Franck Collard, Frédérique Lachaud, and Lydwine Scordia, eds. *Images, pouvoirs et normes. Exégèse visuelle de la fin du Moyen Âge (XIIIe-XVe siècle)*. POLEN--Pouvoirs, lettres, normes, 8. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2018. 417 pp. Notes, figures, plates, tables, bibliography, and abstracts. €77.00 (hb). ISBN: 978-2-406-06735-1; €39.00 (pb). ISBN: 978-2-406-06736-8.

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This volume of essays explores the role of works of painting, sculpture, and architecture in relation to the description, pursuit, exercise, teaching, and commemoration of power in the later Middle Ages, predominantly in France. The fourteen essays, framed by an introduction and a conclusion, approach an impressive array of images and objects while adding considerable nuance to the study of the political imagery at the time when France first began to define itself as a nation and when dynastic change and threats to its sovereignty demanded a vigorous assertion of power and identity. Commissioned by both rulers and the ruled, works of art enunciated identity, allegiance, alliance, and values in compelling and appealing forms.

Despite, or perhaps because of, their immense variety, the essays in this volume are united in their assertion that the relation of images to ideas is anything but stable and subordinate. As Frédérique Lachaud and Lydwine Scordia underline in their introduction, meanings change not only in the transformation from verbal to visual, but also as they move from makers to viewers (and authors and readers) over time and in different contexts. They remind us that the investigation of *communication politique* here, like the study of images more broadly, "n'est pas sans dangers" (p. 23). Particularly in the absence of certainty about production contexts and contemporary reception, a careful reading of the ways that images of power operate must be undertaken at multiple levels. This is certainly what is implied by the choice of *exégèse visuelle* in the subtitle of the book, which invokes the kind of multi-layered reading of scripture that yields the kind of complex interpretation proposed and undertaken by the authors of the essays in this volume. Lydwine Scordia's article analyzing the now-lost tomb of Louis XI at Notre-Dame de Cléry, for example, is at once anthropological, political, and religious. It considers how the location of the tomb, with its effigy at once verisimilar and idealized, and its unusual costume and iconography expressed Jean Gerson's notion of the three lives and bodies of the king. Even the concept of the "visual" is reasonably elastic, as, for example, in Benoît Grevin's suggestive proposal for the excavation of the visual and figurative elements of French royal rhetoric in charts and other official documents that are descriptive and metaphorical but not actually pictorial.

The images under consideration in this volume are informed not only by the ambitious readings of the authors, but also by the broad range of disciplinary approaches that enrich their work. Not

only art historians, but also scholars of philosophy as well as of legal, literary and political history endow this volume with an admirable range of expertise and insights. They include Colette Beaune, whose *Naissance de la nation France* and *Les Manuscrits des rois de France au Moyen Âge. Le Miroir du pouvoir* are some of the seminal texts for the study of French political iconography.[1] Her contribution to the volume examines a group of (now lost) thirteenth-century painted royal sculptures in Compiègne and the way that placards associated with them were edited and translated over time to legitimize the Valois dynasty. Another type of expertise is showcased in a comparison of two illuminations of book seven of John of Salisbury's *Policraticus,* in which Charles Brucker brings to bear a lifetime of study of that text to argue that the different pictorial approaches in them suggest different readings of the work over time and in different contexts.

Most of the contributions focus on French subjects and most focus on a single manuscript or genre of images. Notable exceptions include Olivier de Laborderie's essay on previously unstudied or little-known manuscript sources for English royal iconography and Gisela Naegle's broad-ranging essay on Emperor Maximilien and the construction of his image through the medium of print. But despite the relative consistency of national focus, and a predominant emphasis on manuscripts, the essays in this volume are remarkably heterodox in their approaches to the questions surrounding the visual expression of power in the Middle Ages. They consider both lesser-known works, like Franck Collard's contribution on the *Vigiles de la mort de Charles VII,* a richly illuminated manuscript made for Charles VIII that has not hitherto been the subject of extended examination, as well as better-known subjects and iconographies. The sustained analysis of the emergent iconography of St. Louis in some early copies the *Grandes Chroniques de France* by Anne D. Hedeman, for example, offers a meticulous analysis of the ways that the new tradition was forged after the king's canonization. This essay is supplemented with charts and generously supported with illustrations and draws on insights into the manuscript tradition of the *Grandes Chroniques* that have germinated over the course of her career.

Further studies of kings and royal conduct are found in the contribution of Martine Clouzot, who examines how music, folly, and power interact in late medieval illuminations to offer opposing models of royal conduct. Music--measured and harmonious--marks wisdom and appropriate comportment of a king, whereas folly--often in the form of the court fool--figures the opposite. Gilles Lecuppre similarly explores the representation of "la compétition royale," by which he means challenges to royal authority in the form of violence, exile, and ordeal. This interest in rivalry seems to have been particularly robust at the time of the Hundred Years' War, when France and its monarchy were divided.

Some of the contributions here focus not on kings but on their courtiers and officers; Sabine Berger's essay, for example, examines how royal councilors of the last Capetian kings used architectural forms that echoed those of the crown as a way of signaling fealty and association. Thierry Lassabatère's analysis of an unusual manuscript of the life of the Constable Bertrand du Guesclin considers a shift in the representation of the constable. He argues that the unique iconography of the volume essentially effaces the specific actions of du Guesclin in order to amplify the political role of the constable, a shift made possible by du Guesclin's own political preeminence and autonomy (p. 312).

In spite of the growing interest in the iconography of queens, only two essays consider questions of gender; one, by Julien Lepot, looks at how the *Avis aus roys* extended to queens and princesses by guiding male relations to govern the conduct of wives and daughters. The other, by Lindy

Grant, examines the iconography of Blanche of Castile's heraldry, and in particular the castle of Castile, making the case that the adoption of this insignia, by all of the queen's sons, was unique, and a function of her power and influence: no other queen's heraldry was similarly employed by her sons.

Unlike many other collections of essays, this volume enjoys a notable consistency among the essays, which touch on similar types of actors and objects while at the same time exploring unique circumstances and power relations. Certainly there is recourse to some of the same texts of Aristotle and the genre of advice literature, including Gilles de Rome's *De regimine principum*. But the result is remarkably kaleidoscopic, permitting such sources to be configured in rich and alluring ways in the hands of each of the authors.

The production values of the volume are quite good. Although one always might wish for more illustrations, this volume is already well illustrated, with forty-two black-and-white and fifty color illustrations. Decisions about what to illustrate seem to have been guided both by what was necessary for the comprehension of the texts (clearly a work on visual exegesis would be ill-served without the appropriate images), but also by what can be easily be found online, primarily in Gallica and other databases. In addition to the abundant footnotes in the essays, the volume also includes an extensive bibliography that will be indispensible for future study of the questions it raises.

Although, as Franck Collard notes in his thoughtful conclusion, "Il y a beau temps que plus aucun médiéviste sérieux ne prend les images pour de simples transpositions transparentes des idées" (p. 368), this collection will help to reinforce the important roles of images in the expression, transmission, and consolidation in late medieval structures of power, in courts and beyond them.

LIST OF ESSAYS

Frédérique Lachaud and Lydwine Scordia, "Introduction. Exégèse visuelle du pouvoir"

Sabine Berger, "La mise en scène du pouvoir par les arts. Commandes artistiques et grands programmes éditaires des conseillers des derniers Capétiens autour de 1300"

Julien Lepot, "Reines et princesses dans un miroir enluminé du milieu du XIVe siècle: l'*Avis aus roys* (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, ms. M. 456)"

Colette Beaune, "Les statues royales de Compiègne et leurs pancartes (XIIIe-XVIIIe siècle)"

Franck Collard, "Des idées politiques aux images du pouvoir. L'iconographie de la royauté dans le manuscrit des *Vigiles de la mort de Charles VII* de Martial d'Auvergne offert à Charles VIII"

Benoît Grévin, "*Color rhetoricus*. Réflexions sur l'articulation entre culture visuelle et rhétorique médiévale (fin XIe-fin XVIe siècle)"

Gilles Lecuppre, "Images de la compétition royale à la fin du Moyen Âge"

Charles Brucker, "Philosophie du pouvoir et pouvoir de la philosophie. Double lecture du livre VII du *Policraticus*, texte et images"

Martine Clouzot, "Les images de la folie et de la musique au miroir du pouvoir royal dans les manuscrits enluminés (1350-1480)"

Lindy Grant, "The Castle of Castile. An image of power, or the power of an image?"

Anne D. Hedeman, "Le pouvoir des images saintes dans le *Grandes Chroniques de France*. Le cas de Saint Louis"

Olivier de Laborderie, "La représentation du pouvoir royal dans les manuscrits consacrés à l'histoire de l'Angleterre du milieu du XIIIe siècle au milieu du XIVe siècle"

Thierry Lassabatère, "Le connétable, la guerre et la paix. La geste de Bertrand du Guesclin dans les miniatures du manuscrit BnF, Arsenal, 3141"

Lydwine Scordia, "La statue funéraire de Louis XI. Les trois corps du roi"

Gisela Naegle, "Pouvoir, mémoire et imprimerie. Maximilien 1er forge son image"

Franck Collard, "Conclusions. L'histoire des pouvoirs au défi des images"

NOTE

[1] Colette Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985) and *Les Manuscrits des rois de France au Moyen Âge. Le Miroir du pouvoir* (Paris: Bibliothèque de l'image, 1997).

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