

MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD: THE MORAL CONNECTION BETWEEN *THE HEPTAMERON* BY MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE AND *THE LESSONS OF ANNE OF FRANCE*

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PRESENTATION LAYOUT

- Thesis Statement
- Historical Figures and Context
- Literature Used in the Argument
- Analysis of Text: The Moral Themes of Marriage and Motherhood
- Conclusion

THESIS STATEMENT

L'Heptameron by Magritte de Navarre, as well the *Les enseignements d'Anne de France* written by Anne de France are pieces of evidence that can be used to define the moral viewpoints on marriage and maternity for noble women of the time.

MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE

(APRIL 11TH 1492 – DECEMBER 21ST 1549)



- The Sister of King Francis I of France and the Daughter of Louise de Savoie and Charles d'Angoulême
- Prolific patron of the Arts and literature in the court of the French Renaissance
- Writer of *L'Heptameron* as well as several other novels of poetry
- Married twice first to Charles IV of Alencon in 1509, Married again in 1525 to Henry II of Navarre

LOUISE DE SAVOIE

(SEPTEMBER 11TH 1476 – OCTOBER 19TH 1531)



- Mother of Francis I of France and Marguerite de Navarre
- Daughter of Phillip II Duke of Savoie and Margaret of Bourbon, after the death of her mother she was raised by Anne de France
- Had a difficult relationship with her Daughter, after Marguerite's second marriage they did not talk for several years

ANNE DE FRANCE

(APRIL 3RD 1462 – NOVEMBER 14TH 1522)



- Daughter of King Louis XI of France and Charlotte de Savoie, Sister to Charles VIII of France and regent of France from 1483-1481
- Mother to Suzanne de Bourbon Born on May 10th 1491
- Raised many noble children in her *L'Ecole de Cour* including her much younger cousin Louise de Savoie
- Writer of *Les enseignements d'Anne de France, duchesse de Bourbonnois et d' Auvergne à sa fille Susanne de Bourbon*

L'HEPTAMERON

- Text written by Marguerite de Navarre in the style of Boccacio's *The Decameron*
- Follows 10 “*Devisants*” or narrators who tell moral stories to pass the time. The devisants argue the moral lesson presented in each story
- The devisant named Parlement is considered the *porte de parole* or the mouthpiece of the author who represents the moral standpoint of Marguerite. Stories told by Parlement have emphasized significance
- *Novella 10* tells the story of Florinde and Amadour. The story is told by Parlement and is the main piece of evidence for the morals of marriage and maternity

*LES ENSEIGNEMENTS D'ANNE DE
FRANCE, DUCHESSE DE BOURBONNAIS ET D'
AUVERGNE À SA FILLE SUSANNE DE BOURBON*

- Written by Anne de France for her daughter
- The test contains a series of pedagogical lessons that are imperative for a young women's survival in the French Court
- Anne de France includes several lessons that relate to the reality of Marriage and Motherhood in her lessons.
- The text was widely read by young noble women. Due to the maternal relationship between Anne de France and Louise de Savoie, it is extremely likely that Marguerite would have read the lessons as well
- The lessons written by Anne would influence the moral reality that Marguerite would acknowledge in the fictional stories of *L'Heptameron*

MORALS OF MARRIAGE

- Both Anne de France and Marguerite de Navarre reveal the reality of Marriage for a young noble women as a contract used for social status
- Marriage is presented as a very different moral than love, which is considered a fantasy, even a danger in marriage.

MARRIAGE DESCRIBED IN L'HEPTAMERON

- In Novella 10, Florinde faces the reality of her arranged marriage with quiet acceptance and inner turmoil
 - *La fille, voyant qu'en une chose faite ne falloit plous de conseil, lui dit que Dieu fut loué de tout, et voyant sa mère si étrange envers elle, aima mieux lui obéir que d'avoir pitié soi-même. Et, pour la réjouir de tant de malheurs, entendit que l'Enfant fortuné étoit malade a la mort ; mais jamais devant sa mère ne nul autre en fit un seul semblant, et se contraignit si bien, que les larmes, par force retirer en son cœur, firent saillir le sang par le nez en telle abondance que la vie fut en danger de s'en aller quant et quant. Et, pour se restaurer, épousa celui qu'elle eut bien voulu changer à la mort* (Marguerite 66)
- Aventurade, who is a character foil to Florinde, symbolizes the danger od believing in love within Marriage. She dies due to unreciprocated love
 - *Sur le point qu'elle était presque gagnée à le recevoir, non a serviteur, mais a meilleure parfait ami, arriva une merveilleuse fortune ; car le roi, pour quelque affaire d'importance, manda incontinent Amadour, dont sa femme eut si grand regret qu'en oyant ces nouvelles elle s'évanouit et tomba d'un degré ou elle était, dont elle se blessa si fort qu'onques depuis n'en releva.* (Marguerite 67)

CONNECTIONS TO MARGUERITE'S LIFE

- Many critics have speculated that Novella 10 is a parallel to Marguerite's own life due to the author's similarities that she shares with the protagonist Florinde
- Like Florinde, Marguerite was married at a young age. Her marriage was decided by Louis XII to settle a territory dispute in Alencon.
- Florinde's marriage was decided by the Spanish King and her mother the Countess of Aradne
 - *Or, fut mandée la comtesse d'Arande pour aller à Sarragosee, où le roi étoit arrivé ; et là, se trouva le jeune duc de Cardonne, qui fit si grande poursuite envers le roi et la reine, qu'ils prièrent la comtesse de faire le mariage de lui et de sa fille. La comtesse, comme celle qui ne vouloit en rien lui désobéir, l'accorda, estimant que sa fille, fort jeune, n'avoit volonté que la sienne* (Marguerite 65)

ANNE DE FRANCE ON MARRIAGE

- In her lessons, Anne de France similarly describes the reality of marriage. She also warns against the fantasy of finding love in marriage claiming that love leads to suffering.
 - *À présent, dont ceste parfait amour soit variablement ne au vif congneue. Car comme dit un philosophe, chose nuisible est non congnoissable a ceux qui n'ont engin habille ne vertueux : par quoi on juge souvent ce qui fut oncques. Pensez donc que plusieurs dames et damoiselles ont eu beaucoup à souffrir, et aucunes en ont perdu honneurs et avantages, tant en mariage, que d'autre manière, que je vous laisse à dire, pour notre compte abréger* (Anne de France 36-37)
- This lesson would have prepared Marguerite for her own marriage contract, and influence the morals evidenced by novella 10 in *L'Heptameron*

MORALS OF MOTHERHOOD

- Due to the significance of a women's role in society, her reputation and her education, the idea of motherhood becomes dependent on the lessons that a mother must teach her daughter for survival
- Anne de France writes her pedagogical lessons for the sake of her daughter's education on the standards of noble women
- This type of mother-daughter relationship did not allow for mothers to be nurturing or sentimental with their daughters.

ROLE OF MOTHERHOOD SHOWN BY ANNE DE FRANCE

- The lessons emphasize the significance of education and morality in the life of noble women, but does not mention the sentimental relationship of mother hood
 - « *Tant qu'ils ne cognissent eux ni leurs parents et amis, par quoi les perdent, et toutes fois on n'en peut trop avoir. Aussi, pour la multitude des parents et amis, on ne se doit orgeuillir. Car, comme dit le proverbe, en prospérité tu trouveras assez amis, mais en adversité, peu, car ils faillett au besoin, comme le cheval au pied blanc ; aussi es bien de fortune n'y a rien ferme ni stable [...] Par ainsi on ne si doit fier ne soit en éllever.* » (Anne de Fracne 120)
- The teacher-like role of a mother to her daughter is entirely more important than the emotional.
- Since Anne de Fracne raised Marguerite's mother, Louis de Savoie, she would have been raised in a similar manner that lacked emotional warmth

MOTHERHOOD IN *L'HEPTAMERON*

- In novella 10, Florinde's mother the Countess of Arande cares a great deal more about her family's reputation than her daughter's wellbeing
 - « *En la comté d'Arande, en Aragon, y avait une dame, qui en grande jeunesse demeura vefve du comte d'Arande, avec un fil et une fille, laquelle se nommait Florinde. Ladite dame mit peine de nourrir ses enfants en toutes vertus et honnêtetés qu'il appartient à seigneurs et gentilshommes ; ensorte que a maison eut le bruit d'être l'une des plus honorables qui fut en toutes le Espagne.* (Margurite 49)
- Florinde and her mother come into conflict when the Countess believes Arande's, who rapes Florinde, story over the one that her daughter tells. The two do not talk for seven years over the dispute
 - *La mère, qui regardait sa contenance, n'y sut rien juger, et depuis ce temps-là connut très-bien que sa fille n'avait plus d'affection a Amadour et pensa pour certain qu'elle fut déraisonnable et qu'elle ait tous les choses qu'elle aimait ; et, de cette heure-là, lui mena la guerre si étrange qu'elle fut sept ans sans parler d'elle, si elle ne s'y courrouçait et tout la requête d'Amadour* (Marguerite 79)
- Due to the fact that the Countess cared more about reputation than her daughter, she does not have a relationship with Florinde

RELATING TO MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE AND LOUISE DE SAVOIE'S RELATIONSHIP

- The Countess of Arande, symbolically represents Marguerite's mother Louise de Savoie.
- Like in the novella, Marguerite and her mother do not talk or see each other for several years after Marguerite's second marriage. The reason for their alienation is unknown
- There are letters written by Marguerite that describe her childhood where her mother tried to teach her daughter that “folly and guile” did not suite a noble woman through the constant lessons to “beaten an berated her” throughout her childhood. (Cholkain 36)

CONCLUSION

- The moral rules that defined marriage and maternity for a noble woman during the 16th Century are extremely different than what modern audiences may experience. The texts of Anne de France and Marguerite de Navarre are critical pieces of historical and literary evidence that define these morals.
- Marriage was seen as a social contract decided upon by family reputations and could never involve the fantastical idea of love.
- Motherhood's purpose and goal was to prepare one's daughters to uphold their reputation by instilling into them the lessons expected of noble women.

FURTHER CONTEMPLATION

- It is significant to question the way that each writer demonstrated these morals in their text. Anne de France created a pedagogical list of lessons that leave no room for interpretation
- Marguerite's text, *L'Heptameron*, allows the reader to make their own interpretations on the morals that are discussed in each story. The author makes her standpoint clear through Parlement, but each *devisant* has their own perspective.
- Why does Margeurite allow the morals in *L'Heptameron* to be contemplated by the *devisants* as well as by the audience?

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