

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910459427003321
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Titolo	For fear of the fire [[electronic resource]] : Joan of Arc and the limits of subjectivity / / Françoise Meltzer
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Chicago, : University of Chicago Press, 2001
ISBN	1-282-73846-1 9786612738463 0-226-51984-8
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (269 p.)
Disciplina	944/.026/092 B
Soggetti	Christian women saints - France Virginity Electronic books. France History Charles VII, 1422-1461
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- CONTENTS -- ACKNOWLEDGMENTS -- INTRODUCTION: THE SNOWS OF YESTERYEAR -- CHAPTER ONE. THE BODY REVISITED -- CHAPTER TWO. THE DISCOURSE OF VIRGINITY: A FLIGHT BEFORE LIGHT -- CHAPTER THREE. PROFESSIONS OF VIRGINITY -- CHAPTER FOUR. RESPONSIO MORTIFERA: THE VOICE OF THE MAID -- CHAPTER FIVE. FEAR OF FIRE: DEATH AND THE IMPOSSIBLE -- CHAPTER SIX. FATHER, CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BURNING? -- INDEX OF PROPER NAMES
Sommario/riassunto	Why are contemporary secular theorists so frequently drawn to saints, martyrs, and questions of religion? Why has Joan of Arc fascinated some of the most important thinkers of the twentieth century? In a book that faces crucial issues in both critical and feminist inquiry, Françoise Meltzer uses the story of Joan as a guide for reading the postmodern nostalgia for a body that is intact and transparent. She argues that critics who place excessive emphasis on opposition and difference remain blind to their nostalgia for the pre-Cartesian idea that the body and mind are the same. Engaging a number of theorists, and alternating between Joan's historical and cultural context, Meltzer

also explores the ways in which postmodern thinkers question subjectivity. She argues that the way masculine subjects imagine Joan betrays their fear of death and necessitates the role of women as cultural others: enigmatic, mysterious, dark, and impossible. As such, Joan serves as a useful model of the limits and risks of subjectivity. For Meltzer, she is both the first modern and the last medieval figure. From the ecclesial jury that burned her, to the theorists of today who deny their attraction to the supernatural, the philosophical assumptions that inform Joan's story, as Meltzer ultimately shows, have changed very little.
