The Loss of Constantinople and Imagining Crusade at the Fifteenth-Century Court of Burgundy

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This article concerns aspects of the manuscript production of the fifteenth-century European court of Burgundy during the reign of the duke Philip the Good (1419–67) and the performances of power, identity and prophecy in the documents created at that court. Many works found in that court's library, either commissioned by the duke himself or by noble families close to the court, had to do with the idea of crusading, both past and future, which had grown very complex by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[1] Those works recast a past of contact and conflict in the Mediterranean in a variety of modes (fiction, eyewitness, history, geography) and through specific ideological lenses. Textual performances in Burgundy have multiple functions: they reactivate and reinvent a centuries-old European concept of crusade, they inscribe ducal pretensions as part of, but also distinct from, their French royal lineage, and they help to articulate part of the state-building project of the young Valois dynasty. In this way, the court of Burgundy especially under Philip the Good occupies an important and conspicuous place in a long tradition of crusade propaganda.

The relationships between the constitution of a ducal library, the collection, reproduction and illumination of numerous manuscripts by a highly professionalized

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1 The term crusade here is understood using a "pluralistic" definition such as that of Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274–1580: from Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) or Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: a Short History,* 2nd ed. (London: Continuum, 2005) as a political phenomenon to which the European imagination clung well into early modernity. Politically malleable crusade propaganda can be aimed at Muslims and non-Latin or "heretical" Christians.

group of translators and copyists, and the abovementioned ideological orientations have been the source of much scholarly debate. One such manuscript, Bibliothèque Nationale de France manuscrit français 9087, compiled by Jean Miélot in or after 1456 for Philip the Good, stands out from other such "oriental anthologies" found in the ducal library. It will be examined in depth in this article. The three texts compiled in BNF ms. fr. 9087 (*Advis directif de faire le passage d'oultremer*, *Description de terre sainte* and the Bertrandon de la Broquière's *Voyage d'Outremer*) made it to scholarly readership by means of modern editions which removed them from their original context.[2] This article suggests that critical analysis of highly problematic modern categories typically associated with the court of Burgundy — namely the Orient and the crusades — can be best made by studying texts in their original unit of representation in the ducal library: the codex. By marrying past and present, near and far, geography and politics, tradition and innovation, the codex in question about the Eastern Mediterranean is highly illustrative of the complex processes in the construction of ducal identity.[3]

Even though Philip the Good never actually led expeditions to the contemporary lands of Islamdom, in BNF ms. fr. 9087 text and image work in tandem to depict him as a prince who, through his patronage of travel and writing, is busy exploring and admiring Ottoman power. The manuscript depicts him positioning himself to assume a prophecy, namely that a French prince will come to dominate the Turks. Adopting Susan Crane's notion of the medieval individual and collective self, both located in and created by courtly performance, I argue that the manuscript's architect Jean Miélot creates an interpretative matrix through which the reader at the ducal court is encouraged to link power and heritage, whether associated with the collecting and official presentation of books, or with the imagining of the recovery of Jerusalem and Constantinople.[4]

2 The edition of both Latin and Old French translation of Jean Miélot (based on the KBR 9095 ms.) is given by C. Kohler, ed., *Directorium ad passegium faciendum*, in *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades. Documents arméniens*, vol. 2.2 (Paris: 1906), pp. 365–517; Burchard of Mount Sion, *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae*, in J.C.M. Laurent, ed., *Peregrinatores medii aevi quatuor* (Leipzig, 1864), pp. 1–100; and Bertrandon de la Broquière, *Le Voyage d'Outremer*, ed. C. Schefer, *Recueil de voyages et de documents pour servir à l'histoire de la géographie depuis le XIIIe jusqu'à la fin du XVIe siècle,* 12 (Paris: 1892).

3 Subsequent reference to this codex will use the abbreviation BNF ms. fr. 9087. A preliminary discussion of these kinds of manuscripts has been given by J. Gueret-Laferte, "Le Livre et la croisade," *Le Banquet du Faisan: 1454, l'Occident face au défi de l'Empire ottoman*, ed. Marie-Thérèse Caron and Denis Clauzel (Arras: Artois Presses Université, 1997), pp. 107–115. See also E. J. Moodey, "Illuminated Crusader Histories for Philip the Good of Burgundy (1419–1467)", Unpublished PhD Diss. (Princeton, 2002).

4 Susan Crane, *The Performance of Self: Ritual, Clothing and Identity During the Hundred Years War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

Burgundian State-Building and the Idea of the Crusade

What we know as the fifteenth-century territories under the control of the dukes of Burgundy began to be consolidated during the reign of Philip the Bold (1363–1404). Greater Burgundy, bearing the name of the original duchy of Eastern France but actually encompassing many parts of northern France, Belgium and the Netherlands, was consolidated by means of a politics of annexation and expansion under Philip the Bold's son, John the Fearless (1404–19), and his son, Philip the Good (1419–67).[5] The years 1435–76 have been characterized as a period in which the "monarchic" authority of the dukes took shape and institutions of state control came about, as well as a time in which Philip consolidated power in his "composite" or "pragmatic" empire.[6]

Among the richest in Europe, the court of Philip the Good was a site of great patronage of the arts. There was indeed a great need for the production of image and text of the sort found in BNF ms. fr. 9087 and the many illuminated manuscripts of the ducal library in order to buttress the genealogical or otherwise ideological claims of the relatively young Valois house of Burgundy. The crafting of such identity took other concrete forms as well. The dukes strove to assert themselves as a military power. John the Fearless, for example, engaged in military campaigns in the Eastern Mediterranean. The defeat of John and his men at the hands of Bajazet I at the Battle of Nicopolis in 1396 loomed large in the first half of the fifteenth century, but far from dissuading his son Philip the Good from taking further expeditions to the East, his father's defeat only seemed to bolster his interest in crusading.[7] As if practicing for larger expeditions, or performing his ability to carry out the latter, he formed a navy and cruised along the

5 In some 30 years, Namur, Brabant-Limburg, Hainaut, Zeeland, Holland, Frisia, Luxemburg and Liège were all brought under ducal control.

6 See particularly chapter five of Wim Blockmans and Walter Prevenier, *The Promised Lands: The Low Countries Under Burgundian Rule, 1369–1530*, tr. Elizabeth Fackelman (of *In de ban van Bourgondië*) and ed. Edward Peters (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 103–140. Scholars have argued that the state-building impulse can be found clearly in dynastic depictions in the chronicles of local history written in fifteenth-century Burgundy, and in an even more subtle manner in the recasting of figures of power in the translations of court fiction commissioned by those same dukes. See Robert Stein, *Politiek en historiografie: Het ontstaansmilieu van Brabantse kronieken in de eerste helft van de vijftiende eeuw* (Leuven: Peeters, 1994) and Robert B. Rigoulot, "Imaginary History and Burgundian State-Building: The Translation of the Annals of Hainault," *Essays in Medieval Studies: Proceedings of the Illinois Medieval Association* 9 (1992): 33–40.

7 Aziz S. Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (London: Metheun, 1934).

Danube to the Black Sea in the mid-1440s.[8] Philip the Good's self-fashioning as the guardian of a crusading ideal relies upon the exploitation of a multilayered historical past, the heritage of his father and grandfather, as well as that of the French king Philip VI at the origin of the dynasty, and that of other more distant "heroes" hailing from France and the Low Countries, such as Louis IX or Godefroi de Bouillon of the First Crusade.

Norman Housley rightly debunks the claim of a fifteenth-century pilgrim Felix Fabri that the Holy Land was so lost that no one dreamed of recapturing it.[9] While the "recovery of the Holy Land" *topos* may not have been as prevalent in the fifteenth century as in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century following the Latins' departure from the last sites in greater Syria, Acre (1291) and Arwad (1303),[10] the resilience of that concept and the variety of different aspects it took on at the court of Burgundy deserve critical attention. Philip the Good especially elaborates the *topos* as an idea, both through commissioning the rewriting and recopying of histories of earlier Frankish conquest, and through seizing some of its symbolic power and imagining the imitation of the deeds of these "ancestors." His military pretensions, with both a "domestic" and an "international" flavor, go hand in hand with the cultural renown of Burgundy as one of the great examples of late medieval court culture.[11]

Until the latter part of the twentieth century, critical understanding of Burgundy's cultural production was typically seen through the lens of a "waning" of the Middle Ages or a decadence of earlier medieval models of chivalry. Burgundy was deemed unrealistic and hopelessly nostalgic, overly concerned with reviving outdated social models. Although often denigrated for its highly propagandistic tone, its historical inaccuracies, its verbosity and its peculiar style, the vibrant neo-chivalric culture in the Burgundian vernacular is nonetheless a fascinating site from which to explore the relationship of power and writing on the eve of premodernity.[12] The products of ducal patronage, in such

8 Jacques Paviot, *La politique navale des ducs de Bourgogne : 1384–1482* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires de Lille, 1995).

9 Housley, p. 48.

10 Sylvia Schein, *Fideles crucis: the Papacy, the West, and the Recovery of the Holy Land, 1274–1314* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

11 The library of the Valois dukes of Burgundy is one of the finest of the late middle ages. The landmark work on the Burgundian literary phenomenon is Georges Doutrepont, *La Littérature française à la cour des ducs de Bourgogne* (Paris: Champion, 1909).

12 I borrow this term of phrase from Joël Blanchard and Jean-Claude Mühlethaler, *Ecriture et pouvoir à l'aube des temps modernes* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2002).

visual or textual compilations such as BNF ms. fr. 9087, illustrate not only how far that vernacular revival of the heritage of the crusade had actually taken place, but also how complex and multilayered a process of representation it actually was.

Political Languages of Loss: 1453 and Western Historiography

One might understand court life in Burgundy as a world of spectacles, of elaborate representations of power which sought to reshape a political landscape through the writing of history. Burgundian historical compilations and translations as textual appropriations of the past are necessarily rhetorical and persuasive in nature, that is, they belong to the world of political language. In the years following 1453 and the fall of Constantinople and other Greek islands to Fatih Sultan Mehmet II, a variety of responses to this loss emanate from Western Europe, ranging from the optimistic to the frenzied. Modern-day critics of the idea of crusade in Burgundy, instead of offering critical readings of the texture of its performative political idiom, of the interplay of text and image, often uncritically mimic fears of losing European culture to an external menace, usually one coming from non-Christian empires of the East. Even the most scientific of Western scholars mentioning the year 1453, invariably insists upon the "tragedy" or the "painful" experience of the fall of the city not from *within* Constantinople itself, but from *without*. The sensationalist titles of Euro-American colloquia and scholarship reflect an anxiety about any number of different Orients, and uphold the idea of medieval Latin solidarity against foreign others, suggesting complicity, albeit perhaps unconscious, with the Huntington thesis of a "clash of civilizations."[13]

Such descriptions of loss, or fear of continued loss, remind one of eighteenth-century historian Edward Gibbon's histrionic interpretations of the 1453 siege of Constantinople and the subsequent loss of the city to the Turks. His account of the event backs away from the entire legacy of the Eastern Empire surrendering it to the Turks as early as the third day of the siege. Following his account of the vision at the tomb of Abū Ayyūb (Job), Gibbon claimed magisterially: "Constantinople no longer appertains to the Roman

13 Take, for example, two volumes containing important essays on medieval Europe and the Orient with the unfortunate titles: Liana Nissim and Silvia Riva, eds., *Sauver Byzance de la Barbarie du monde*: *Gargnano del Garda, 14-17 May 2003, Quaderni de Acme* 65 (Milan: Cisalpino, 2004), and Marie-Thérèse Caron and Denis Clauzel, eds., *Le Banquet du Faisan, 1454 : l'Occident face au défi de l'empire ottoman*, (Arras: Artois Presses Université, 1997).

historian."[14] He went on several pages later:

> [t]he importance of Constantinople was felt and magnified in its loss…and the grief and terror of the Latins revived, *or seemed to revive*, the old enthusiasm of the crusades. In one of the most distant countries of the West, Philip, the duke of Burgundy entertained, at Lisle in Flanders, an assembly of his nobles; and the pompous pageants of the feast were skillfully adapted to their fancy and feelings.[15]

Gibbon's description of the "grief and terror" of the Latins which, he claims, made them want to respond by launching a new crusade, stands in odd counterdistinction with his depiction of spectacles at the court of Burgundy as a privileged, fanciful world apart. Gibbon appears to establish a causal relationship between the siege of Constantinople and the performances designed at court to stimulate enthusiasm for crusading through this allusion to the Pheasant Oath Ceremony (1454). The first reaction to loss is, in other words, to forge a community around a shared notion of what is lost. Gibbon's own parenthetical reserve, namely that the fall of Constantinople "*seemed to revive*" the desire for crusade is significant, however, since such a causal relationship between military loss, the imagined community of Burgundy and the concomitant cultural discourses of loss and recovery is a complex and difficult one to ascertain. Perhaps Gibbon is right that loss is magnified in retrospect, but by what means, and for what purposes? The political rhetoric of loss in source material from the court of Burgundy is a subject ripe for critical inquiry.

The Court of Burgundy's Library on "Outremer"

Material about the history of *'outremer'* [the world beyond the sea] can be found in a variety of texts from fifteenth-century Burgundy but particularly in two forms: *translations*, of greater or lesser factual precision, and *compilations*. In the Burgundian milieu, history and literature are easily confounded; events and chronologies are sometimes outrageously reconfigured to fit larger polemical or ideological schemes. Compilations about the Orient cobble together a variety of ancient authorities with legendary material about a Hellenic heritage, as well as about a medieval Islamic and

14 Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, (London: Methuen, 1902), 201.

15 Gibbon, 206 (emphasis mine).

Christian Eastern Mediterranean. The dukes' political reconstitution of the past creates an intricate historical fabric drawing upon and fusing classical and medieval legends. Moreover, local instances of power are linked to ancient ones, and local heroes find heroic positions in old narratives of glory. This kind of two-way *translatio studii et imperii*, both teleological and anachronistic, can be found throughout the ducal library.[16]

BNF ms. fr. 9087 brings into one original binding two *translations* and one *travel narrative* accompanied by an elaborate illumination program. It eschews legendary stories in favor of "authoritative" geographical descriptions and eyewitness treatises. It contains two texts which outline for their original patron, King Philip VI of France (1328–1350), the challenges and pitfalls of recovering the Holy Land. With these century-old texts is anthologized a contemporary travel narrative of one of Philip the Good's ambassadors to Ottoman Turkey. One could imagine this manuscript to be conceived of as a high-class travel guide for the duke's eventual "saint voyage de Turquie" [holy voyage to Turkey]. This article will argue that it is more appropriately seen as a text which invites contemplation of such an idea of a new crusade. It represents the Valois duke as the rightful inheritor of such a project as well as the collector of new authoritative knowledge about the Ottomans and the contemporary Eastern Mediterranean, a world grown obscure to Europeans since the end of the thirteenth century.

The qualitative differences in Philip's library and his book collecting have been divided by both Colette Beaune and Jacques Paviot into two phases worthy of mention here.[17] In the first phase, composed mostly of translations and transcription of fictional works up through the 1440s and the failed expedition at Varna in 1444 against the Ottomans, historical reflection on Islamdom is diffuse. Both factual imprecision and mythical confusion regarding the "Saracens" abound. This is not to say that there was total ignorance of the Eastern realms. To the contrary, there was a great deal of movement between the court of Burgundy and Byzantium. As early as 1421, Philip sent an emissary, Ghilbert de Lannoy as far as the Levant, and again in 1432, Philip sent

16 Examples of codices about the Eastern Mediterranean include copies, translations and compilations such as *Eracles*, Villehardouin's *Conquête de Constantinople*, Marco Polo's travels, Joinville's *Vie de Saint Louis*, *Histoires de Jerusalem, Histoire de Charles Martel*, in addition to more fantastic stories about crusading, *Saladin*, *Chevalier de la cygne*, *Godefroi de Bouillon*.

17 Colette Beaune,"Les Vœux du Faisan: Introduction" in Danielle Régnier-Bohler, ed., *Splendeurs de la cour de Bourgogne: récits et chroniques* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1995), pp. 1131-33 and Jacques Paviot, *Les ducs de Bourgogne, la croisade et l'Orient (fin XIVe siècle–XVe siècle), Cultures et civilisations médiévales* (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2003).

Bertrandon de la Broquière on a reconnaissance mission to Constantinople and Jerusalem. Geoffroy de Thoisy set out in the 1440s as well to retrace the legendary journey of Jason and the Argonauts on the Black Sea. In that first phase of Philip's reign, the threat of a generalized non-Christian non-Latin other is diffusely and amateurishly spread across his whole collection.

The acquisitions of Philip's library take a turn in 1451, however; a fact which Paviot attributes to changes in French politics.[18] In that year, the Order of the Golden Fleece, Philip's chivalric order modeled after the Greek legend of Jason, was inaugurated and talk of a crusade resurfaced with Jean Germain's plea for reunification of Christianity in his speech to the French king (1452). It was also in 1451, as Johan Huizinga reminds us, that Denis the Carthusian in his tract on princely life sounded an alarm by posing the question "Will the Turks reach Rome?"[19] Rather than actually planning a crusade which at the time was too difficult and relied upon too many factors, textual and courtly performances begin to imagine and question the challenge of a specifically Turkish threat, not simply an epic-like generalized Oriental menace. In this period, as opposed to the 1440s, it is obvious that the spectacles of the court of Burgundy reach a new level with the staging of the Pheasant Oath, alluded to by Gibbon in the citation above, as a fantastic performance of the collapse of the Eastern Christian Empire infused with a tone of collective hysteria.

The "Banquet du Faisan" took place in Flanders in February 1454. It is at that gathering that Philip publicly announced his own desire to leave on crusade and promised boastfully to fight the "Grand Turc" (Fatih Mehmet II) in one-on-one combat. It was also at that gathering that Philip coaxed his nobles into making their own such oaths to join him on the perilous journey to "Turquie." All very stylized and symbolically orchestrated, the performance of the Pheasant Oath draws upon legends of great figures of antiquity, in particular, Jason and Alexander, and reenacts the displacement of power in the East away from the Greek Church to Turkish Islam. Steven Runciman describes the Oath as follows:

> Philip presided at a banquet…where a live pheasant garlanded in precious stones was brought into the royal table, while a man dressed as a Saracen threatened the guests with a toy elephant and young Olivier de la Marche, dressed as a damsel, mimed the sorrows of Our Lady Church.[20]

18 Paviot (2003), p. 13.

19 Johan Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 217.

20 Stephen Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople (1453)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 166.

The entire affair was decorated with luxurious *haute lisse* tapestries, custom-woven for the occasion, portraying the life of Hercules. Pantomimed skits alluded to the Chateau of Lusignan and Melusine, the legendary fairy of the Frankish house of Cyprus, and portrayed the Eastern Church as women wrapped in cloaks embroidered in Greek letters. Following the banquet were a series of oaths pronounced by the nobles at Philip's court. From the shock of the loss of Constantinople, Philip, to use Gibbon's phrase again, "*seemed to*" forge a community around such complex mythological and historical imagery. The details of the Pheasant Oath were not particularly new, but the way it collated and presented them is exceptional. It is in the context of such ritual performance of the ducal self at the center of the imagined community that BNF ms. fr. 9087 is best understood.[21]

The Structure of BNF ms. fr. 9087

The codex BNF ms. fr. 9087 is a carefully constructed visual object which both depicts the loss of Constantinople and responds to it through a display of the symbolic capital of Philip the Good. In it one finds specific textual geography of the Orient and the paths leading to it from Europe resurrected from century-old texts, as well as two vivid visual accounts, first of the state of the Holy Land, and second, of the fall of Constantinople on 29 May 1453. The manuscript was compiled for Philip the Good by Jean Miélot, *chanoine* at Saint Pierre de Lille and an important figure in manuscript production and translation at the court of Burgundy.[22] Executed after 1456 for Philip's library, it is a luxurious manuscript on vellum of 252 folios, with three distinct texts and six detailed

21 Another analysis of this event studied at the level of codex is given by Marie-Thérèse Caron, *Les Voeux du Faisan, noblesse en fête, esprit de croisade: le manuscrit français 11594 de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France*. Burgundica 7 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2003).

22 On Jean Miélot as translator and compiler there is abundant literature. See Gianni Mombello, "Per la fortuna del Boccaccio in Francia: Jean Miélot traduttore di due capitoli della 'Geneologia'," *Studi sul Boccaccio* 1(1963): 415-44; Rosalind Brown-Grant, "Illumination as Reception. Jean Miélot's reworking of the *Epistre Othea*," *City of Scholars: New Approaches to Christine de Pizan,* eds. Margarete Zimmerman and Dina de Rentiis (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994), 260-271; Annemarie Heinz, *Der Wortschatz des J. Miélot: Übersetzer im Dienste Philipps des Guten von Burgund*, Wiener Romanistiche Arbeiten III (Vienna, 1964); P. Perdrizet, "Jean Miélot: l'un des traducteurs de Philippe le Bon," *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France* 14 (1907): 472-82; R. Bossuat "Jean Miélot, traducteur de Cicéron, " *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, 99 (1938): 82-124; A. Schoysman, "Les prologues de Jean Miélot," *L'analisi linguistica e letteraria* 8 (2002): 315-328; C.C. Willard, "The Concept of True Nobility at the Burgundian Court," *Studies in the Renaissance* 14 (1967): 33-48.

illuminations.[23] The codex is clearly designed to be read as a whole. Although Jean Miélot edited and translated two of the works in the codex, the hand is most likely that of another scribe.[24] This codex is most likely one of the some 480 manuscripts taken to Paris after Louis XV's invasion of Brussels in 1746. It bears the stamp of the "Bibliothèque Royale."[25]

Of the three texts copied in this manuscript, the first two are French translations of Latin texts about the *path to the Holy Land* written in the first third of the fourteenth century, some forty years after the last of the Latin cities fell. The first text, (1) the "*Advis directif pour faire le passage d'oultremer*" (ff. 1–84*r*) is a translation made by Jean Miélot of the *Directorium ad passegium faciendum* (1332).[26] The second text, (2) the "*Description de la terre sainte*," (ff. 86–151*v*) translates the *Descriptio terrae sanctae*, (also 1332) by a Dominican, the German Burchard of Mount Sion.[27] Both texts were supposedly composed for Philip VI of France. According to the editor of the Latin versions of these texts, Charles Kohler, the first two texts are found copied together elsewhere, a fact which gives precedence to Miélot's inclusion of them as a pair

23 I have chosen the date of execution as after 1456 because of the colophon to the *Description de la terre sainte*: "Cy fine le livre de la Description de la terre sainte fait a lonneur et loenge de Dieu et fu compile jadis lan mil trois cens trentedeux par frere Brochart lallemant de lordre des freres precheurs. Et depuis lan mil quatrecens cinquantesix par le commandement et ordonnance de treshault trespuissant et mon tresredoubte seigneur Phelippe … [a] este translate en cler francois par .Jo. Mielot…" See J. Paviot (2003), 146.

24 A manuscript description which compares the hand and illuminations to other works in the Library of Burgundy can be found in *La Miniature flamande: le mécénat de Philippe le Bon. Exposition organisée à l'occasion du 400e anniversaire de la fondation de la Bibliothèque Royale de Philippe II le 12 avril 1559* (Brussels: Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, 1959), no. 89.

25 For a previous discussion of this manuscript see Georges Dogaer, "De Handschriften over de kruistochten in de librije der hertogen van bourgondië" *Spiegel Historiael* 2:9 (1967): 457–65.

26 Miélot's translation in ms. fr. 9087 identifies the author as "Guillaume Adam;" however the identity of the author has been the subject of debate. Alexandar Nikolov has identified the author as "pseudo-Brocardus." See his "Oriens Christianus between Scylla and Charybdis: Oriental Christians in *Directorium ad passagium faciendum*," unpublished workshop paper; *Constantinople 1453: The Fall of an Empire, the Rise of an Empire*, CEU, Budapest, 28-29 November, 2003; and his book "*Believe or I shall kill you!*": *The* "*Orientals*" *in the Crusaders Propaganda 1270-1370* [in Bulgarian] (Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2006). Paviot, using Jean Richard, identifies the author as "Raymond Etienne", Paviot (2003), p. 149. J. Richard, *La papauté et les missions d'Orient au moyen âge (XIIIe – XVe siècles)* (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 1977), p. 170. The editor Kohler in the *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Documents arméniens* identifies the author as Brocard.

27 A Latin copy of this work also exists in the Library of Burgundy, KBR ms. 9176–77. Its description can be found in Georges Dogaer and Marguerite Debae, *La librairie de Philippe le Bon: Exposition organisée à l'occasion du 500e anniversaire de la mort du duc* (Brussels: Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, 1967), no. 209. The manuscript is entitled *Directorium ad Philippum Regem*.

in BNF ms. fr. 9087. The third text, (3) written originally in middle French and contemporary to the court of Philip the Good, comes from the pen of Bertrandon de la Broquière, Philip's envoy to the East mentioned above. He composed the narrative of his travels only years before the fall of Constantinople from the notes made during his trip in the 1430s and his account is copied in BNF ms. fr. 9087. In a nutshell, the first two texts are treatises making an argument for the best ways—political and geographical—to go about crusade. The third text explicitly states its intention of exploring a route to the Holy Land across Anatolia, which had become impossible in the fourteenth century with the rise of Ottoman power. As if to fill this gap in information, much of Bertrandon de la Broquière's account reads as a "reconnaissance" mission to describe Turkey, its powers that be, and the century-old transformations of the space of Asia Minor. Broquière's is a text from a Western court fascinated by the courtly ways of the Turks. To borrow another expression from Crane's study cited above, Bertrandon de la Broquière's narrative is full of the preoccupation of how power speaks to itself and how it imagines its rivals.[28]

That Miélot put Philip the Good's own commissioned work together with that of his dynastic successor as a legitimizing technique is immediately obvious. That the three texts are grouped in this codex with no particular textual commentary in the interstice between the *Advis directif* / *Description* pair and Broquière's account is a bit puzzling. Given that the translations do not alter appreciably their subject matter, which is an exception to the rule in the Burgundian library,[29] this would ostensibly imply two things: first, that the relationship between Philip of France and Philip of Burgundy was either a subtle, or perhaps even problematic, one, but also, second, that what binds together this complex codex is its visual commentary. Indeed, both the content and the placement of the illuminations form a significant gloss on the texts. Both Judith Guéret-Laferté and Rima Devereaux have made the claim that the illumination program is a significant feature of

28 Crane, 2.

29 Kohler explains that a section about Ethiopia and its wonders is omitted from the *Advis directif*. Besides this, it seems that we can take the prologue literally that the text was faithfully translated by Jean Miélot: "[e]n comprenant la substance selon son entendement sans y adiouster riens du sien" [including the subject matter to the best of his ability without adding any personal commentary] (f. 1v). The prologues and subsequent text of the first two works stress their eyewitness quality. After cursory study, the first two texts do, in fact, seem to be more or less faithful translations of the original Latin texts.

this manuscript, however, without thoroughly illustrating how and why this is the case.[30]

Guéret-Laferté places BNF ms. fr. 9087 in a wider context of manuscript production which links, as her title intimates, "le livre et la croisade" [book and crusade]. Despite the useful list she cites of manuscripts which bring together works about the Orient, her argument is full of lacunae. It does not comment on the relationship between books and mobilizing armies with papal approbation. What is missing from (but perhaps implicit in) Guérte-Laferté's argument are some theoretical claims about the ability of codices, not books per se, elaborated within a specific context of noble patronage to function as propaganda, either to manipulate or sway the opinion of the duke, or to curry his favor by representing his opinions that he would like others at court to hold. Instead, her essay prefers vague terms typically used to describe the movement of the so-called "later" crusades: "élan," [enthusiasm] "rêve" [dream] or "esprit," [spirit].

Devereaux, however, makes more of a claim for the connection between manuscripts and a crusade when she claims that the illumination program focuses either upon cities or upon presentation scenes, or both. She argues that the illumination program of BNF ms. fr. 9087 creates an implicit argument for crusade, which seems to mean, in her terms, that it assumes a "reconstruction" or "projected colonization" of the city of Constantinople planned by Philippe le Bon. She argues for this reconquest particularly through evoking the illumination program, and in particular, the sixth (and last) illumination, that of the siege of Constantinople which "replaces the fallen city and implicitly points to its future recovery and reconstruction through the deeds of Philippe le Bon."[31] Devereaux speciously situates the codex in the context of what she calls the "postcolonial frontier between itself and Constantinople in the wake of [1453]"[32] and the "West's painful experience of the frontier between itself and Byzantine Constantinople, reinforced by the Ottoman Turks' conquest of the city and felt as a wrench from *eternal past* to *constant now*."[33] Devereaux's insistence upon the trauma (the "cataclysmic event") of the loss of

30 J. Guéret-Laferté, "Le livre et la croisade," *Le Banquet du Faisan, 1454: l'Occident face au défi de l'empire ottoman*, eds. Marie-Thérèse Caron and Denis Clauzel (Arras: Artois Presses Université, 1997), 107-114 and R. Devereaux, "Reconstructing Byzantine Constantinople: Intercession and Illumination at the Court of Philippe le Bon," *French Studies* 59.3 (2005): 297–310.

31 Devereaux, 306.

32 Ibid., 297.

33 Ibid., 299.

Constantinople echoes in the critical language of postcolonialism a notion which I do not believe can be found in the manuscript itself.[34] She claims that a presentist argument pervades BNF ms. fr. 9087, where historical precedence is eclipsed by current events all pointing to the urgent reconstruction of loss. Whereas she makes the argument that the manuscript calls for a renewed crusade to reconstruct Byzantium, the depiction of Constantinople in fact cannot be understood separately from the historically-inflected image of the Holy Land or from the three presentation miniatures in the rest of the codex. BNF ms. fr. 9087 is less about "reconstructing" Byzantium, or the Holy Land for that matter, than it is about depicting the duke of Burgundy. It is, of course, a response to the fall of Constantinople in 1453, and theoretically it could have contributed to a revival of interest in crusade, but, first and foremost, it coolly negotiates a past full of attempts to revive the crusade, and anchors, by means of a dynastic diptych, Philip the Good's position as the rightful heir of such a mantle of crusader prince.

Paviot has claimed that the idea of crusade in Burgundy was essentially a "regard en arrière" [a retrospective glance] on great heroes of the past, which he has qualified as "une volonté de revivre les faits et gestes des héros légendaires ou réels du passé" [a will to relive the deeds of legendary and real heroes of the past].[35] Paviot has eloquently expressed here the operative principle of much of Burgundian fiction. Miélot's compilation takes a more subtle position, however, since not only did the deeds of Philip VI not in fact lead to crusade, but it was also not practical after 1453 to lead a crusade. The power of text and image consequently take over in this codex to counterfeit a recent past of crusading glory and to sketch out the possibility of it in the future. Heroism of the past consisted of preparing oneself for crusade rather than actually going on it, and keeping the idea alive rather than actually realizing it. The remainder of the analysis here focuses on some of the cues which the compiler and his illustrators employed in the construction of the codex, the interconnectedness of images of geography and commissioning books. This textual performance of Philip's ducal identity seems suspended between past and future, between here and there. Borderlands are indeed depicted, but when reading BNF ms. fr. 9087, we are not necessarily compelled to march to them just yet.

34 Ibid., 298.
35 Paviot (2003), 294.

The Illustration Program of BNF ms. fr. 9087

What makes BNF ms. fr. 9087 particularly interesting is that its retrospective glance focuses only on three historical figures, Philip VI of France, Philip the Good and to a lesser extent on Bertrandon de la Broquière, Philip the Good's traveler-envoy, but not on other fictional figures. The logic that links the texts in the compilations seems to be that they are three descriptions of oriental geography and peoples, a kind of cultural roadmap for any nobleman considering making a trip to the Eastern Mediterranean himself. Perhaps with the exception of the sixth illumination, which is a detailed illustration of the oldest part of the city of Constantinople, the rest of the illuminations form a matrix through which the reader can visualize elements of princely identity.

What links the six illuminations set in the codex together are also the three main topics depicted in them: manuscript presentation to a patron, departure on military expedition and geography. The codex in question in fact contains some of the most sophisticated miniatures ever produced in the workshop of Miélot.[36] The illuminations include: (1) a scene where Jean Miélot presents his manuscript to Philip the Good (f. 1r);[37] (2) a second presentation miniature showing Brocardus offering his text to Philip VI of France (f. 2r);[38] (3) an illustration of the preparation for Philip VI's crusade (f. 9r);[39] (4) an illumination of the Holy Land showing Jerusalem prominently (f. 85v);[40] (5) an illumination of Bertrandon de la Broquière's coming to Burgundy and codex presentation scene to Philip the Good (f. 152v);[41] as well as (6) an elaborate drawing of the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn and the Turkish siege of the oldest part of the city of Constantinople (f. 207v).[42]

At first glance, the illuminations of this codex might appear to fall into groupings of three pairs: two presentation miniatures (illuminations 1 and 2), two images depicting a chivalric leader (miniatures 3 and 5) and two city scenes (miniatures 4 and 6). This

36 *La miniature flamande*, 89.

37 The first five images are in the public domain, available online at Gallica, the public digital book archive of the National Library of France. The sixth image is reproduced here. The URL for the first illumination (f. 1r) is: gallica.bnf.fr/scripts/mediator.exe?F=C&L=08005601&I=000001

38 The second illumination (f. 2r): gallica.bnf.fr/scripts/mediator.exe?F=C&L=08001262&I=000001

39 The third illumination (f. 9r): gallica.bnf.fr/scripts/mediator.exe?F=C&L=08005595&I=000001

40 The fourth illumination (f. 85v): gallica.bnf.fr/scripts/mediator.exe?F=C&L=08005594&I=000001

41 The fifth illumination (f. 152v): gallica.bnf.fr/scripts/mediator.exe?F=C&L=08003425&I=000001

42 The last miniature (f. 207v) is reproduced *infra*.

division into three pairs of miniatures, however, oversimplifies the complex process of associations taking place between the six illuminations and three texts. Two simple details give the reader pause. The fifth illumination itself also contains a manuscript presentation scene, and, what is more, the page layout in the case of the first three illuminations contrasts sharply with that of the last three. Another metaphor captures the visual program better, that is, that meaning unfolds through a chain of images, where texts and contexts serially create a network of meaningful associations.

The First and Second Illuminations (ff. 1r and 2r): a Presentation Diptych

One of the more original features of BNF ms. fr. 9087 is its double presentation miniatures on the first two folios. In the structure of the two presentation miniatures we observe Philip the Good, Valois duke of Burgundy, making an implicit calque of power. He is portrayed on the opening folio of the codex as the patron of the entire compilation. This self-portrait is constructed, however, acknowledging his debt to the first member of his own Valois dynasty of France, King Philip VI, who was the original patron of the *Advis directif.*

Philip's self-fashioned role as patron of this codex is made even clearer when the similarity in size and format of the first illumination and the subsequent two illuminations is noted. The first three illuminated folios all contain a decorative frame, a miniature, an illuminated initial and a small text block. In the case of the second and the third illustrated folios, the text block corresponds to the introduction to the work which follows it. In the first text block, however, it is important to note that Miélot uses the name and details of the first work, the *Advis directif*, to introduce the whole compilation, thereby metonymically linking Philip VI's commission to Philip the Good's larger, more synthetic project. This introduction, not atypical for Burgundian codices, gives a genealogy for the text at hand. It reads: "Intitulation du livre nomme l'advis directif pour faire le passage d'oultre mer" [the book is entitled the 'Directions for making the passage overseas] and explains how the work was first written in Latin and then was subsequently translated into French for Philip the Good. This is followed by the latter's numerous noble titles and a standard humility *topos* on the part of Miélot. Following it, the text block on folio 2 gives the original prologue to the *Advis directif* "prologue de l'acteur qui presente son livre au roy Philippe de Valois" [prologue of the author presenting his book to Philip of Valois].

Through this subtle technique, Miélot has both celebrated Philip VI's achievements as book collector and then contained them within a larger frame.

The identity of the patron of texts is not the only way that Philip the Good manipulates the reputation of his predecessor Philip VI. The two presentation scenes, as we have noted, bear a remarkable resemblance, but the introductions of both texts mention making the "holy passage," a fact which allows Philip the Good to draw further upon some of the glory of Philip VI's legacy as leader and organizer of crusade. Even the seated position of the noble man and the prostrate kneeling translator-author at his right reinforces this visual association of ideological projects within the same dynasty. The information needed to make the passage beyond the sea is to be found in the books. The projects of the two princes are not represented, however, as having equal value.

Some significant visual details are worth noting since they cleverly distinguish these first two miniatures from each other, signaling Miélot and his illuminator's differing interpretations of the two Philips' identities. The first detail is the unobstructed central window above Philip the Good's head to the left in the first miniature sketching a path which leads off into the distance, a detail which contrasts sharply with the almost claustrophobic interior of Philip VI's room where all fenestration is covered with bars or tapestries, a room in which even the way out seems obstructed. The path into the distance in miniature 1 sets Philip the Good apart as the one capable of leading such an expedition; the visual flight of the path in the first miniature resonates with the prominent paths into faraway landscapes of illuminations 3, 4 and 5. Secondly, only Philip VI reaches down to put his hand on the book itself. In the first and the fifth miniatures Philip the Good does not grab on to the presented codex, but rather stands with gestural elegance in front of it, perhaps implying a reserve with seizing the power of the information contained therein, or more simply, a different relationship to it, specifically as prince who *collects* (and perhaps even contemplates) information about oriental geography. The third, and last detail, has to do with how the images of French royalty are imbedded within a distinctly Burgundian frame, but are also carefully marked as such. The second miniature of the former king of France, just as the siege of Constantinople in the sixth miniature, are the two folios that bear prominently Philip the Good's motto "Aultre naray" [I shall have no other] reminding us of the true manuscript patron at hand. These three details, and perhaps others I have not seen, although subtle, create an

interesting tension in BNF ms. fr. 9087. It is tempting to say that they are a restrained critique of the failures of Philip VI's campaigns, although it is probably more a strategy of replacement of a past by a distinct present. The dynastic relationship between Philip the Good and Philip VI is undeniable, and yet, French royalty is placed in a past and in a background where Burgundian glory can supersede it.

The Third Illumination (f. 9): Philip VI "Departs" for Crusade

The third illumination is placed on folio 9, clearly designed to depict Philip VI of Valois leaving for crusade, just after the textual reference to a royal prophecy: "une prophecie tant lesdiz Turcz comme les autres sarrazins que en ce temps present qui est lan mil ccc.xxxii ilz doivent estre desconfiz et destruis par ung prince de France" [a prophecy that the above mentioned Turks and other Saracens in 1332 shall be defeated and destroyed by a French prince.] The illumination depicts an image of a Philip VI seated on horseback clearly leaving behind him a walled, moated city, perhaps Marseille (or Aigues-Mortes?) where Philip VI gathered to leave on his crusade. The codex of course does not represent Philip VI's crusades as a failure. It was, after all, cancelled in 1336 after several years of attempts to launch the movement again, a moment which has been qualified by Tyerman as "the collapse of the last organized attempt in the tradition of St. Louis and Richard I to recover the Holy Land from the Infidel."[43] The first three illuminations create a mirroring effect between Philip the Good and his predecessor. Philip the Good is noticeably portrayed as resuming where Philip VI left off in 1336. Almost as if to refrain from stealing the glory away from his predecessor and to truncate the historical record before the cancellation of the crusade, the codex's depiction of his triumphant departure brings the prophecy of the emergent anti-Turk French king to visual (albeit mendacious) fulfillment. In a nutshell, the first three illuminations lead the ducal reader from patron to predecessor to prophecy of French royal victory over the Ottomans. To continue a thought question posed by Tyerman about Philip VI's crusade, it seems that Miélot understood better than most that, whether patrons were serious in their intentions of recovering Jerusalem or not, they must be portrayed as both ready and prepared to do so, and with the correct visual and textual lineage to legitimate such an

43 C.J. Tyerman, "Philip VI and the Recovery of the Holy Land," *The English Historical Review* 100 (394): 25–52.

endeavor.[44]

The Fourth Illumination (f. 85v): Islam in Jerusalem

The second three illuminations are characterized, as has been mentioned above, by an illumination block of almost identical size. Although they lack a textual prologue on the illumination page itself (found in illuminations 1 and 2), illuminations 4 and 5 actually serve as a "visual" introduction to the last two texts anthologized by BNF ms. fr. 9087. In illumination 4, Miélot's miniaturist has clearly depicted the Holy Land. Its portrayal contrasts sharply with the illumination 6 of Constantinople in the sense that it is not map-like; its coordinates not to scale and all the portrayed locations are not clearly identifiable. This figurative representation of the Holy Land locates in the top half of the image block the walled city of Jerusalem. In the bottom half of the illumination are found three cities, one in the center full of octagonal or hexagonal towers topped with the orientalizing onion-bulb roof. Above and to the left of this ostensibly prosperous city is a dead city full of what appear to be abandoned Romanesque style buildings. In the foreground clearly on the coast is a city in total ruin with the Mediterranean shore lapping at its edge, perhaps figuratively representing a fallen Acre.[45] A path winding through these cities features a sparse trail of travelers, merchants or pilgrims, and besides this movement the image is rather static. Some parts of the foreground and marginal areas around Jerusalem are full of live healthy trees, other parts full of dead trees with stark branches. The contrast of living and dead is surely meant to evoke, from the Western Christian perspective, the distressing state of the Holy Land, and to draw a contrast in two dimensions between the former Latin kingdoms and the current Muslim-controlled city of Jerusalem.

An in-depth study of this portrait of Jerusalem (and of the sixth illumination of Constantinople) should still be made in comparison with other representations of these cities in fifteenth-century maps and manuscripts. What can be said about the image of Jerusalem is that it is portrayed from an odd angle, its proportions are not realistic and

44 Tyerma, 26.

45 Incidentally, this visual dialogue between ruined coastal Acre in the foreground and the prosperous Jerusalem in the background would seem to comment upon the original text of *Description de la Terre Sainte* which is fascinated not only with Jerusalem as center of the Holy Land, but also with the city of Acre, political and intellectual center of Crusader Palestine.

the city's major sites are not all easy to visualize. It is simple to identify the Al-Aqsa Mosque/Dome of the Rock, the largest complex just left of center. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher with its characteristic open rotunda is also clearly identifiable at top to the right. At left and to the bottom is found a four-towered gate; this is presumably the Jaffa Gate. What is noteworthy about this portrayal of Jerusalem is, similar to the smaller city in the lower portion of the image, how the rooftops across the whole visual field of the walled city are dominated by the onion-bulb roof, minarets and crescents. As a portrait of the Holy Land, this image to a Western Christian audience would certainly indicate the predominance of Islam. The one church represented here in the whole of the city can be found at the extreme right, with its Romanesque style, two levels and small cupola. Presumably this would be St. Anne's Church, erected in the twelfth century by Crusaders on the birthplace of the mother of Mary. It is known as the one crusader-era church not destroyed in Jerusalem, but rather converted to a Muslim school by Salāhaddīn al-Ayyūbī in 1192. This church's conspicuous placement on the right side of the visual field, incidentally with most of the flourishing trees, would seem to suggest a symbolic remainder of Christianity in the holy city. It does not visually dominate as al-Aqsa does, but its size rivals that of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The grayish palette connoting death is mainly found at left and at the bottom of the image block. As we move toward the church at right and to the top, the dead trees are replaced with live ones, and, generally, the contrasting palette of gold and blues in the cities becomes more vivid, suggesting a hint of optimism or even rejuvenation in Jerusalem and, more generally, in the institution of the Church.[46] The miniature invites a reading from left to right, and from bottom to top, a reading further encouraged by the protruding stone cliff at the image's center. Such details, I believe, hint at a notion of futurity and survival despite the apparent destruction.

The fourth illumination of the Holy Land depicts loss and survival at the same time, a space clearly of Islamdom but in which Christians still have some place. This, of course, introduces visually the second text, *Description de la Terre Sainte*, perfectly, and yet, the image is not exclusive to the ambit of either Philip. This image and its function located before a textual description of the Holy Land is reminiscent of a bundle of materials given to Philip the Good by Jean Germain in 1451 at the meeting of the new Order of the

46 I thank Elizabeth Campbell for this thoughtful suggestion.

Golden Fleece documenting the state of contemporary Christianity, except that the present case it is infused with more of a feeling of loss with respect to the East.[47] As such, this illumination is the next image meant to draw a serial parallel between Philip VI and Philip the Good. In its static out-of-time quality the image even seems to collapse the eras of the two rulers, as if the Holy Land had not changed at all since 1332, a fact belied by Bertrandon's text which follows in the codex. The image undoes the assumed result of the triumphant princely departure of illumination 3, putting the announced prophecy on hold and focusing on the lasting state of loss in the Holy Land.

The Fifth Illumination (f. 152v): Bertrandon de la Broquière and Philip the Good

With the third anthologized text, the compilation BNF ms. fr. 9087 jumps forward in space and time to a work contemporary to Philip the Good's reign. The text in question is Bertrandon de la Broquière's *Voyage d'Outremer* composed only years before the fall of Constantinople about his trip made there earlier in 1432. The choice to anthologize it here no doubt draws on the fact that the land route to Palestine from Europe across Anatolia had been for some time impracticable, and his text offers a special glimpse into the changes in the lands of the Ottomans since the time of Philip VI. In this respect, the third text stands in as Philip the Good's unique contribution to the kind of descriptive texts designed to describe the trip to Jerusalem. The overwhelming majority of Bertrandon de la Broquière's narrative describes his encounters once he had left Greater Syria and was returning to Europe via present-day Turkey.

The fifth illumination, preceding the text of the *Voyage d'Outremer,* illustrates Philip the Good standing out in front of a town which Guéret-Laferté has identified as Pothières, one of the more famous villages in Burgundy containing an abbey founded by Girart de Vienne, hero of the Girart de Roussillon legend.[48] It was from the nearby town of Vézélay that the First Crusade was preached. Pothières to a Burgundian eye would thereby evoke the piety and sanctity of the Valois house. This illumination illustrates Bertrandon de la Broquière, having just dismounted from his horse, kneeling in front of Philip offering him a book. Which book is actually being offered to Philip has sparked a

47 Paviot (2003), 228.
48 Guéret-Laferté, 108–9.

good deal of debate and the interpretation of the BNF ms. fr. 9087 illuminator here complicates matters. The illumination as a presentation scene seems to imitate illumination 1 and 2, whereby Broquière would be offering his own travel narrative to the duke. An additional piece of information in favor of this interpretation is that since Broquière is portrayed as returning to Burgundy dressed in Oriental garb, as he was forced to do in parts of his travels in order to protect himself, it seems he was presenting his *Voyage d'Outremer* to Philip the Good. We know that he did not write his *Voyage* down immediately upon his return, but rather some twenty years later. Guéret-Laferté, Devereaux and others have claimed precipitously that the book being presented to Philip was a Qur'an.[49] Broquière indeed acquired a text which included "ensamble l'Alkoran et les fais de Mahomet que le chappelain du consul des Venissiens à Damas m'avoit baillés par escript en latin, qui contenait beaucop d'escripture" [the *Alkoran* and the deeds of Mohammad that the Venetian chaplain of Damascus had given me written in Latin and containing a lot of writing] destined for the duke's bishop Jean Germain, which would ostensibly have been presented upon Bertrandon de la Broquière's return in 1432.[50] If the codex being presented is in fact the book about Mohammad from the end of the *Voyage,* it marks a major shift away from the trend established by Miélot's illuminator to introduce a work with an illustration of the author presenting the work commissioned for the patron. This is highly unlikely given the structure of BNF ms. fr. 9087. Both sources of knowledge, the description of Ottoman Turkey in the travel narrative itself and the summary about Mohammad are significant elements of the Bertrandon de la Broquière embassy. It seems more likely that this illumination, like the previous one of the Holy Land, is suspended somewhat in time. It is neither meant to depict 1432 the date of Broquière's return, nor the early 1450s when he had written the work.

What is important about the book being presented to Philip the Good is that it contains knowledge about the Orient. It is not a Qur'an. There is, after all, no conclusive evidence that a Qur'an was actually offered to the duke, and no study of the corpus of Jean Germain, the final recipient of this gift, to my knowledge, has yet demonstrated

49 In the legend to the cover portrait of his book, Paviot (2003), with more critical reserve, labels it "le livre sur Mahomet [que Bertrandon] a rapporté de Damas," [a book about Mohammad that Betrandon brought back from Damascus] referring to a summary about Mohammad and Islam of the kind that no doubt circulated in the Middle Ages, p. 4. Later, on page 120, he claims that there were in fact two texts, a Latin Qur'an and a copy of the *Gesta Mahometi.*

50 Schefer, 261.

conclusively Germain's original or noteworthy knowledge of Islam outside of what he could have culled from the stock works available anywhere in Europe in the fifteenth century. The presented codex is also not a copy of his *Voyage d'Outremer*. According to this interpretation Bertrandon de la Broquière's Turkish clothing is more fashion than anything, tantamount to the Turkish clothing that Philip the Good would wear as a baby, and it marks Bertrandon de la Broquière more as a man who has traveled and learned than actually someone who has just returned from Turkey. The same goes for Philip's stylized *miles Christi* apparel. He is not in saddle as Philip VI was, but rather appears engaged in chivalric exercises at home. The book presented to Philip stands, as such, as a sign of a codex rather than a specific codex, a symbolic anthology of information about the East, past and present, the mark of Philip's embassies in the East, and his endeavors to gain this kind of information. It is like BNF ms. fr. 9087 itself but even greater, a sign of the multifaceted patronage of works concerning the Orient and the crusade.

The title chosen by Broquière, linking the *Alkoran* and the *Faits de Mahomet* together adds an interesting twist to this interpretation. That the book is presented to Philip in armor, the pious soldier standing in front of this sacred city of Burgundy, far away from any horse that he could depart on, seems to be showing Philip the Good presented with the heroic deeds of his rival. This illumination, instead of portraying the Burgundian court's introduction to Islam and its theology, maps religion and the legacy of Muslim conquests onto the coordinates of pious chivalry so revered in Burgundy and in its crusading rhetoric. The illumination maps Islam onto intelligible court discourse. It is reminiscent of Commynes' calling Mehmet II one of greatest knights of all time or of the fictional French prose history of *Saladin* (also of the fifteenth century) portraying the eponymous hero, a highly Westernized version of Salāhaddīn al-Ayyūbī, as an example of chivalric refinement. There is even a slight possibility that the *Faits de Mahomet* with its pseudochivalric title could be also referring to Fatih Mehmet II, even though he is usually called the "Grand Turc." François Philelphe, the author of a famous treatise about the Turks in 1451, after all, referred to Mehmet as Mahomet.[51] If this part of my interpretation is correct, the presentation of such a book follows in step with the manuscript's tendency to depict prophecy, here hinting at the conquest of 1453, clearly the centerpiece of Mehmet II's chivalric deeds. After all, Broquière's travel account was

51 Paviot (2003), 121-122.

full of all kinds of pessimistic remarks about the perilous state of the city in the 1430s. It would not be a mendacious fulfillment of the prophecy for the sake of glorifying royal memory, but rather a clever depiction of the factual loss of that city that covers up Philip the Good's own inability to realize a crusade plan just before 1453, due to the domestic problem of the revolts in Ghent.

The Sixth Illumination (f. 207v): Constantinople in 1453

What distinguishes the sixth illumination from the others is its clear depiction in time and space. It depicts unmistakably the moment of the siege of Constantinople on 29 May 1453 as well as its immediate aftermath. It has been suggested to me that depictions of Constantinople from this angle, with the tip of the peninsula upward, are very rare.[52] More research needs to be done to identify the antecedent of such a map if in fact one exists. It is not, however, the first time that maps are found in manuscripts at the Burgundian court.[53] This map of Constantinople is of course marked with the coat of arms of Philip the Good and his motto "Aultre naray," [I shall have no other] making it a distinct part of this codex, and yet, in its style and its precision, its geographical tags and its vivid representation of both movement in the siege of the walled city itself, and the static quality in the foreground in the Turkish encampment, distinguish it from the other illuminations. It is as if the visual culmination of the codex is realized in the form of the often-prophesied "siege," understood in both senses of the French word, the *military attack* of the city, and the concomitant *encampment* of the "Grand Turc."[54] The position of the image in the manuscript, however, causes a problem. Unlike illumination 1, 3 or 5 which introduce the beginning of a new text, illumination 6 is inserted at the moment when Bertrandon de la Broquière views

52 Kay Edel, personal communication. See also I.R. Manners, "Constructing the Image of a City: The Representation of Constantinople in Christopher Buondelmonti's *Liber Insularum Archipelagi*," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 87.1(1997): 72–102.

53 A rough mappamundi can be found in Lyons Bibliothèque Municipale ms. Palais des Arts 32 in the frontispiece. Also, Philip the Good supposedly commissioned an elaborate mappamundi from Jean van Eyck. See Marcel Destombes, *Mappamondes, AD 1200–1500*, Monumenta Cartographica Vetustiorius Aevi, no. 1 (Amsterdam: N. Israel, 1964), 4.

54 I acknowledge Elizabeth Moodey for encouraging me also to think about it as the seat of the Turks.

Figure 1
Bibliothèque Nationale de France ms. français 9087 (f. 207v),
depicting the siege of Constantinople in 1453.

Constantinople for the first time in 1432. At this moment of the narrative, the description of the city is quite stunning indeed. Maria Colombo has argued that few "literary" texts (narrative fiction and lyric poetry) actually contain descriptions of the city of Constantinople of the sort that are found in Bertrandon de la Broquière.[55] The text at the end of folio 206*v* describes a bridge from which "il est bien parfont pour aler veoir laditte cite de constantinoble" [it is perfect for viewing the city of Constantinople]. Again, this infidelity to chronology created by the illuminations put in the middle of the text — Bertrandon traveled there in the 1430s and the Turks took the city in 1453 — would appear to serve a specific purpose. It lends the codex, as a complex document which collapses chronologies and space, a specific ideological force. On the one hand, after 1456 and the execution of the codex, the recent loss of the seat of Eastern Christendom, appears predictable, as if forecasted through the analysis of Broquière, as early as the 1430s. This illumination, in this way, is in dialogue with illumination 3 creating another prophetic effect of the manuscript. Here is foretold in the time of narration a loss of an important city. In the prophetic gap — an effect which the codex has produced all along — the textual design opens a space for Philip and his princely pretensions. This last illumination updates that objective, specifically focusing on Constantinople as now the seat of the Ottoman power. Philip is faced, if not literally sandwiched between, spaces of monotheistic heritage (illuminations 4 and 6) which used to be circumscribed by Christendom, but have fallen outside such a space.

Conclusion

If we think of the illumination program as logically extending the intention of the first two texts, namely to provide a "cultural map" of the Eastern Mediterranean useful for anyone desiring to travel there, it is easy to see how critics have made the jump in logic to assume that BNF ms. fr. 9087 argues for the launching of a new "saint voyage." With the exception of the metonymic introductory chapter, which suggests that this whole codex might be called the "Advis directif," the rest of the manuscript does not seem to make that argument, explicitly or implicitly, visually or textually. If on the other hand we think about the illumination program as the extension of Philip's pretensions to supersede his

55 M. Colombo, "Cherchez la ville. Constantinople à la cour de Philippe le Bon (1419–1467)," *Sauver Byzance de la Barbarie du monde: Gargnano del Garda, 14-17 May 2003*, eds. Liana Nissim and Silvia Riva, Quaderni de Acme 65 (Milan: Cisalpino, 2004), 113-130.

dynastic predecessor, all the while using the symbolic capital of his prophetic power, then illumination 6 can be seen as an updating of information about the East, just as Broquière's narrative was. It is more a factual representation of loss rather than a Pheasant Oath-style spectacularization of loss. The latter invites immediate action to recuperate the loss, the former invites a more strategic recasting of princely power. This article began with a suggestion about how the illuminations can be read serially, each responding to problems raised in previous images. Instead of three pairs of two illuminations, it would appear that the associations of the manuscript are more centered around two triptychs, the first three illuminations which establish a dynastic argument and reposition the image of Philip the Good in a lineage of guardians of the crusade, and the second set of three illuminations which present Philip with the reality of the Eastern Mediterranean he so often thought about elsewhere. The second set and their complicated use of temporality and allusion are a version of the "Jerusalem or Constantinople" dilemma created by Miélot and his illuminator, at the center of which Philip the "monarchical" duke is collecting knowledge about the current state of affairs. Although Grunzweig did not explicitly mention this codex, he very well could have, since he argued that two cities–Jerusalem and Constantinople – in the 1450s were both important to the Burgundian court, but that Constantinople after 1453 had replaced the Holy Land as immediate object of worry.[56] In BNF ms. fr. 9087 we observe a cautious portrait of the prince for local consumption, a portrait of a judicious duke who upholds the identity of chivalric prince, whose duties could include reviving the crusade in action, but without being represented as actually calling for those expeditions to take place.

BNF ms. fr. 9087 combines different kinds of texts: from a century-old polemical text on the necessity of taking the Holy Land to a detailed geographical and anthropological description of the multicultural Levant, and then a jump of a century to present a Burgundian-led fact-finding mission. The program of illuminations of the codex reenact yet again Philip's self-proclaimed goal as duke, that of "Grand Duc d'Occident" [the Great Duke of the West] who of course would be expected to be the guardian of the crusader ideal. The illumination program, no doubt designed for the reading of an inner circle of ducal power, makes a much less extravagant claim than the more public spectacles of the Pheasant Oath. Scholars seem keen to read at every turn in the *matière*

56 A. Grunzweig, "Philippe le Bon et Constantinople," *Byzantion* 24 (1954): 47–61.

de Bourgogne a call to war beyond the sea. This seems to say more about their notion of crusade and of propaganda than about the variety of historical sources themselves. Scholars are enthusiastic about interpreting texts as "calls" to crusade, misreading the representations at hand as explicit steps taken towards aggression, whereas the system of ducal patronage and representation is much more complex. BNF ms. fr. 9087 seems to manage ideologically both information about the Orient and a history of attempts to organize late expeditions to recover the Holy Land. Let us not forget that there is little actual pre-1291 history in this manuscript. The question of the feasibility or the realistic expectation of success of a renewed campaign against Muslim power does not seem to even matter in such a private representation of power; a dynastic legacy of crusade and the simple signs of crusade are enough for ducal self-representation. Paviot has argued for the "continuité de l'idée de croisade à l'intérieur du royaume de France" [continuity of the idea of crusade inside the kingdom of France] which translated to a specific crusade project among the dukes of Burgundy only in the case of Philip the Bold (1363–1404) and Philip the Good (1419–1467). It is not unreasonable to question what this idea of "continuity" actually entails. It would seem that to claim that there was a "continuity, or a *persistence*, of the idea *of reviving* a crusade" might give more critical space, on the one hand, for an analysis of the complex ebb and flow of political projects such as crusade in response to local political situations, and on the other hand, a deessentializing of what a crusade actually was over time, and a richer knowledge of the various representations through which such a concept was translated in the late Middle Ages.

The three texts included in BNF ms. fr. 9087 did not make it into printed form in their own century, but stayed in the rather anachronistic form of the illustrated manuscript. More research is needed of both text and image concerning the "saint voyage" and histories of the Orient in the numerous manuscripts which contain them, specifically for the details that they provide about the kinds of representational distinctions made between all the peoples of the East, of course, but also for the strategies of self-depiction of the political and military actors in the second half of the fifteenth century in a European context, between France, Burgundy and the Empire,[57] and in a comparative

57 An older example of this kind of study is the study of the "competition" between the French and the Imperial chancellery by Helene Wieruszowski, *Vom Imperium zum nationalen Königtum. Vergleichende Studien über die publizistischen Kämpfe Kaiser Friedrich II. und König Philipps des Schönen mit der Kurie* (Munich: 1933).

Mediterranean context, between the various actors vying for the legacy of the fallen Eastern Empire. Such "codicological performances" as BNF ms. fr. 9087 illustrate the ability of ideologues at the court of Burgundy to consolidate the histories and myths of the crusades in their attempt to situate the duke in the political geography of a nascent Europe. There are many other such compilations from within Burgundy, including a variety of codices that recount the Pheasant Oath, and it is to be expected that each performance will arise from within a specific combination of political conditions. Careful readings of other "oriental compilations" such as Vienna ms. 2533 (*Chroniques de Jerusalem abregees*), BNF ms. fr. 12201 (containing Hayton's *La fleur des histoires d'Orient* as well as a biographical sketch of Timur Lang), or BNF ms. fr. 2810 (containing Marco Polo's *Le livre des merveilles*) can no doubt be shown to embody similar pragmatic political impulses. Reading "codicologically" should provide a needed analysis of the political languages of text and image in such remarkable cultural productions.