Chapter 2

CHIVALRIC CONNECTIONS

ON THE HEELS of Charles's near-canonization in 1376, the political landscape evolved rapidly. King Charles V confiscated the duchy in 1379, dispossessing both Jeanne de Penthièvre and Jean IV despite the legal cases made in their favour. A Breton rebellion ensued, in which Jeanne remained ostensibly neutral while networking with those who opposed the French king. Duke Jean's recall from exile and effective military resistance led to the second treaty of Guérande in 1381, reestablishing the terms agreed at the end of the war of succession. Jeanne herself died in 1384, but the long-delayed release of her eldest son Jean from English captivity in 1387 further provoked sporadic armed conflict that would carry over into the next generation.[1] Meanwhile, from 1370 to 1407 the position of royal military commander (*connétable*) was held by powerful Breton noblemen who opposed the Montfortists, first Bertrand du Guesclin, who had fought for Jeanne and Charles during the civil war, then Olivier de Clisson, father-in-law to Jean de Penthièvre. However, King Charles VI's mental instability precluded further French military intervention in the duchy after 1392, and his daughter Jeanne married the future Duke Jean V in 1396. Against this backdrop of shifting tensions and affiliations, new historical accounts developed to frame the Breton civil war and its participants in a martial light.

By examining Jeanne's and Charles's posthumous reputations in the framework of what may be termed "chivalric" chronicles, preoccupied with feats of arms and aristocratic values, a very different picture emerges from that in the canonization proceedings. In the histories written by Froissart and Cuvelier, the war took centre stage rather than being excused. Its violence brought suffering to the duchy and its inhabitants, but also, indeed primarily, enabled extraordinary deeds. The expected standards of behaviour were no longer couched in clerical terms, but engaged more directly with the performance of knighthood. And whereas Jeanne's characterization had previously depended on the parameters established for Charles, the widening of the narrative scope now made the influence more independently bi-directional. Nevertheless, the audience for these works was

1 Lémeillat, "Jean et Olivier de Bretagne," 71–74, 77–79.

socially similar to the witnesses who testified at Angers, and the events of the early 1370s were still relatively fresh within elite circles. This overlapping outlook meant that some of the same stories, themes, and interpretations from the first phase of their reputational development found new life in the chronicle tradition.

This second phase participated in a booming period of chivalric writing, and in particular of chivalric biographies that advocated their protagonist's virtues to consolidate their knightly legacy.[2] But whereas many of these works were preoccupied with the accomplishments of individual men, the treatment of the Breton civil war allowed the dynamics of the ducal couple to come to the fore. The interplay of Jeanne's and Charles's roles shows how structural mechanisms for acquiring and delegating power could rework the usual patterns of military leadership.[3] This two-way exchange further extends our understanding of seigneurial partnerships, where a husband's ability to act (systematically) on behalf of his wife, or a wife (periodically) on behalf of her husband, have been treated largely in isolation rather than as part of a single process, and adds a gendered dimension to our assessment of how elite networks played into civil wars.[4] Moreover, as knightly honour was keyed to martial masculinity, the extent to which noblewomen were able to reach these standards has been much debated, both then and now.[5] The reciprocity between the duke and duchess here suggests that lordly women could be routinely integrated into this normative framework with or without crossing gendered lines, and the success or failure of both men and women according to chivalric standards took on new explanatory weight in divergent assessments of shared power.

Chivalric Reputations

Whereas the canonization proceedings packaged disparate testimony into an ostensibly coherent whole, the chivalric accounts dressed their basic story in layered reinterpretations. The two narratives taking the spotlight in this chapter were originally the work of two contemporary ecclesiastics, Jean Froissart and Cuvelier, probably both of Picard origin (a dialectal region

2 Taylor, *Virtuous Knight*, 1–5.

3 A preliminary version of some of this research appeared in Graham-Goering, "Authority."

4 E.g., Bolton and Meek, *Aspects of Power*, 1; LoPrete, "Women, Gender and Lordship," 1924–26, 1929, 1931.

5 LoPrete, "Gendering Viragos."

in northeastern France). Very little is known about Cuvelier, whose identity can only be deduced from clues in his work. He appears to have been a cleric, probably associated with the French royal court, who died between 1384 and 1389.[6] Froissart's life is much better-documented.[7] He was born around 1337 in the county of Hainault, at the modern-day border of France and Belgium. His first literary patron was Philippa of Hainault, queen of England by her marriage to Edward III, for whom he wrote a now-lost poetic chronicle. After her death in 1369, he returned to his hometown of Valenciennes and pursued several church benefices while building his writing career with the support of various great magnates connected to the courts of both France and England. Of these patrons, the most significant from the point of view of the Breton conflict was Guy de Châtillon (d. 1397), count of Blois and Charles's nephew. Froissart's extensive travels in France, Great Britain, and Italy also put him in contact with many of the other major political players of his day. While the precise date of his death is unknown, he continued to write until after 1404, though his chronicle ends with events in 1400. Both Froissart's chronicle and Cuvelier's poem thus developed in a similar context and from similar perspectives. They were vernacular works written about and for, but not by, the knightly aristocracy following the winding down of the Breton war.

However, each of these works were also much more than a polished interpretation of events by a single person. Froissart's chronicle, for instance, was a medieval bestseller, with over 150 known manuscripts, though its popularity in France increased during the fifteenth century.[8] It is conventionally divided into four parts: Book I (covering roughly the years 1307–1378), Book II (1379–1384), Book III (1386–1391), and Book IV (1392–1400), totalling about 1.5 million words. The "matter of Brittany," as Froissart called it, fell into the first book, which survives in around 60 manuscripts. And because Froissart was reluctant to leave well enough alone, we have seven different versions of Book I, in addition to other variations introduced by the people who copied specific manuscripts. To study how Jeanne's and Charles's reputations developed in his work, we can focus on four variants, known as Amiens (composed between 1384 and 1391),

6 Cuvelier, *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, ed. Faucon, 3:36–37.

7 Ainsworth, "Froissart, Jean"; Ainsworth, "Jean Froissart: Chronicler, Poet and Writer"; Croenen, "Froissart et ses mécènes."

8 Croenen, "Reception," 410; Tesnière, "Manuscrits copiés par Raoul Tainguy," 302; Courroux, *Écriture de l'histoire*, 368, 936; Guenée, *Du Guesclin et Froissart*, 174–75, 180–83.

B (1391–1399), and Rome (1404 or later), as well as an Abridged version written around the same time as Amiens.[9] The Amiens, Rome, and Abridged versions survive in only a single manuscript each, the first two named for the libraries where these are now kept. Unfortunately, the Rome manuscript is incomplete, so the surviving text of Book I only records events up to 1350. Of these four it was the B text, or large excerpts thereof, that was circulated most widely in the medieval period, so insofar as reputation reflected common opinion, it should be seen as the most representative. However, its narrative decisions can only be understood in comparison with the alternatives Froissart explored elsewhere.

Even figuring out what order these versions were composed in has been challenging for historians. A key sticking point is that Froissart himself based portions of his work on an earlier chronicle written by Jean Le Bel. Le Bel was another Picard churchman, serving as a canon of Liège in what is now Belgium.[10] He wrote a chronicle of Edward III's reign from 1326 to 1361 at the request of Jean, lord of Beaumont, Queen Philippa's uncle, whom Le Bel accompanied to England and Scotland in 1327. This account was relatively little known in its own right, with only one manuscript surviving.[11] Because Froissart sometimes drew heavily and explicitly on Le Bel's chronicle, scholars since the late nineteenth century have often assumed that versions that stuck closer to this source were written earlier, and more independent versions came later. In some parts of the text this was true, but Froissart's representations of the Breton civil war were less strictly linear. Godfried Croenen has identified several considerations that influenced Froissart's decisions, from updating his information, to enhancing dramatic or realistic descriptions, to constructing a coherent narrative—not all necessarily compatible motivations.[12] Moreover, Froissart kept his other versions to hand (including Le Bel) and may even have developed some simultaneously, so he could freely rework the text by innovating in some places or reverting to a trusted textual authority in others. Accord-

9 For this chronology, see Croenen, "Guerre en Normandie," 142. Respectively, these four versions have been edited in Froissart, *Chroniques: Livre I*, ed. Diller (hereafter Amiens); *Chroniques de J. Froissart*, ed. Luce (hereafter FrB); *Œuvres de Froissart*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (hereafter Abridged); Froissart, *Chroniques: Dernière rédaction*, ed. Diller (hereafter Rome).

10 Croenen, "Jean Le Bel."

11 See Le Bel, *Chronique*, for the French text, and Le Bel, *True Chronicles*, for an English translation.

12 Croenen, "Guerre en Normandie," 142.

ingly, each new version was not an "improvement" on the last or working towards a definitive account of the conflict, but used different possibilities to interpret past events.[13]

How we use Froissart as a historical source has changed substantially over time. While he was long regarded as a, or indeed the, authority on the events of the Hundred Years' War, skepticism from the later nineteenth century onwards about his factual reliability has led more recent scholars to emphasize Froissart's value as a reflection of the mindset of his social circle.[14] Book I opened with a clear statement of Froissart's goals in writing the chronicle. He hoped to record the "great deeds of arms" of the wars between France and England, so that they could be widely known and forever recalled as instructive exemplars.[15] This focus on martial feats has earned him the moniker of the "chronicler of chivalry" among some modern historians, not all of whom view it as a good thing.[16] Rather than underestimating conventional portrayals of aristocratic action as "servile," however, we can consider how they constructed reputation in specific ways.[17] First for our purposes, Froissart's focus on feats of arms meant that his narrative of the Breton civil war was structured around certain highlights of the conflict. The opening years of the war were discussed in greatest depth; then Froissart picked up on Charles's capture at La Roche-Derrien in 1347, the Combat of Thirty of 1351, and finally the battle of Auray. Jeanne's and Charles's reputations consolidated around these set-piece encounters, but continued to reflect a range of ideas about lordship, gender, and shared power.

Second, Froissart's aim to commemorate and inform meant he usually selected positive illustrations of aristocratic values and behaviour, though it has been noted that the final, Rome version assumed a bleaker tone.[18] His noble audience wanted to see themselves reflected in these stories, and were even the source for many of them.[19] In his prologue Froissart noted that he had spoken with the "valiant men, knights and squires" who had taken part in these events, supplementing his own eyewitness testimony. For Brittany

13 Palmer, "Book I," 24; cf. Courroux, *Écriture de l'histoire*, 352, 366.

14 Jones, "Breton Civil War."

15 Amiens, 1:1; FrB, 1.2:1; Rome, 35.

16 Coulton, *Chronicler of European Chivalry*.

17 Ainsworth, "Froissardian Perspectives," 62.

18 Froissart, *Chroniques: Dernière rédaction*, ed. Diller, 22.

19 Courroux, *Écriture de l'histoire*, 369.

specifically, Froissart visited the duchy in 1366, and spoke with the former Penthièvre knight Even Charruel in 1373–1374 and possibly with Guillaume de Saint-Mesmin, one of Charles's physicians, in 1388.[20] Through such dialogue Froissart sought a historical truth that lay less in strict facts than in what was plausibly understood to have happened and its significance.[21] In other words, he tried to create a permanent record of good *fama*, though as Froissart's constant rewritings (and other non-authorial additions) show, the process of reputation was not so easily pinned down.

Cuvelier, by comparison, personally wrote only one version of his poetic life and deeds of Bertrand du Guesclin (ca. 1320–1380), constable of France.[22] The scope of this work, finished around 1384, was quite unlike Froissart's chronicle—Cuvelier termed it not a chronicle or history, but a *roman*, or heroic narrative.[23] It focused on a single individual, used the poetic format which was increasingly coming under suspicion for distorting truth in favour of rhyme, was substantially shorter (at 24,346 lines) than Froissart's work, and enjoyed a much more modest, albeit still considerable, manuscript circulation (eight are known to survive).[24] As an example of chivalric biography, it nevertheless belonged to the same world of grand military exploits and idealized aristocratic culture that flourished in the late Middle Ages.[25] These shared interests make it fruitful to compare how Cuvelier's and Froissart's narratives approached the figures of the duke and duchess in the context of the civil war.

Adding a layer of complexity, however, Cuvelier's poem was rewritten in prose not once but twice within five years of its completion. We know nothing of the authors of these texts, but unlike the poem we have a good idea of when and for whom they were written.[26] The first prose version (A) was commissioned in 1387 by Jeannet d'Estouteville, a Norman at the French

20 Jones, "Ancenis," 93; FrB, 4:115; Jones, "Breton Civil War," 73–74; Froissart, *Œuvres*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, 1.1:318.

21 Ainsworth, "Contemporary and 'Eyewitness' History," 270; Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. Luce, 1.1:cviii–ix; Courroux, *Écriture de l'histoire*, 819–57.

22 See Cuvelier, *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, ed. Faucon, vol. 1 (hereafter Chanson), for the French text; and Cuvelier, *Song of Bertrand du Guesclin*, for an English translation.

23 Cuvelier, *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, ed. Faucon, 3:39.

24 Ainsworth, *Jean Froissart and the Fabric of History*, 36–46; Cuvelier, *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, ed. Faucon, 3:311–12, 329.

25 Taylor, *Virtuous Knight*, 1–5.

26 Vermijn, "'De quoy juqu'a mille ans bien parlé en sera,'" appendix 1.

royal court with personal and familial connections to the constable.[27] It condensed the original length by about a third, but remained largely faithful to the overall narrative. The second prose version (B) was written around 1389 at the command of Jeanne and Charles's daughter Marie de Bretagne, duchess of Anjou.[28] It was much freer than the A version in terms of both style, which became more like that of a chronicle than an epic, and content, particularly to develop the role played by Marie and her family. The A version survives in eight manuscripts, the B version in twelve (plus four of an abridged text), suggesting a successful uptake in each case, and both would be set into printed editions in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The poem and both prose texts circulated at the royal court and among the northern French nobility, while the A version also enjoyed a certain popularity in Burgundian circles. Yvonne Vermijn suggests that the coexistence of all three versions meant they inspired variations in each other in subsequent copies.[29] While Cuvelier was not involved in revising his work as Froissart had been, the end result was similarly diffuse, evolving in several directions without establishing a definitive form.

The chronological overlap in the composition of Froissart's *Chroniques* and Cuvelier's *Chanson* and their appeal to similar audiences gives focus to the political positioning of these works and how it shaped their framing of the Breton conflict on multiple levels. Froissart claimed, famously, to be impartial in the contest between the kings of France and England. His exemplary knights represented both sides (an even-handed praise that could, to partisans, nevertheless appear hostile) and he took no position on the core issues that set the kings at odds. However, equitable reporting could still capture different strands of public opinion. Froissart's characters held views on the legitimacy of the claimants in Brittany, and his own understanding of the war evolved over time. More subtly, a chronicler's neutrality might be no better than that of their sources. Jean Le Bel, sympathetic to the English as he was, was still susceptible to Valois spin, seen in an erroneous Montfort genealogy that persisted throughout Froissart's rewritings.[30] Certain manuscript copyists, in turn, attempted to correct such libel.[31] This reiterative process shows how such chronicles lived within a wider political

27 Ménard, ed., *Histoire de messire Bertrand du Guesclin* (hereafter PGA).

28 Buchon, ed., "Chronique anonyme" (hereafter PGB).

29 Vermijn, "Chacun son Guesclin," 31–36.

30 Chareyron, *Jean Le Bel*, 209.

31 Mazzei, "Two Claimants," 154n10.

discourse, and the reputations in their works were unavoidably shaped by these currents.

Cuvelier's emphatic pro-French stance contrasts with Froissart's more international perspective, as does the place of the civil war in his work. Charles, and especially Jeanne, were only supporting characters in Cuvelier's story of the constable, so their reputations were somewhat incidental to the work's panegyric function. Insofar as Bertrand fought on their side, Cuvelier was sympathetic to their cause. At the same time, he was active in the French court when Charles V fell out with Jeanne de Penthièvre, who contested the king's attempted annexation of the duchy in 1379–1380. On top of this conflict of interest regarding Breton affairs, Cuvelier's active misogyny coloured his approach to gender dynamics differently from Froissart's.[32] Conversely, his adaptors and later copyists did not necessarily share these views and updated the text accordingly. Some later copies of the poem and of the Prose Guesclin A were more critical of Charles V or modified various characters' roles to reflect contemporary political fortunes.[33] Marie de Bretagne's commission predictably expanded on certain episodes of the war and enhanced the portrayal of its protagonists where needed. Again, the ongoing political value of these works meant an author's initial interpretation was not the end of the story.

Finally, chronicles responded not only to external political contexts, but also to each other. I have already discussed how different versions of Le Bel/Froissart and Cuvelier fed into their own retellings, but the same happened between formerly separate histories. For example, Froissart's A version (ca. 1381) survives only for the beginning and end of the text (which do not concern the Breton war); instead, it was combined with large excerpts of the B version and the unrelated *Grandes chroniques de France* to create a hybrid chronicle that circulated widely under Froissart's attribution.[34] These accounts in turn became the source of rumours and reputations. We can only directly trace their impact on written historiography, but the audiences who read these works or heard them read aloud would have made them part

32 Cuvelier, *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, ed. Faucon, 3:117–20.

33 Vermijn, "Chacun son Guesclin," 33–34, 42–43.

34 Croenen, "Guerre en Normandie," 118. The *Grandes chroniques* were the official and highly influential history of the French kings, composed at the royal abbey of Saint Denis, then at court, from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. The excerpts covered the years 1350–1356 in most of the Froissart manuscripts, although in four copies (MSS A34–37 in Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. Luce, 1.1:xxxv) the opening years of the Breton war up to Charles's capture are a paraphrase of the *Grandes chroniques*.

of their political dialogues.[35] Both individually and in combination, then, the chivalric narratives of the war of succession fed from and into the cyclical process of creating *fama*.

Legitimizing Status, Gender, and Relationships

If the canonization inquiry stressed that Charles was not born to be duke, the inheritance of lordly status was a defining feature of Jeanne's and Charles's roles in both Froissart and the Guesclin tradition. This framing makes sense when talking about a war of succession, but it also reflected the aristocratic preoccupation with titles and ancestry.[36] For them, leadership was not just about what you *did*; it was part of who you *were*. Jeanne's position as the natural heir of the late Duke Jean III let her automatically claim the loyalty of the Breton nobility. Charles, meanwhile, was a representative of the extended French royal family, granting him both rank and access to a network of friendship and obligation. These distinct types of authority became complementary in marriage, with Jeanne's claim to the duchy reinforced by Charles's friends in high places. Into this mix came a third source of legitimacy, the oaths of fidelity sworn between lords, which helped Charles in particular establish himself as duke. Authority played out across these relationships as both direct command and indirect delegation, complicating the impact of status and gendered roles on princely legitimacy.

The passage of Froissart that best illustrates the fluid outcomes of this framework appears during Jean de Montfort's initial bid to conquer the major Breton towns. His first stop in the chronicle was the fortress of Brest on the western tip of the peninsula, where its captain Garnier de Clisson defied him. Garnier's reasoning, however, differed from version to version.[37] Proceeding chronologically, in Amiens he would not obey Jean because "there was one nearer to the inheritance than was he." In the Abridgement, it was because Garnier held Brest for the heiress, wife of Charles de Blois, to whom he himself was related. The B version claimed Garnier would not accept Jean as lord without clear proof "of the lord to whom it should belong by right." Finally, in the Rome text, Garnier objected first that the Breton barons and the French king must recognize the new duke, then bluntly declared

35 Cuvelier, *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, ed. Faucon, 3:288–89; Contamine, "En marge."

36 Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood*, 55.

37 Amiens, 2:102; Abridged, 107; FrB, 2:91; Rome, 468–69.

that the duchy belonged to Charles by reason of his wife as a daughter of the ducal line. While all four scenes emphasized the orderly structures underpinning legitimate authority, the potential claimant could be either member of the ducal couple, explicitly named or left ambivalent. Consistent factors of status, gender, and relationships could generate inconsistent interpretations of joint lordship.

To unpick these dynamics, I will show how Jeanne and Charles were each situated at a different node of their power networks before turning to how they interacted. For both Froissart and Cuvelier, relationships were key to establishing the respective status of the would-be duke and duchess. All of Froissart's retellings of the Breton war, as well as Le Bel's earlier account, explained that Jean III's heir was the daughter of his younger brother. Jean had married her to Charles de Blois, nephew of the king of France, although he worried that the count of Montfort would attempt to disinherit her.[38] Cuvelier's four-line summary of the war's premise likewise foregrounded Jeanne's inheritance, her marital status, and the Montfortist threat. He explained that there were two heirs claiming to be the late duke's nearest relation: a lady, wife of Charles de Blois, who pursued her rights, and the count of Montfort who wished to take precedence.[39] The Prose Guesclin B further developed the legal logic of the succession, which suggests that the anonymous author had, via their patron, better access to the actual terms of this suit, but otherwise followed the familiar pattern.[40] Putting Jeanne and her lineage first was a deliberate decision. Froissart's and Cuvelier's accounts contrasted with, for example, the *Grandes chroniques*, which were written from the French royal perspective and began instead with Charles's family history.[41] Starting with Jeanne established her claim as the source of authority within Brittany, while Charles provided a link to the higher, external power on which the duchy depended.

Jeanne's and Charles's respective positions shaped in turn the depiction of their leadership, because their status determined how others might follow them and serve their interests. Froissart at times suggested that Jeanne automatically commanded the loyalty of the Breton military captains. In addition to Garnier de Clisson above, the captain of Rennes Henri

38 Amiens, 2:97–98; FrB, 2:87–88; Rome, 462–63; Le Bel, *Chronique,* 1:247–48. For a schematic breakdown of these passages, see Graham-Goering, "Authority," table 1.

39 Chanson, ll. 843–46; cf. PGA, 17.

40 PGB, 4; Graham-Goering et al., *Aux origines de la guerre*, doc. II.

41 Viard, ed., *Grandes chroniques*, 9:218.

d'Espinefort in the Amiens text refused to give up his "rightful lady" and had always considered her the heiress, a view allegedly shared by a thousand other knights and squires. The town's elite agreed that they would never "commit fraud or fail in their loyalty towards their rightful and natural lady."[42] This phrasing emphasized leadership as a structural effect. The adjective *droit(e)*, translated here as "rightful," had several interlocking connotations: legitimate legal and moral entitlement; appropriateness according to reason, truth, and order; and directness or immediacy. Similarly, the concept of a "natural" lord invoked ideas of birthright (and even birthplace), inherent nobility, legitimate rule, and conformity to natural law and order.[43] Casting the duchess's authority in these terms mapped out how it should have worked, a pre-ordained course subverted by Jean de Montfort's intervention (not unlike imagining Charles's uncontested rule in the canonization). Ordinarily, Jeanne could expect loyalty because of who she was.

Charles's position as nephew of the king of France, meanwhile, worked a bit differently. His high birth made him unquestionably a great nobleman, and both chronicle traditions stressed the eminence of his blood and lineage.[44] When it came to converting this personal status into the capacity to command, however, Charles (or the king on his behalf) had to ask for help. Charles could usually rely on kinship bonds to recruit French lords to his cause. Froissart's Rome version was particularly explicit about these family ties, repeatedly referring to major players as Charles's uncle, brother, or cousin.[45] Charles could not demand assistance from these magnates as he was not their lord, but they were generally willing to enter his service upon request, or at least to act as his allies.[46] Of course, the efficacy of these connections relied on affinity, as seen in the contrast between the beginning and end of the war. Froissart emphasized King Philippe VI's closeness to his nephew when explaining his grant of the duchy to Charles and initial assembly of an army in 1341.[47] However, the sense of obligation became more tenuous over generations: by 1364, Philippe's grandson Charles V gave Duke Charles military support more on the basis of the promises made by his pre-

42 Amiens, 2:107, 110–11, 114–15.

43 Krynen, "Naturel," esp. 184; Levasseur, "Dénoncer la tyrannie"; Scordia, "*Il n'est pas sire de son pays*"; Roux, *Dialogues de Salmon*, 22.

44 E.g., Abridged, 105; Rome, 474; Chanson, ll. 3074, 6312; PGA, 36.

45 Rome, e.g., 490, 499, 568, 580; cf. Amiens, 2:143.

46 E.g., Rome, 490; FrB, 2:158; Chanson, l. 2499.

47 Amiens, 2:142; Abridged, 113; FrB, 2:104, 106–7, 116; Rome, 490.

decessors than on his own account.[48] Nevertheless, he lamented the death of his cousin shortly thereafter—and with this kinship connection broken, French aid to the duchy ceased.[49] Through Charles, a conflict between two branches of the Breton ducal family became the project of the French royal family, of which Charles effectively acted as the local representative.

Cuvelier neatly outlined these conceptual counterparts when the duke of Lancaster asked Bertrand du Guesclin to identify his lord. Bertrand replied that it was "Duke Charles de Blois, who was born of the royals, and milady his wife of great excellence, who ought to hold the inheritance of Brittany."[50] Likewise in Froissart's Amiens text, when the duke of Normandy left Brittany after the opening campaign, he had the Breton barons swear to stay loyal to "milord Charles *his* cousin, and his wife, *their* lady."[51] But because both components, inheritance and networks, were necessary for the ducal couple, it was easy for their roles to intertwine. Katrin Sjursen has argued that medieval aristocratic marriages helped establish what she calls a "lordship unit," where both spouses participated in seigneurial authority regardless of their independent relationship to the source of power and, to some extent, regardless of their gender.[52] In Froissart, Charles displayed this parity by commissioning armorial banners befitting "a lord and a lady."[53] Correspondingly, their supporters and allies were motivated to act on behalf of them both together. In the Abridgment, the departing French lords formally took their leave of both Charles and his wife the duchess.[54] Earlier, the captain Olivier de Clisson at La Roche-Periou had sworn that "never would he obey [Jean de Montfort] and would hold no other lord heir of Brittany save for milord Charles de Blois and milady his wife."[55] Meanwhile, Jean de Montfort worried that the French would intervene to "claim the inheritance in the name of milord Charles de Blois and of his wife who called herself

48 Amiens, 3:330; Abridged, 408.

49 Amiens, 3:356; FrB, 6:177–78; Abridged, 419; FrB, 6:173; Chanson, ll. 7278–79, 7284; PGA, 151; PGB, 27.

50 Chanson, ll. 1883–85; cf. PGA, 35.

51 Amiens, 2:301 (my emphasis).

52 Sjursen, "War of the Two Jeannes," 39.

53 Rome, 475–76.

54 Abridged, 118.

55 Abridged, 110.

heiress of it."[56] In all these instances, leadership was a joint attribute resulting from the individual authorities of the duke and duchess.

I suggest, however, that rather than implying equivalent access to ducal authority on both sides, such overlap reflected a mutual dependence that engaged, rather than obscured, personal status and gendered roles, neither of which could exist outside a relational context. For instance, marriage put Jeanne at a disadvantage in gendered terms, and her dependency on Charles is shown overwhelmingly by the fact that these accounts referred to her primarily as his wife. Only the Rome manuscript of Froissart's Book I mentioned her given name, and only at her first introduction.[57] But while Jeanne was subordinated to the generic lordship of her husband, this gendered domination did not affect her direct access to the title of duchess.[58] Meanwhile, her status as heiress permitted her to command despite her sex: "natural" lordship overrode the "natural" subordination of women, keeping Jeanne's leadership within the expected order.

Conversely, on gendered grounds we might expect Charles to have control over his wife's duchy as a matter of course. Froissart indicated this simplified process in Book III, where he reminded his audience that by marrying Jeanne, who "came from the direct stock of Brittany and its dukes," Charles could claim the ducal title.[59] However, the implications were not so clear-cut up close.[60] Le Bel, and so Froissart's B text, claimed that Duke Jean promised Charles the duchy in marriage, but this direct authority apparently came from the duke's commitment rather than by default.[61] Moreover, this line was omitted in the other three versions, which instead emphasized that Charles would defend Jeanne's claim as the rightful heir.[62] Charles's authority therefore stemmed from, rather than supplanting, that of his wife. He was called duke *a cause de* or *de par sa femme*—because of or on behalf of his wife—and so became a proxy who exercised what was actually Jeanne's

56 Rome, 482.

57 Rome, 462. It was also the only version to realize that Jeanne inherited the county of Penthièvre from her mother, rather than gaining it at the treaty of Guérande. Jeanne was again named in Book III: Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 865, fol. 309v.

58 E.g., Amiens, 3:356; FrB, 6:178–79; Rome, 817.

59 Besançon, BM, MS 865, fol. 309.

60 For another case where a husband's authority was not automatically accepted over that of the heiress, see Blincoe, "Geoffrey le Bel of Anjou," esp. 89.

61 Le Bel, *Chronique,* 1:247; FrB, 2:87.

62 Amiens, 2:97; Abridged, 105; Rome, 463, cf. 468–69.

lordship by delegation.[63] Neither Jeanne's leadership nor Charles's could be fully understood without reference to the other, as their identities combined and recombined to produce different configurations of leadership.

A third, external source of legitimacy then inflected this mutual dependence within the couple. Seigneurial authority was founded on the act of homage, a mutual pledge of loyalty and assistance between two people in a hierarchy. Homage was not, in itself, a masculine prerogative, but its basis in military service made it more readily available to men, especially when acting as their wife's representative. For Brittany, the duke owed homage to the king of France, and would receive homage from the Breton barons. The logic of homage was linked to the logic of legal ownership of the duchy. Accordingly, certain French chronicles of this period did portray Charles and Jeanne jointly performing homage to Philippe VI, or even Jeanne on her own, in recognition of her blood claim.[64] For Froissart and the Prose Guesclin B, however, it offered an alternative channel for Charles to access authority in his own right, rather than remaining dependent on Jeanne.[65] The duchy thereby became his own inheritance. Charles in turn raised an army and began to receive homage from the barons and towns of the duchy.[66] These repeated vows of loyalty were intimately linked with the progress of the war, coming after successful sieges and accompanying the installation of new military officers. For Charles, homage implied an active achievement of lordship that became especially important in light of the contested succession as well as the feats of arms prioritized in a chivalric chronicle.

As a result, these accounts frequently portrayed Charles as sole leader rather than part of a pair. Even Bertrand du Guesclin, on other occasions in Cuvelier's work, tended to stress this singular loyalty. When war broke out, he reasoned that Charles showed a greater right to the duchy and swore to aid him, persuading his fellow knights to join him with promises that Charles would make them all rich.[67] Charles's claim and the obedience he commanded were similarly stressed in several versions of Froissart, as when the (possibly fictitious) bishop Guy de Léon defected from the Montfortists

63 Amiens, 3:333; FrB, 2:102, 305 (A version); Rome, 480; Chanson, ll. 893, 2395–97; PGA, 133; PGB, 5.

64 Moranvillé, ed., *Chronographia regum Francorum*, 2:183; Molinier and Molinier, eds., *Chronique normande*, 50.

65 Le Bel, *Chronique,* 1:263; Amiens, 2:142; FrB, 2:106; Rome, 488; PGB, 5.

66 Abridged, 116; Rome, 492.

67 Chanson, ll. 895–97, 902–3, 959–60, 6217–18; cf. 2376–82, 3465, 6317, and PGB, 10.

to join Charles, or again with Bertrand du Guesclin himself.[68] After capturing the castle of Champtoceaux at the start of the war, Jean duke of Normandy handed it over to Charles "as heir and duke of Brittany" or "as his own and his inheritance."[69] Several of the greatest Breton lords left the duchy rather than join Jean de Montfort, but they knew King Philippe would not allow his nephew to be driven out of his inheritance.[70] His use of the ducal arms independently of Jeanne reflected that of Jean de Montfort pursuing his own claim.[71] Indeed, whereas Cuvelier introduced the disputed succession in Jeanne's name, Froissart invoked the "cause and right" which Charles had to the inheritance of Brittany, eclipsing Jeanne.[72]

Having direct authority mattered precisely because of the persistent ambiguity engendered by Jeanne and Charles's mutual dependence. Compare Froissart's Abridgement, where Charles "believed himself to be the rightful heir of Brittany," to the A text, where he "believed himself, by reason of his wife, to be the rightful heir of Brittany."[73] The Amiens manuscript directly juxtaposed Charles, who saw himself as heir on his wife's behalf, with King Philippe, who supported his nephew as heir.[74] In the B version, Charles summoned the nobles who had done him homage to help guard and defend his inheritance against his foes, but in Amiens they had done homage because they considered him duke and lord on behalf of his lady wife.[75] This theme even appeared in some of the homage scenes directly, reminding us that the process technically represented the couple even when performed by the husband alone.[76] Just as they both relied on each other for access to power, Jeanne and Charles each had a direct source of legitimacy in the form of inheritance and homage respectively. The fact that these neat parallels blurred easily made it important to continually assess the basis of leadership—it was never a settled question—but also provided opportunities to develop the narrative in different ways. In the framework of these relational reputations, legitimacy was transferrable and therefore negotiable, even

68 Amiens, 2:215; Abridged, 131, 409; FrB, 2:151, 6:148.

69 Rome, 494; Amiens, 2:148.

70 Amiens, 2:133–34; cf. Rome, 474.

71 Amiens, 2:131, 133, 145; Rome, 590; cf. Abridged, 417; FrB, 6:162.

72 Amiens, 2:96; FrB, 2:86.

73 Abridged, 112; FrB, 2:305.

74 Amiens, 2:136.

75 FrB, 6:151; Amiens, 3:333.

76 E.g., Amiens, 2:153; Abridged, 119.

though (and perhaps because) it rested on such ostensibly immutable concepts as birthright, marriage, and gender.

Delegated Leadership in Action

If leadership in the Breton civil war began with questions of status and relationships, this authority still had to be put into action to be fully realized. Froissart wondered why Charles did not act faster against Jean de Montfort, a problem that clearly kept bothering him: "what was Charles de Blois thinking, who claimed to have as his wife and spouse the rightful heiress of Brittany, and who was of such great lineage in France, that he did not set forth, but let the count of Montfort do what he liked?"[77] The Breton barons were, he explained, unable to take up his cause on their own, but needed someone to lead them in arms. We can therefore distinguish between lordship in general, and the role of *chef de guerre*, a war leader in a specific conflict.[78] This was by default a male role, so these chivalric chronicles predictably centred on Charles. Nevertheless, Jeanne appeared sporadically at Charles's side, especially when the direction of the conflict was changing, such as rallying troops for a new strategy or confronting a threat of siege.[79] These appearances, entirely absent in Le Bel, emphasized their shared interests and made their partnership integral to the war's narrative as a whole. Going a step further, Froissart appears to have been increasingly interested in the alternation between Jeanne and Charles that marked the two main turning-points in the war: once after his capture at La Roche-Derrien (1347) and again after his death at Auray (1364). The different possibilities for narrating this shifting power show how the mutual dependence established between them produced a complicated process of delegated authority in the management of violence.

To begin in 1347, whereas the Amiens and Abridged chronicles passed over the consequences of Charles's capture in silence (and Cuvelier omitted the capture entirely), Froissart's B version noted that Charles's fortresses and towns continued to hold out because "milady his wife, who called herself duchess of Brittany, took up the war with great will."[80] Her action, Frois-

77 Rome, 474; cf. Amiens, 2:114, 121, 129, 132, 134; Abridged, 112.

78 Cf. Blincoe, "Geoffrey le Bel of Anjou," 91.

79 Amiens, 2:156, 253, 279; Abridged, 119, 144; FrB, 3:17, 6:149; Rome, 557, 573, 579.

80 FrB, 4:43.

sart explained, brought about "the war of these two ladies" (referring to Jeanne de Flandre, countess of Montfort).[81] This brief mention indicated that Jeanne was Charles's deputy: the fortified sites remained his, but she was able to step into his place. Froissart's reminder of Jeanne's claim to the title suggested it was on this basis as much as her marriage that she assumed command. Moreover, he returned to this theme in setting up the chivalric encounter of the Combat of Thirty in 1351, noting that the Breton wars continued "between the parties of the two ladies" in their strongholds.[82] Now Jeanne was fully in charge of her faction, not just a proxy. The 1351 mention also appeared in Amiens and ultimately originated in Le Bel: but in these earlier works it came out of nowhere.[83] By the B version, Froissart had apparently decided the idea of a face-off between the would-be duchesses was important enough to show the transition between Charles and Jeanne as war leader.

Finally, the Rome text elaborated on the consequences of La Roche-Derrien at length:

> The wife of milord Charles de Blois, who was staying at Nantes and who called herself duchess of Brittany, took up the bit in her teeth and showed the heart of a man and of a lion. She kept together all her companions, the knights and squires of her faction, and she made the viscount of Rohan and milord Robert de Beaumanoir captains and overseers of her troops. And when the knights and squires came to her in her service, she showed them two fair sons which she had by milord Charles de Blois her husband, Jean and Guy, and said: "Here are my children and heirs. If their father has done

81 In the modern period, this turn of phrase has given rise to the name "War of the Two Jeannes" (*la guerre des deux Jeanne*) as a shorthand for the war of succession. The earliest use I can find is in an early nineteenth-century university textbook (Desmichels, *Tableau chronologique*, 132), where it refers specifically to the war after 1347. The lack of comment or explanation suggests that the designation may already have been current in popular usage, but it does not appear to have been adopted by the major historiographers of Brittany before the twentieth century.

82 FrB, 4:110.

83 Amiens, 3:54; Le Bel, *Chronique,* 2:194. There is also an interesting shift in the terminology of the Combat of Thirty proper, where Jean (here, Robert) de Beaumanoir proposed the fight to the Englishman Robert Bemborough (here, Brandebourch). In Le Bel, Amiens, and the Abridgment (284), he suggested that they fight "for love of their *dames*," the same term for "ladies" that was used in describing the ongoing war. In the B and Rome texts, this word became *amies*, evoking the lady/knight relationship of courtly romance. This sense was perhaps what was also intended in the earlier versions, but given the set-up Froissart felt apparently that further clarity was needed to make sure the combat read as a chivalric more than a political undertaking.

> you well, I and the children will do you even better." And the said lady rode from town to town and from fortress to fortress, those that held for her, revitalizing and encouraging those whom milord Charles de Blois her husband had put and established there. And the lady waged as good and as strong a war against the countess of Montfort and her people, as before milord Charles de Blois and his people had done.[84]

Laying the foundations for the war of the two ladies, this passage mirrored almost word-for-word the countess of Montfort's takeover after her husband's capture and death, a scene originating with Le Bel.[85] Froissart, however, subtly updated his description to reflect the differences in the two Jeannes' positions, emphasizing Jeanne de Penthièvre's place within the ducal line while setting Jeanne de Flandre outside it. He clearly remained sensitive to the specific context of each woman's authority.

Moreover, whereas in the B text Jeanne simply took the lead "with great will," reflecting women's routine seigneurial capacity, in Rome she did so with "the heart of a man and of a lion." This phrasing created a double-gendering: the war of the two ladies ultimately saw them competing in manly terms. Invoking the trope of the virago (which meant literally to act like a man) was, for Froissart, praise for the two Jeannes.[86] At the same time, it underscored the emergency that demanded Jeanne go above and beyond the limits of her usual gendered role. Her newfound masculinity also emphasized that she had not one narrative counterpart, but two: her rival and her husband. Jeanne's ability to wage war was explicitly compared with Charles's several times in this passage, with Jeanne meeting or exceeding the precedents he set as a military leader. Moreover, the power transfer was now immediate: these were her companions, her fortresses, her service, her party, even if they had been initially established by Charles. By detailing how Jeanne assumed leadership from Charles, Froissart further clarified the mechanisms of their joint power. Delegation happened reciprocally. Jeanne assumed her husband's command in his absence, reflecting a widespread expectation that noblewomen should be prepared to assume a masculine role as needed; other writers likewise spoke of such women as having the "heart of a man."[87] But Charles had been Jeanne's delegate in the first place,

84 Rome, 817–18.

85 Le Bel, *Chronique,* 1:271–72.

86 Cf. LoPrete, "Gendering Viragos," 21.

87 LoPrete, "Women, Gender and Lordship," esp. 1929; Pizan, *Livre des trois vertus*, 150–51; cf. Westerhof, *Death and the Noble Body*, 42, 51–54.

leading the army to prosecute her claim to the duchy. In his absence, therefore, the role could simply revert to her, and she did not *have* to become masculine to take the war in hand.

These same factors—Jeanne's and Charles's respective contributions, the need for a military leader, and processes of delegation—played out in a different format at the end of the war. This time, Charles was dead, and Froissart seems to have hesitated over the impact of his removal from the field. Lacking Le Bel as a model, he initially focused on Jeanne's strikingly feminine outpouring of sorrow while Jean de Montfort completed his conquest of the duchy. In the Amiens text, King Charles V sent his brother, Louis d'Anjou, to comfort Jeanne (again styled duchess and heiress of Brittany), left abandoned and dismayed by her husband's death and her sons' imprisonment.[88] Even Louis's offer to take over as her war leader (*chiés de le guerre*) did not lift his mother-in-law's spirits. Instead, Jeanne took comfort in her little son Henri, and wept for her lost friends. Tears of grief for the slain were not automatically feminized, but became so when coupled with powerless passivity.[89] It was thus still the "party of Charles de Blois" to whom a few towns stayed loyal.[90] Conversely, Jeanne took positive action in the Abridgement: although still distressed and dismayed, she summoned Louis to help maintain her inheritance, and it was only French intervention that stymied this renewed enterprise.[91] Somewhere between the two, the B version claimed that when King Charles sent Louis to Jeanne, she could not possibly have been more grieving and distressed by her husband's death, but she had confidence in his support until the king changed his mind and sought peace.[92]

All three variations—the incompleteness of Rome is especially regrettable here—suggest that Charles himself was not strictly necessary as a war leader. After all, it was Jeanne's duchy, and if she was willing to go on, so too could the war. Even the *Grandes chroniques*, taking the royal point of view, conceded that Jeanne could have been a plausible rallying point for a Breton resistance had one manifested.[93] Later in Book I, Froissart described how Bertrand du Guesclin waged war in Jeanne's name against

88 Amiens, 3:356.

89 Casey, "Feeling It Like a Man," 237, 243–44, 245.

90 Amiens, 3:358.

91 Abridged, 418.

92 FrB, 6:173.

93 Delachenal, ed., *Grandes chroniques*, 2:6.

English invaders in the viscounty of Limoges to the south, forcing the town of Saint-Yrieix to surrender to Jeanne's obedience.[94] Louis d'Anjou was clearly a plausible substitute for the late duke, especially as Jeanne's son-in-law. Moreover, the events of 1347 had shown that Jeanne could even uphold the fight on her own. What was truly lost with her husband was Charles's connection to French backing. Cuvelier focused on this aspect, highlighting King Charles's grief over his kinsman's death and the end of his alliance with Brittany.[95] The Prose Guesclin B initially painted a similar picture, but added that after the treaty of Guérande (made contrary to the terms consented by Jeanne), Louis offered to champion the rights of his wife and mother-in-law before the king's intervention put an end to the project.[96] Whereas after Charles's capture, Froissart noted that King Philippe continued to send troops to his kinswoman (*cousine*) Jeanne, the refusal to perpetuate this relationship after Charles's demise rendered Jeanne's new delegation of power ineffectual.[97]

The need for a war leader was therefore not strictly a matter of gender. Bertrand du Guesclin had acted in that capacity for Charles de Blois; the Prose Guesclin A even said Bertrand "governed" the war in Brittany on Charles's behalf.[98] Delegation was, after all, a routine part of warfare and of lordship generally. Gendered cues, however, could be deployed to reinforce specific narrative interpretations. Each of Froissart's portrayals of Jeanne's mourning laid more or less stress on her feminine role. The Amiens text went furthest in this direction, highlighting not only her paralysing tears but her position as a mother wrapped up in her (politically irrelevant) youngest child.[99] Her abdication of authority here contrasts oddly with the loyalty she inspired at the start of the war, before Charles stepped into the role of military leader. It was also a far cry from the manly will and courage that let her take command in 1347. These weaker emotions were tempered or quickly overcome in the versions of the story where Jeanne was more active. Masculinity and femininity thus (optionally) heightened the dynamics of delegation within the aristocratic partnership more than they drove them.

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94 FrB, 7:248–49.

95 Chanson, ll. 7279–88; PGA, 151.

96 PGB, 27, 29.

97 Rome, 818.

98 FrB, 6:154; PGA, 63.

99 Cf. Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 179–80.

Honour and the Justification of Violence

In these chivalric texts, Charles and Jeanne largely appeared as representatives of their types, that is, as an exemplary nobleman and noblewoman. The inclusion of emotive elements may make them seem more like individuals, but their behaviour was codified to help readers parse the significance of their actions, in keeping with the works' commemorative and didactic aims. Nevertheless, this interpretive process was complicated by Charles's saintly aura as well as the competing demands of knighthood. This time, the problem was less that he had fought, than that he had lost. If defeat did not always threaten knightly honour, it was important to lose for the right reasons.[100] How could Charles's death at Auray be explained as something other than a failure of leadership?

Froissart, Cuvelier, and their adaptors explained the interactions of joint lordship in various ways to give different answers to this question, and so reassessed the gendered dimensions of aristocratic conflict. Craig Taylor points out that because knights and nobles respected the capacity for violence, there are "important and complicated questions regarding the gendering of honour and shame in chivalric culture."[101] Unsurprisingly, the traditional standards for assessing specifically feminine honour relied entirely on non-martial qualities.[102] But if Ruth Mazo Karras has gone so far as to suggest that women could not gain honour within a chivalric framework, Kimberly LoPrete identifies a trickier problem: while women's potential for manly action was praiseworthy, they were still expected to adhere to feminine ideals.[103] As the two norms were not necessarily easy to reconcile, this gap could be exploited to convey moral judgements. Within the dynamics of delegated power, whether violent actions were honourable or not depended on who was doing them and why.

In both full-length versions of Froissart, the preparations for the battle of Auray put a spotlight on the relationship between the duke and duchess. First, Charles assembled the Breton nobles to help him defend his inheritance against his foes. They were willing to serve their lord (by right of his wife) because they had done homage to him. Charles greeted them joyfully and gave them a warm welcome. Then, when it was time to head out,

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100 Karras, *From Boys to Men*, 24, 40, 60.

101 Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood*, 70 and n. 101.

102 Crouch, *Chivalric Turn*, chaps. 5 and 8.

103 Karras, *From Boys to Men*, 28, 60; LoPrete, "Gendering Viragos," 21.

> they took leave of milady the wife of milord Charles de Blois, who gave it to them gladly and said to her husband with the barons of Brittany present: "My lord, you are going to defend and preserve my inheritance and yours, for what is mine is yours. In this, Sir Jean de Montfort impedes us, and has long impeded us, wrongly and without cause—as God knows, and these barons of Brittany—even though I am the rightful heiress. So I pray you dearly that you commit to no arrangement, accord or treaty by which the whole of the duchy does not remain ours." And the knight Sir Charles de Blois promised her that he would not do this. So he kissed her and took his leave, and the lady most pleasantly gave it to him and to all the barons of Brittany too, one after the other.[104]

This scene drew attention to all the salient features of mutually delegated ducal authority we saw above. The inheritance was transferable from wife to husband (though this needed to be pointed out explicitly), and their interests aligned on the basis of this shared possession. In the Amiens text quoted here, Jeanne was nevertheless repeatedly recognized as the source of that authority, while Charles was legitimized by his ties of homage. Conversely, the B version initially downplayed both Jeanne's claim and Charles's personal connections to create a more homogenous lordship. Yet it also added a final detail that the lords "took leave of their lady, whom they held as duchess," achieving a similar effect. This pattern echoed the captains who had originally held out against the senior Jean de Montfort in Jeanne's name at the start of the war, although Jeanne now directly dictated the terms on which battle might be avoided.

This scene established that Charles led the army in person, but he and his followers ultimately acted on Jeanne's behalf, not just his own. The duke both commanded and served, while the duchess pursued the war but only by proxy. Amiens in particular evoked certain tropes of courtly gender dynamics to reinforce these interactions. The leave-taking itself was a formal ritual repeatedly reflected in contemporary literature, and here served to publicly place Jeanne's trust in her husband and the knights who followed them.[105] Her gracious manners and Charles's farewell kiss (omitted in B) played up the image of knightly service to a lady.[106] At the same time, the sentiments and actions displayed here were part of a wider performance of leadership undertaken by men as well as

104 Amiens, 3:333–34; cf. FrB, 6:151–52.

105 Burnley, *Courtliness and Literature*, 57–58.

106 Carré, *Baiser*, 66; Karras, *From Boys to Men*, 25, 61.

women.[107] Charles's warm welcome to his troops was couched in the same emotional terms as Jeanne's farewell: both spoke *liement*—joyfully or gladly—with their troops. Earlier in the war, the Rome text showed Charles thanking his men for their service, receiving them "most gladly one after the other," just as Jeanne did in 1364.[108] Meanwhile, although the B version removed the emotive reactions of both Jeanne and Charles in the leave-taking, it had them jointly greet Bertrand du Guesclin "gladly [*liement*] and gently [*doucement*]" at Nantes just before they made the decision to fight at Auray.[109] Once on the battlefield itself, Charles would again "most pleasingly and gently" or "most gladly and gently" exhort his troops to their best efforts.[110] Courteous, individualized interactions were a core component of the affective side of military leadership, regardless of gender.[111] Moreover, historians of emotions have come to recognize how "emotional communities" structure affective relationships within different social groups and shape how these ties are supposed to be expressed, both personally and rhetorically.[112] This leave-taking connected both the duke and the duchess to the same elite, martial community.

Even the power dynamics and connotations of the kiss were more complicated than they might first appear, since this gesture was used not only in romantic contexts, but as a political gesture of friendship and trust. Most notably, it was a traditional part of the homage ceremony wherein a subordinate pledged loyalty to their superior. The implications of performing such a ritual public kiss between men and women were repeatedly debated due to concerns over sexual propriety and gendered hierarchies.[113]

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107 Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 105, speak of the "reasoned use of the emotions in the exercise of power"; cf. 158–59, 177–78, 180, on the importance of emotions to late medieval political history. On the ritualization and even institutionalization of emotional performance in the service of socio-political order, see Rosenwein, "Thinking Historically," 830–31.

108 Rome, 590.

109 FrB, 6:149.

110 FrB, 6:154; Amiens, 3:337.

111 Cf. Pizan, *Livre des trois vertus*, 150–51; Wittig, *Learning to Be Noble*, 134; Karras, *From Boys to Men*, 25, 46; Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 104.

112 Rosenwein, "Thinking Historically," 832; Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, introduction, and esp. 25–29 on the mediating role of texts; cf. Broomhall, "Introduction," 1.

113 Major, "'Bastard Feudalism' and the Kiss," 514–15, 517–18, 521; Carré, *Baiser*, 109, 203–4.

However, the gesture made clear sense here both as a sentimental exchange between spouses and as a representation of Jeanne's delegation of power to Charles, since it parallelled a vassal's kiss to their lord.[114] The emotions and rituals in this scene differentiated Jeanne and Charles while confirming them both in their authority.

Charles's image of cheerful lordship is particularly striking because the canonization trial had stressed his sober and pious temperament to appeal to the emotional values of the Church. But his affability also translated across the (admittedly porous) boundaries between the clerical and aristocratic emotional communities by aligning with each group's priorities. During the papal inquiry, Charles's kindness to his subordinates, including his martial followers, had substantiated claims of his humility.[115] Now, they made good military sense. For example, Charles consulted with the castellan or captain of the besieged city to encourage him to hold out, receiving him gladly (*liement*), joyfully (*joieusement*), or even laughing aloud (*tout en riant*).[116] Although most contemporary readers would have known the tragic outcome of Auray—a dramatic irony Froissart surely intended—Charles's almost relentlessly positive attitude, associated as it was with knightly honour, was an essential part of encouraging his troops and retaining their loyalty.[117] Similarly, if his performance of religious rites before battle or tendency to give credit to God had been used in 1371 to show he prioritized spiritual over worldly matters, they were also a necessary part of a leader's attention to their army's well-being.[118] The performance of piety and chivalry were acceptable as two sides of the same coin.

Elsewhere we find sharper shifts in the emotional reputation, so to speak, that legitimized Charles's leadership in this new phase. As a knight and prince he was allowed displays of strong and even violent feeling that he had not shown as a saint.[119] The squire Jean de Plessey, among others, reported in 1371 that whenever Charles learned of the capture of his castles

114 Carré, *Baiser*, 68, 108, 140–43, 190, 192, 196, 208, 209.

115 E.g., D31.2, 38.2, 49.2.

116 Amiens, 3:340; Abridged, 411; FrB, 6:158.

117 White, "Politics of Anger," 142–43.

118 E.g., Amiens, 3:342–43; Abridged, 411; FrB, 6:159.

119 Karras, *From Boys to Men*, 65–65; Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 169–71; Broomhall, "Introduction," 4; though cf. White, "Politics of Anger," 149, on angry saints.

or the death of his warriors, he never became angry.[120] To be sure, this calmness was also evidence of the manly self-restraint needed for governance. But especially within the courtly and chivalric community, it became acceptable to express righteous anger in the defence of personal honour and rightful seigneurial authority.[121] In the Rome manuscript, when Charles heard the town of Carhaix had defected, he "was greatly angered" and swore on the spot to besiege it.[122] The loss of La Roche-Derrien in 1347 provoked a similar reaction, as Charles vowed to retake it at once no matter the cost, punish those responsible, and exact "such a harsh vengeance that it would be an example to all others."[123] This violent lordship could not contrast more starkly with Charles's lordly priorities at the siege of Quimper, where the witnesses had instead emphasized his protective measures. Froissart now described the duke's determination to seize the castle of Jugon as his troops took whatever supplies they could from the town's inhabitants.[124] In the Rome text, Charles ordered his men to restore what they had taken, but enforced it poorly; and while he let residents peacefully take refuge in the castle, it was merely a tactic to overload the defenders' supplies.[125] In the Amiens text, he was reluctant to give the town of Vannes a respite from assault, and had to be persuaded by his barons that it was better to conquer through love than hate.[126] Mercy was certainly a chivalric virtue, but the demands of war could override such concerns.[127] Meanwhile for Cuvelier, Charles enjoyed fighting: a man of valiant courage, he came to Auray gladly (*lyement* again) and bore himself fiercely (*fierement*) into battle.[128] These emotional attributes signalled Charles's effectiveness as a knight and lord, but would have been out of place before the papal curia.

Nevertheless, the canonization process took place before either Cuvelier or Froissart set pen to parchment, and it had consequences for the historiographers. If Froissart's earliest text (Amiens) did not refer to Charles's holiness, the next stressed the point in some detail. Buried reverently at

120 D41.7.

121 White, "Politics of Anger," 143–45; Barton, "'Zealous Anger,'" 154, 155.

122 Rome, 557.

123 Rome, 812; cf. Amiens, 3:42; Abridged, 244; FrB, 4:40.

124 FrB, 2:180.

125 Rome, 559–60.

126 Amiens, 2:226.

127 Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood*, chap. 6.

128 Chanson, ll. 6748, 6804, 6813.

Guingamp, Charles's body was sanctified by God's grace, and "they call him Saint Charles, whom Pope Urban V approved and canonized."[129] This version's wide circulation would have promoted its interpretation. Two iterations of Book III also experimented in summarizing the Breton war. Whereas the version written around 1390–1391 consistently spoke of "Sir [*messire*] Charles de Blois" as usual, a later revision called him "Saint Charles de Blois" instead.[130] Cuvelier likewise reported that "they say and believe truly that he's a saint," and added a miracle where Charles healed a soldier driven mad after boasting of having killed the duke.[131] The premise was adopted by the Prose Guesclin A, if with slightly greater restraint.[132] Charles's holy reputation was progressively integrated into the chivalric discourse.

The Prose Guesclin B offers a point of comparison for how specific details of Charles's sanctity did (or did not) circulate in French circles. On one hand, the strict imprisonment that some canonization witnesses had linked to Charles's increasing asceticism was a far cry from later descriptions of his captivity. Le Bel merely stated how long his ransom took.[133] The B version went further: although Charles was initially placed in "courteous imprisonment" along with the king of Scotland and the earl of Moray, Queen Philippa quickly intervened on her cousin's behalf to allow him out on parole around London for up to a night at a time, or more if Charles was in the company of herself or the king.[134] The Rome manuscript even claimed that Charles played boardgames with his fellow prisoners, attended a royal party, flew falcons, and went sparring in the countryside whenever he wanted, so long as he checked in every fifth day.[135] Never, the text specified, was he put in confinement. This environment was hardly one for penitential reflection. On the other hand, there are clear indications that stories of Charles's suffering at the battle itself circulated in French political society. The Prose Guesclin B unsurprisingly added the episode of Charles's capture, which Cuvelier and the Prose A had skipped over.[136] It reported that he

129 FrB, 6:171.

130 Besançon, BM, MS 865, fols. 309r–310v; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), MS français 2650, fols. 152v–154r.

131 Chanson, ll. 2466, 7357–75; cf. 3462–64.

132 PGA, 71, 152.

133 Le Bel, *Chronique,* 2:149.

134 FrB, 4:66–67.

135 Rome, 819, 875–76.

136 PGB, 7.

received seventeen mortal wounds, a number reduced (intentionally or by scribal error) to seven in the *Grandes chroniques*, but tallying exactly with what Charles's physician Georges de Lesnen reported in 1371.[137] It likewise added that the Englishman Thomas Dagworth shut Charles naked in a cellar with only a bit of straw to lie on, a streamlined and dramatized reworking of another part of Georges's testimony. A garbled version of this story made it into Froissart's Rome text, which told how the English rescued a captive Thomas Dagworth who lay wounded on a mattress in Charles's tent.[138] The parallels with the canonization underscored the value placed by the Penthièvre family on Georges's testimony, and it is possible he spread these recollections himself thereafter.[139] Still, the uneven success of such anecdotes in shaping the wider chronicle discourse suggests that Charles's life as a saint was not usually the historiographers' highest priority.

Instead, his sanctity mattered most when it came to interpreting his death—which now had to be justified from a chivalric perspective too. The Prose Guesclin B went so far as to insert a synopsis of Charles's character at the end of his life. This eulogy mirrored the canonization tactics of combining a princely exterior with a saintly interior, but also laid greater stress on Charles's chivalric prowess. It reported that Charles had won sixteen of his eighteen battles and that he was "the fairest knight of France and the most endowed with valour, doing only that which pertains to a prince, for there was never a battle in which he did not wish to be out in front, and many times he was the first to fall upon his enemies."[140] Indeed, at Auray Charles had overruled his knights to take personal command of the first battalion.[141] Far from a reluctant duke, Charles's behaviour was exemplary for his status, standing out not for his temperance but for being the most agreeable and merry (*joly*) of all. He was, moreover, a composer of songs and lays, the latter indubitably secular material, which the *Grandes chroniques de France* apparently corroborated with a curious mention of Charles joining in on the gittern (an instrument similar to a lute or guitar) with other prisoners en route

137 Viard, ed., *Grandes chroniques*, 9:304.

138 Rome, 817.

139 Georges was still alive in 1381, and as master of the cathedral school at Nantes would have had contact with both lay and secular elites: Héry et al., eds., *Procès de canonisation*, 87n82.

140 PGB, 27.

141 PGB, 24.

to England.[142] By contrast, the canonization had naturally focused only on Charles's performance of sacred music alongside his priests.[143] In the chivalric tradition, Charles could be a model *prudhomme*, with consummate manners as well as prowess, and so undisputably virtuous along secular lines.[144]

However, the Prose Guesclin B also reported that Charles covertly led a holy life, as was now borne out by the miracles he performed. Like Cuvelier's original, it described how Charles's corpse was discovered wearing a hairshirt, publicly revealing his inner sanctity after his death in knightly service.[145] This imagery contrasted sharply with Froissart's descriptions of Charles lying dead beneath his shield or upon his axe and surrounded by the bodies of his attackers.[146] He commended Charles as "an especially good knight who valiantly and boldly fought and attacked his foes with great will," and who died with his face towards his enemies.[147] Still, such praise was not meant to contradict Charles's sanctity. Froissart even suggested it was because Charles died valiantly while defending his inheritance that he could be proclaimed a martyr.[148] Charles's spiritual legitimacy continued to derive from his seigneurial legitimacy.

But if this was, in Froissart's estimation, a good death, it was nonetheless a defeat, raising the question: how could a paragon of knighthood and holiness lose? Any possible answer, for these historiographers, depended on another question: should Charles have fought at all? The possibility of a negotiated settlement was first explored at the Landes d'Évran on July 24, 1363. Cuvelier succinctly summarized the preliminary accord: both would-be dukes should receive enough of the duchy's towns to let them each use the title.[149] Froissart moved this compromise to Auray, where the encounter between the two armies was postponed by a last-minute diplomatic effort

142 Viard, ed., *Grandes chroniques*, 9:305.

143 E.g., D33.3.

144 Wittig, *Learning to Be Noble*, 159.

145 PGB, 27; Chanson, ll. 7254–55; PGA, 150. The Prose Guesclin B added that his naked body was borne away from the battlefield by a Franciscan monk, Raoul de Carquignolles, perhaps echoing the story of the Dominican who claimed in 1371 to have rescued the discarded hairshirt (D30.8).

146 FrB, 6:171, Amiens, 3:351.

147 FrB, 6:164, 168; Amiens, 3:346, 348.

148 Abridged, 417.

149 Chanson, ll. 3254–63; cf. PGA, 66.

by Jean, lord of Beaumanoir.[150] The chroniclers disagreed on whether this would have been an acceptable solution, and if so, who to blame for its falling through. Cuvelier mused that such a peace may have been fundamentally unobtainable in the long run, leaving battle as the only solution to two intractable claims.[151] Froissart attributed the treaty's failure to the English, and specifically the duplicity of the knight John Chandos. Since his troops opposed the loss of profits they would face in the event of peace, Chandos informed Jean de Beaumanoir that Jean de Montfort was unwilling to accept any partial title to the duchy, before reporting back to his commander, expressly to provoke him, that Charles was determined not to bargain. The Abridgement even stressed the young count of Montfort's eagerness for a peaceful resolution (which here involved some of the real terms from the first treaty of Guérande in 1365), heightening the pathos of the missed opportunity for reconciliation. The possibility of *refraining* from violence was clearly on the table as an honourable option.

The Prose Guesclin B was more militant, embracing the justness of Charles's cause. It preferred not to excuse the count for the breakdown of negotiations, citing his subsequent failure to show up at the bargaining table to finalize the details.[152] Jean was also unreasonable to expect any concessions from the true claimant. This narrative notoriously introduced a new explanation for how Charles died, building on a rumour that had apparently begun circulating soon after the battle.[153] Rather than being killed outright in the melee, he was severely wounded, captured, and brought before his rival. There, Jean de Montfort berated him, accusing him of having fought despite having no right to the duchy: "you are descended of neither the [coat of] arms nor the lineage [of Brittany]." He addressed Charles as the informal *tu* rather than formal *vous*, the pronoun rudely implying Charles's inferiority, and demanded that he renounce his claim on pain of death.[154] Charles responded at length, refuting Jean's own familial claim using the same spurious genealogy (with an extra dose of scandalous adultery) accepted by Froissart, while denying that he, Charles, fought for his own sake: "for you well know that the duchy belongs to my wife and to my children, and not to

150 Amiens, 3:341–43; Abridged, 412–13; FrB, 6:158–62.

151 Chanson, ll. 6241–42, 6272–73.

152 PGB, 14.

153 PGB, 26–27; D9.15.

154 By contrast, in the canonization trial Charles's humility had been exemplified by his use of *vous* towards his own servants.

me, who must defend and uphold their rights, and who cannot give away any part of that which belongs to another." So Jean had one of his men slit Charles's throat in cold blood.[155]

This exchange exposed a potential vulnerability that came with casting Charles as the sole leader of his party, for indeed he had no birthright of his own. But it also revealed the solution to this challenge, which was to remove his agency. Conforming to the expectations of aristocratic bloodlines, he could only implement Jeanne's will, not make decisions for her. Honour was here satisfied by the knightly ideal of service. Moreover, Charles's chivalrous behaviour contrasted with how Jean fell short of that standard, delegitimizing the Montfortist victory. This reasoning brings us back to Jeanne's speech before Auray as recounted by Froissart, where she exercised her right to set limitations on her husband's diplomatic strategy. Similarly, when Jean de Montfort renewed the offer of splitting the duchy on the eve of battle in the Prose Guesclin B (again invoking certain terms of the actual treaty of Guérande), Charles forwarded the proposal to his wife the duchess, she being the one in the line of succession. She, with great mettle, refused the compromise point blank.[156] A woman could legitimately pursue a course of war to defend her seigneurial prerogatives.

But although Jeanne's resolve could be presented positively, it also opened the door to another, more critical interpretation. Four fifteenth-century Froissart manuscripts had an alternative take on Charles's departure for Auray.[157] The first was produced around 1410–1415 by four scribes, one named Raoul Tainguy and three anonymous. Tainguy, a Breton working in Paris, is noteworthy for his "bold" interpolations in the texts he copied, especially concerning affairs of his homeland.[158] Although the relevant passage was transcribed by Tainguy's primary anonymous collaborator, this emendation fits the same pattern. Having left with his army, Charles reflected upon the burden now facing him. The duke "was very gentle and most courteous, [and] would have willingly agreed to peace and been content with only a portion of Brittany with little dispute." Unfortunately, he was "so put upon by his wife and the knights on his side, that he could not

155 The political ramifications of this accusation of murder remained apparent for some time to come: Estourbeillon, *Serment de Jean de Lesnerac*, esp. 7–8.

156 PGB, 23.

157 Luce classified these as the third family of the A redaction: Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. Luce, 1:xxxiv; Paris, BnF, MS français 2640, fol. 246r; Croenen, "Paris, Bibliothèque nationale"; Tesnière, "Manuscrits copiés par Raoul Tainguy," 352–54.

158 Luce, *France pendant la guerre*, 248–49.

disagree or ignore it."[159] This addition fundamentally altered the dynamics of the ducal couple. Charles was once again a would-be peacetime ruler, but was thwarted in this laudable intention by the bad counsel spearheaded by his wife. The opposition between knight- and sainthood used during the canonization not only reemerged, but now made the duchess in particular shoulder the blame in order exonerate her husband.

This interpretation seems to have been mainly Cuvelier's work in the first instance.[160] Although he implied a decisive combat was inevitable, it was not desired by either pretender if an alternative could be found.[161] Jean de Montfort declared himself willing to settle for half if Charles would allow him, and Chandos even encouraged this offer. Charles, meanwhile, would gladly have granted the request immediately for the honour of God and to end the costly war. Both men were troubled by the spiritual implications of the battle. It was not dear to Jesus, mused Jean de Montfort, while Charles told his companions that he was greatly displeased at the prospect of fighting and the death of good men on his account, which might constitute a sin. Whereas Froissart had Charles stake his soul and his place in Paradise on the righteousness of their cause, in the Cuvelier tradition the demands of Charles's secular station were once again at odds with his spiritual stance.[162] The Prose Guesclin A showed Charles struggling to balance his desire that God aid his pursuit of what he believed a rightful claim, with the burden of moral responsibility.[163] Ultimately, it was his barons who swayed the reluctant Charles. In their judgement, he could only be blamed for *not* attempting to take control of the duchy. They urged Charles to act like a duke: he could not let his inheritance escape him or show fear before one of lower status like Jean de Montfort.[164] Since chivalric honour was determined by one's fellow knights, it was important for Charles to maintain their good opinion.[165]

But where the barons stressed Charles's need to uphold his status as a duke and highborn prince, the focus on Jeanne's inheritance brought the

159 FrB, 6:327.

160 The poet himself attributed his account to an unnamed written source (l. 6469), but this claim was likely a move to lend credibility to public rumour or simply introduced for the sake of a rhyme. Raoul Tainguy's close connections to the French court could in turn have facilitated his workshop's access to Cuvelier's poem.

161 Chanson, ll. 6367–72, 6404, 6430–32, 6466–68.

162 FrB, 6:154.

163 PGA, 132.

164 Chanson, ll. 6421–27, 6478–91; PGA, 134.

165 Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood*, 57.

issues of knightly service and of shared power to the fore. Charles's desire for a peaceful settlement was rebuked in no uncertain terms:

> it was forcefully said to him, off to one side, "Lord, what are you thinking? For the love of God, you have not the heart of a powerful knight if you wish to give away the rightful inheritance of your pleasant wife like a coward! A knight should in no way hold a land if he does not wish to defend it with sharpened blade."[166]

Though this tirade was presumably delivered by the knights on hand, they were elided from the scene; instead, this speech was made "on behalf of his wife" (*de par sa moillier*). It was irrelevant whether this response came from Jeanne herself—a reading early modern historians certainly embraced—or if it was merely an obvious concern for the Breton lords to raise.[167] Her interests were represented either way, and they took on an aggressively gendered tone. Being unable to defend what belonged to his wife (or to him via her) viscerally threatened Charles's manliness, while Jeanne's anger, her own or by proxy, underscored the risk by potentially making the wife more assertive than her husband.

So while Jeanne gave Charles the impetus to fulfill his secular responsibilities, her forcefulness also made her conveniently culpable for the consequences. She violated gendered hierarchies by demanding battle and commanding her husband. We come back, then, to the reworked farewell speech in Froissart, which had all the markings of an intercession gone wrong. Intercession, particularly as performed by medieval queens, was a popular political tool to let a male ruler exercise mercy or simply change his mind without looking weak, because he did so as a special favour to his spouse. Calling on his softer side with a submissive feminine voice, she allowed a safe exception to the masculine expression of authority and violence.[168] This model for queenly action had biblical precedent in the Virgin Mary and Queen Esther, and tied in with wider expectations of women as peacemakers.[169] Froissart himself composed a classic example of such a scene, where Philippa of Hainault tearfully begged her husband Edward III to spare the lives of six Calais townsmen after the 1346–1347 siege. The king declared himself reluctant to give in, but avoided the charge of cruelty thanks to Philippa's interven-

166 Chanson, ll. 6469–76; PGA, 133.

167 Argentré, *Histoire de Bretaigne*, 473.

168 Parsons, "Queen's Intercession," 147; Strohm, *Hochon's Arrow*, 103–4.

169 Parsons, "Queen's Intercession," 153–57, 159; Adams, *Life and Afterlife*, 77; Strohm, *Hochon's Arrow*, 96–98; Huneycutt, "Intercession."

tion.[170] Under Cuvelier's influence, Charles's leave-taking inverted these dynamics: though personally inclined to peace, he was compelled to obey his wife and the knights whom she had functionally co-opted for the pursuit of war. The verb used for their influence, *bouter*, had strong connotations of physical force, such as striking, pushing or thrusting (including in a sexual sense); Froissart used it elsewhere for more- or less-legitimate reversals of position, such as driving out invaders or Jean de Montfort's attempt to evict Jeanne from her inheritance.[171] If the war had presented a challenge during Charles's canonization process, it could likewise interfere with Jeanne's potential to live up to feminine ideals. She had already served as the counterpart to Charles's spiritual extravagance in the curial testimony; now her failings were narratively useful to preserve Charles's honour in the framework of shared power.

After all, the threat to the duke's masculinity was not ultimately realized, for Charles died heroically on the battlefield in service of a worthy enterprise. Cuvelier did not go so far as the Prose Guesclin B in framing Charles's death as an assassination, but he cast moral judgement on the killing: "his banner was thrown to the ground savagely, and Charles brought down and wounded savagely, taken by the helmet and dragged savagely; and there an Englishman, acting perfidiously, put a dagger through his throat so that it came through half a foot on the other side."[172] The rhythmic repetition of the word *laidement*, which I have translated "savagely" for its implications of both violence and the dishonourable tactics used by the false Englishman, very effectively hammered home the shameful brutality of Charles's killers.[173] Cuvelier then concluded that Charles was "so superlative, the most honourable man who ever lived. He always waged war reluctantly and under pressure."[174] The duke's death was laudable precisely because the cause had not been his own.

This point was so important that Cuvelier undercut the immediacy of the duke's death-scene by having Charles deliver some implausible final words. Asking God's forgiveness for the death of his men, he excused himself by saying, "'I have long fought, against my conscience—he who believes his wife too much will repent it in the end!'"[175] The Prose Guesclin A went further,

170 FrB, 4:60–62; Benz St. John, *Three Medieval Queens*, 53–54.

171 Amiens, 3:358; Rome, 463.

172 Chanson, ll. 7152–57.

173 Cf. Karras, *From Boys to Men*, 38–39.

174 Chanson, ll. 7169–71; PGA, 14[8].

175 Chanson, ll. 7163–64.

having Charles explain (despite having been stabbed through the mouth) that he had fought, unwillingly, "'through the instigation of my wife, who always led me to believe that I was completely in the right.'"[176] Not only did this framing move from the trite misogyny of an adage to a more concrete context, it cast Jeanne's claim as deliberately manipulative. The word *en(n) ortement*, meaning instigation or advice, appeared repeatedly as an excuse in contemporary pardon letters, often implying an unequal or subversive power balance. Jeanne's duplicity regarding her claims was also hinted at in the poem, where Charles explained to his men that "'I believe that I have the right to this lordship and that, for my wife whom I love blamelessly, I must bear its name without falseness.'"[177] Invoking the vocabulary of knightly service to women, Charles's actions were faultless because Jeanne's were not. The persuasiveness of this trope relied on established notions of the perversity of women, but at root Charles's problem, and Jeanne's, was the corruption of order. Contemporary expectations held that noblewomen and queens should above all practice submission to their husband and work towards peace and mediation, while kings who fell too much under the control of their wives (or mothers) were liable to be led astray.[178] In a traditional intercession, the wife's feminine leniency allowed her husband to relax his hypermasculinity in the service of good rule. Here, her transgression of these standards justified his saintly inclinations towards peace.

The ducal couple laid bare the inconsistencies of achieving chivalric honour through the pursuit of violence. Charles was a worthy knight, even a saint, for dying in defence of his seigneurial rights and service to his lady. Jeanne, too, could be honoured for refusing to compromise her lawful inheritance and pursuing war towards this end. Both of them communicated the affective aspects of martial leadership and connected with the knightly community in similar ways. However, Jeanne was vulnerable to a less charitable reading that saw her warmongering as disruptive. As heiress, she could not fall back on her marriage to excuse any self-serving actions, unlike Jeanne de Flandre, who was praised for fighting for her husband's cause (effectively giving her access to the honour of knightly service). Jeanne's exclusion from the chivalric ideal was not an automatic outcome of gendered principles, but

176 PGA, 14[8].

177 Chanson, ll. 6326–28.

178 Allirot, "*Male royne boiteuse*," 128–30; Turner, "Eleanor of Aquitaine," 24, 26, 28; Marvin, "Regicidal Queens," 167; Huneycutt, "Creation of a Crone," 34.

a constructed tension that linked the structures of shared power to the justification for conflict.

Conclusions

The fluid development of these chivalric reputations showcases some of the possibilities for how aristocratic audiences interpreted shared power as part of a politically charged discourse. Legitimate authority was partly a function of networking, both within the bounds of the marriage partnership itself and in the wider context of family, friends, and followers (to borrow Gerd Althoff's famous formulation).[179] These connections permitted a flexible interpretation of the demands of military leadership as the war progressed, as processes of mutual delegation mitigated moments of acute pressure. At the same time, because chivalric legitimacy and honour were evaluated at once on an individual and a collective basis, there were limits to how far an aristocratic couple was interchangeable. Gendered differences, in particular, could be used to underline both continuities and disruptions in the provision of leadership, and so helped turn the events of the contested succession into the story of a war. Jeanne and Charles continued to be seen as both partners and counterparts, as they had been during the canonization and would continue to be under the Montfortist chroniclers to whom I turn next.

This interplay of honourable violence, gender norms, and power-sharing adds further dimensions to understanding leadership in the framework of constant crisis. As Michel Nassiet, among others, has observed, disputes were likely to flare up when women stood to inherit powerful territories (as they regularly did).[180] This potential for turbulence can therefore be seen as a normal part of these women's subsequent authority, which was both routinely accepted and routinely disrupted. Strife, in other words, did not delegitimize their role. Nor were their fights necessarily distinct from those in which all nobles might expect to participate simply by virtue of being part of the aristocracy, with its cultures of status competition and martial power. These social relationships, predicated on the possibility of violence, continually both drove and resolved conflicts. The co-participation of both chivalric men and, if we may go so far, chivalric women in this value system helped make late medieval politics what it was.

179 Althoff, *Family, Friends and Followers*.

180 Nassiet, *Parenté*, 197–98; Wolf, "Reigning Queens"; Waag, "Rulership, Authority, and Power."