle of Power," *The New History of French Literature* (Cambridge, MA., 1989), 245. The metrical chronicle of Paris fr. 146 describes one of the earliest full records of an elaborate political celebration; 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, forthcoming in *City and Spectacle in the Middle Ages*, ed. Barbara Hanawalt and Kathryn Reyerson (Minneapolis, 1994).
9. See R. S. Loomis, "Chivalric and Dramatic Imitations of Arthurian Romance," in *Medieval Studies in Memory of A. K. Porter*, ed. Wilhelm R. W. Koehler (Cambridge, MA., 1939), I, 79-97; Ruth Huff Cline, "The Influence of Romances on Tournaments of the Middle Ages," *Speculum* XX (1945), 204-11; Larry D. Benson, "The Tournament in the Romances of Chrétien de Troyes & *L'Histoire de Guillaume Le Maréchal*," in *Chivalric Literature. Essays on relations between literature & life in the later middle ages*, ed. Larry D. Benson and John Leyerle (Toronto, 1980), 1-24; Michel Stanesco, *Jeux d'errance du chevalier médiéval. Aspects ludiques de la fonction guerrière dans la littérature du moyen âge flamboyant* (Leiden, 1988), 71-96.
10. Richard Barber and Juliet Barker, *Tournaments. Jousts, Chivalry and Pageants in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1989), 38-39 and 207. See Sarrazin, *Le Roman de Hem*, in *Histoire des ducs de Normandie et des rois d'Angleterre*, ed. Francisque Michel, Société de l'Histoire de France (Paris, 1840), 213-384; Stanesco, *Jeux d'errance*, 88-94; and Philippe Walter, *La Mémoire du temps: Fêtes et calendriers de Chrétien de Troyes à "La Mort Artu"*, Nouvelle Bibliothèque du Moyen Age, XIII (Paris and Geneva, 1989), 707-8.
11. Barber and Barker, *Tournaments*, 35 and 46.
12. See *Le Roman de Fauvel* (facsimile of fr. 146), 10-15 and Nancy Freeman Regalado, "Masques réels dans le monde de l'imaginaire. Le rite et l'écrit dans le charivari du *Roman de Fauvel*, MS. B.N. Fr. 146," in *Masques et déguisements dans la littérature médiévale*, ed. Marie-Louise Ollier (Montreal and Paris, 1988), 111-26.
13. La. = Långfors' edition of verses added by Chaillou de Pesstain in ms E (Paris ms fr. 146) and numbered separately from his edition of the *Roman de Fauvel* proper.
14. Emilie Dahnk edited the texts of the musical pieces interpolated into Paris fr. 146 and those portions of Chaillou's narrative additions which were omitted by Långfors ("L'Hérésie de Fauvel," [Dissertation, University of Leipzig, 1935]); citations refer to her numbering: p. mus. = *pièce musicale*. SC = *sote chanson*. Translations from the French throughout are mine.
15. Jean-Claude Mühlethaler, "Fauvel au pouvoir. Lire la satire médiévale," (Dissertation, University of Zurich, 1990), 156. I am deeply grateful to Jean-Claude Mühlethaler for giving me a manuscript copy of his thesis and for our ongoing collegial exchange of papers, articles, and information about Paris fr. 146 since 1983.
16. The narrator is not present as a witness to any other scenes in the Paris fr. 146 *Fauvel* narrative; he is depicted in three miniatures at the end of Book I that represent the poet inspired by the Holy Spirit and reading his work to an attentive public (fols. 10, 11), and three at the end of Book II where he supplicates Fortune and prays to the Virgin and God (fols. 42v and 43).
17. Rubric at the bottom of col. B: "Et chantoient si com semble / Ceste prose trestouz ensemble" (Dahnk, *Hérésie*, 193, v. [1062-1063]); And it seems they sang this prose all together).
18. Dahnk, *Hérésie*, 201; translation by Elizabeth A. R. Brown.
19. *Fauvel au pouvoir*, 36-37.
20. Although tournaments were repeatedly prohibited by Philip IV, a children's tournament is listed among the entertainments staged by the Parisians for the celebration of the knighting of his sons in 1313 in the metrical chronicle compiled in Paris fr. 146 with Chaillou's *Fauvel* (vv. 4979-80; see Brown and Regalado, "La Grant Feste," and Barber and Barker, *Tournaments*, 39-40, illustrated by a jousting scene from Paris fr. 146, fol. 40v).
21. See Barber and Barker, "Tournament Armor" in *Tournaments*, especially 154, and Millia Davenport, "Feudal Lords and Kings: XIII Century," in *The Book of Costume* (New York, 1948), I, 151-59.
22. See Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Mediaeval Art from Early Christian Times to the Thirteenth Century* (London, 1939, rpt. New York, 1964).
23. Andrea Pulega edited two twelfth-century lyric versions in French by the trouvères Huon d'Oisy and Richard de Semilli (fragment), the "Carros" by the troubadour Raimbaut de Vaqueiras (ca. 1200), "La Treva" (ca. 1216-1220), an anonymous French *Tournoiement aus dames* in octosyllabic couplets (ca. 1265), and the *Tornoient as dames de Paris* (ca. 1292) in *Ludi e spettacoli nel medioevo: I tornei di dame* (Milano, 1970). To these pieces must be added the single stanza of another version, "Cele d'Oisseri," which Jean Renart inserted into his early thirteenth-century *Roman de la Rose ou de Guillaume de Dole*, ed. Félix Lecoy, Classiques Français du Moyen Age, XCI (Paris, 1962), xxix and 105, vv. 3419-30. Identification of the historical personages in some of the French texts was undertaken by Holger Petersen Dyggve in his series of studies of "Personnages historiques figurant dans la poésie lyrique française des XIIIe et XIIIe siècles"; III. "Les dames du *Tournoiement de Huon d'Oisi*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, XXXVI (1935), 65-84; "Les Personnages du *Tournoiement as dames* (Paris, BN ms fr. 837)," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, XXXVI (1935), 145-92; V. "L'Yolent à l'écu échiqueté du *Tournoiement de Huon d'Oisi*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, XXXVII (1936), 257-61; X. "Deux dames du *Tournoiement de Huon d'Oisi*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, XLI (1940), 157-80. See also Alfred Jeanroy, "Notes sur *Le tournoiement des dames*," *Romania*, XXVIII (1899), 232-44.
24. Pulega, *Ludi*, 21-63. Ed. M. Pelaez in *Studj romanzi*, XIV (1917), 5-68 (rpt. Perugia, 1917) with reproductions of the miniatures (reviewed by Mario Roques and Arthur Långfors, who lists the names and pursues identification of the historical personages, in *Romania*, XLIV [1920], 409-26). See the articles on the "Tornoient as dames de Paris" by: Charles-Victor Langlois, "Pierre Gencien, auteur d'un poème en français," *Histoire littéraire de France*, XXXV (1921), 284-301; François Maillard, "Note sur *Le tornoient as dames de Paris*," *Romania*, LXXXIX (1968), 539-41, who dates the poem around 1269-1270; and Helen Solterer, "Figures of Female Militancy in Medieval France," *Signs*, XVI (Spring 1991), 522-49. I thank Helen Solterer for sending me a copy of her article before publication.
25. *Dits de Watriquet*, XVIII, vv. 120-441.
26. Compare the figures from two late thirteenth-century Arthurian romances and an early fourteenth-century breviary of women armed only with spear, distaff or shield charging armed knights in Lilian M. C. Randall, *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966), Figs. 708-10.

27. Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, 1975), 124–51, especially 130–36.
28. On the representation of Fauvel's "left-handed" marriage, see Lucy Freeman Sandler, "The Handclasp in the *Arnolfini* Wedding: A Manuscript Precedent," *AB*, LXVI (1984), 488–91 and *idem*, "More on Marriage Handclasps," *AB*, LXVIII (1986), 326. I am greatly indebted to Lucy Sandler for her invaluable comments on my descriptions of the tournament miniatures.
29. See *Le Roman de Fauvel* (facsimile of Paris fr. 146), 45. Exactly contemporary with Paris fr. 146 and also representing good government themes by means of images of Paris are the famous bridge scenes in the miniatures of the *Life of St. Denis* undertaken for Philip IV and presented to Philip V in 1317 by Gilles, abbot of Saint-Denis; see Charlotte Lacaze, *The Vie de St. Denis Manuscript (Paris, BN MS. Fr. 2090–2092)* (New York and London, 1979), 126–37.
30. The virtuous constancy of Philip V's wife, Jeanne de Bourgogne, is celebrated elsewhere in the Paris fr. 146 compilation in two allegorical dream poems: Geffroi de Paris's "Un songe" (vv. 291–97) and in Jehannot de Lescurel's "Gracieus temps est, quant rosier" (st. 9–28).
31. See also John Benton, "Entering the Date," in *A New History of French Literature*, ed. Denis Hollier (Cambridge, MA., 1989), 1–6 and *Le Roman de Fauvel* (facsimile of Paris fr. 146), 48.
32. In her unpublished paper "Kings like Semi-Gods: The Case of Louis X (1314–1316) of France" and her forthcoming book *Les Livres de Fauvel*, Elizabeth A. R. Brown reads specific connections between the tumultuous political events of 1314–1316 and the satirical images of the Paris fr. 146 *Fauvel* charivari. It is a pleasure to acknowledge how much my work on the Paris fr. 146 *Fauvel* has benefited from ongoing consultation and collaboration with Professor Brown.
33. See *Le Roman de Fauvel* (facsimile of Paris fr. 146), 48–49.
34. Ed. Margaret O. Bender, *Romance Monographs 17* (University of Mississippi, 1976). Chaillou's use of the *Torneiment* is discussed in *Le Roman de Fauvel* (facsimile of Paris fr. 146), 9–10.
35. The tyrant is characterized in a less chivalric vein as *orde glouttonnie* (filthy gluttony) by Pierre d'Ailly in his late fourteenth-century poem "Ung chastel scay, sur roche espoventable" cited by Jean-Claude Mühlethaler in his valuable discussion of images of the tyrant in fourteenth-century literature and political theory (*Fauvel au pouvoir*, 89–90, see also 85–94).
36. Mühlethaler offers extended analyses of the Fauvel satirist as philosopher and prophet in: *Fauvel au pouvoir*, 167–328; in "Le poète face au pouvoir: de Geffroy de Paris à Eustache Deschamps," *Milieux universitaires et mentalité urbaine au moyen âge*, ed. Daniel Poirion, *Cultures et civilisations médiévales*, 6 (Paris, 1987), 83–101; and in "Les masques du clerc pour parler aux puissants: Fonctions du narrateur dans la satire et la littérature 'engagée' aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles," *Le Moyen Age*, XCVI (1990), 265–86.



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