I argued some time ago, discussing the crusader ideology in Leontios Makhairas’ Greek chronicle of Cyprus at a conference on Holy War, most appropriately held in Jerusalem, that Philippe de Mézières portrays King Peter I of Lusignan (1329–1369) as the ideal crusader and defender of the Church, the epic hero as opposed to Makhairas’ more realistic picture. I also suggested that a close comparison of how the two writers view the Cypriot king’s reign would enhance our understanding of the social logic of their work. I am glad that a conference on Mézières, most appropriately held in Nicosia, gives me the opportunity to further explore these issues. This paper is, thus, intended to compare the way Peter and the events surrounding his reign are perceived and presented in the writings of Mézières and Makhairas in order to show the difference of perspective between a fourteenth-century non-Cypriot exponent of the crusader ideal and a fifteenth-century Greek Cypriot historiographer. It will focus on the relation between the way the picture of Peter’s reign is constructed by the two writers and their ideological and authorial intentions. The examination of the interdependence between ideological bias and historical reliability will be attempted only occasionally since such an approach...
would demand an extensive comparison with other contemporary and later texts and goes beyond the scope of this paper.

MÉZIÈRES AND MAKHAIRAS: WORKS AND DAYS, IDEOLOGY AND HISTORY WRITING

The reconstruction of the lives and careers of Mézières and Makhairas mainly from the sparse information we glean from their writings as well as the study of their ideological identity as revealed in their work suggest that these were factors that had a great impact on the way they present Peter and his reign. Interestingly, their lives seem to go along common pathways. Philippe was a Frenchman by birth and a citizen of Christendom by conviction; although he lived for some time in Cyprus, nothing suggests that he spoke Greek. Leontios was a Greek Cypriot partaking of the French culture; he is said to have spoken

