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The Commemoration of Jeanne d'Evreux's Coronation in the *Ordo ad Consecrandum* at the University of Illinois¹

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In the Middle Ages the French royal coronation was an important ritual which transformed the royal person in significant ways.² The drama and importance of this public ceremony were clearly expressed in treatises about the coronation, and the ceremony itself was commemorated in numerous copies of the *ordines*, most frequently in pontificals.³ Despite the importance of visual symbols to the French ceremony, detailed pictorial representations of the coronation are rare, perhaps because independent coronation books were made after the ceremony for a small, private audience.⁴ Only three or four illustrated French coronation books survive from before 1400.⁵ One of the earliest of these is a French manuscript from the early fourteenth century in the Rare Book and Special Collections Library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The interaction of pictures and text in this *ordo* restructures history in order to shape a particular memory for the manuscript's patron.


The University of Illinois's Coronation Book contains the text of the last Capetian *ordo*, the ceremonial drafted late in the reign of Saint Louis that may have been used for coronations from Philip III's accession in 1270 through Charles V's in 1364.⁶ Though fragmentary, the manuscript is densely illuminated. As the Appendix to this paper makes dear, its twenty-three folios are filled with over thirty historiated initials that include nineteen narrative scenes, three busts of the king or queen, and nine coats-of-arms.⁷

Even though the nineteen narrative scenes are schematic in composition and rough in style, they bear a sophisticated relationship to their text. Most of them illustrate the extensive rubrics which constitute a directory for the actions of the participants in the ceremony.⁸ For example the first surviving scene in the manuscript (fol. 1) represents the bareheaded king humbly placing his sword on the altar as the archbishop and clerics watch. This initial "G" begins the rubric which describes the action pictured in it; the "king should offer it on the altar.... Subsequent historiated initials trace the archbishop's and king's actions as the archbishop prepares the chrism, sings the *Kyrie*, anoints the king, presents him with his ring, his scepter, and his main-de-justice, crowns the new monarch, kisses him in homage, says mass, and gives the king communion.

The queen's ceremony follows the king's and is complete. Its text mirrors the ceremonial of the king, and its illustrations, which represent events described in the rubrics, reinforce the parallelism between the king and queen established by the ceremony. Pictures represent the queen brought before the bishop, anointed, presented with her scepter and *verge* and her ring, crowned, and acclaimed by matrons and barons. At the same time, details within the text that are reinforced in the images of her ceremony differentiate the queen's role from the king's. Visual distinctions reinforce symbolic differences between the queen's and king's ceremonies that are explicitly stated in the rubrics. Thus

for example 

(fig. 1)

when the queen receives her scepter and *verge*, the *verge* is smaller and of different form than the king's main-de-justice 

(fig. 2)

in conformity with the rubric "After the prayer the archbishop gives the queen a smaller scepter of a different kind



than the king's and a rod similar to the king's." [10](#)

Although the directory and contemporary practice are the primary sources for the iconography of the narrative initials, the placement of certain initials at the beginnings of prayers rather than in the rubrics draws special attention to central moments of the ceremony. For instance the "K" which begins the "*Kyrie eleison*" (fol. 2), the largest initial in the book, is historiated with a scene in which the bareheaded king kneels as the archbishop and clergy declaim the litany. Although the rubric directly preceding the initial describes the events represented in this initial, the initial does not introduce the rubric but marks the first word of the litany. Aspects of the initial's composition reinforce the importance of the text that it begins. "*Kyrie*," the first word of the litany, is inscribed on the painted book placed on the podium in the initial. The archbishop indicates the painted book with a gesture that points beyond it to the actual text of the "*Kyrie eleison*" in the manuscript which the reader holds. The play of word and image here seems deliberately designed to make readers of the *ordo* feel like active participants in the coronation commemorated in its pages; readers would say the *Kyrie* as though they were present with the archbishop and clerics.

Subsequent images reinforce in a simpler way the experience of the reader as witness to the ceremony depicted in the initials. The king's unction, the presentation of the insignia to the king and to the queen, and their coronations each appear within the historiated initials that begin specific prayers addressed by the archbishop to the king or queen at the moment that their unction, presentation, or coronation takes place. These images encapsulate the gestures made by the central figures of the archbishop and the king or queen when the words of which the initials are a part--"I anoint you ...," "Accept this scepter ...," or "I crown you ..."--were intoned.

The structure of the cycle as a whole seems to center around these historiated initials that make the reader a witness of the coronation. Both the layout of the *ordo* and the pattern of distribution of historiated and non-narrative initials create clusters of images. Demarcated by extensive rubrics within the text, the clusters are loosely framed by a mixture of narrative initials placed within the rubric and non-narrative initials representing busts of royal figures or coats of arms. This sequence of illustrated textual units isolates central portions of the *ordo*. In the king's ceremony the units consist of the consecration of the chrism with prayers for mercy and protection, the unction of the king, his investment with the royal insignia and coronation, and the mass. In the queen's ceremony they include her investment with the royal insignia and her coronation and homage.

An examination of the illustrations of the section of the *ordo* clustered around the king's unction exemplifies how differently these framing images relate to their texts. This portion begins with an extensive rubric which describes the events which follow. The rubric states: "Here he [the king] is anointed with chrism and oil sent from the sky previously mixed on a paten by the archbishop as was described above. Thus the archbishop anoints him first on the top of the head with the said unction, second on the chest, third between the shoulders, fourth on each shoulder, fifth on the bending of each arm, and says with each unction ..." [11](#) This rubric is followed by the archbishop's prayer when he anoints the king, an antiphon, and three subsequent prayers. Initials that introduce the rubric (fol. 7v), the antiphon, and the final prayer bear a different relationship to their texts than the central figure of unction does. While the central image (fol. 8) is closely tied to the prayer it begins, the initial to the rubric preceding this prayer celebrates the heavenly origin of the holy chrism, sent by God for the baptism of Clovis in the fifth century in order to distinguish coronations of French kings from all others. The initials to the antiphon (fol. 8) and third prayer (fol. 10) that follow the central image are totally independent of their texts. Although the antiphon refers to Old Testament antecedents for the coronation and the prayer expresses the hope that the Holy Spirit would descend upon the newly anointed king so that he would deserve to reign eternally with Christ, the initials of these prayers contain a pair of women's coats-of-arms (those of Jeanne d'Evreux and of a woman of the Evreux family married to a man from the house of Laval) which have absolutely nothing to do with the content of the prayers they accompany. [12](#) This particular configuration of armorial bearings recurs four times in the manuscript.

Comparison between corresponding events in the king's and queen's coronation provide clues as to the original patron of the manuscript. Such a comparison suggests that the *ordo* may have been made for the as-yet-unidentified woman from the house of Evreux whose arms appear paired with the queen's in the manuscript. A comparison of the scenes of homage after the coronation for the king  (fig. 3) and the queen 

(fig. 4)

reveals the special importance given a woman in the queen's ceremony. The picture illustrating the rubric for the king's homage establishes a precedent for letting the actions of the most important participant in the coronation represent the actions of the group--a means of structuring compositions used throughout the manuscript. Thus, although the rubric speaks of the activities of the archbishop and of the other peers: "Then the archbishop with the peers who support the crown lead the king to the chair which is adorned with coverings of silk and they must put him in his seat which should be so high that all might see him. And then the archbishop should as a sign of reverence kiss the king as he sits in his seat. And after him the bishop and the lay peers who support the crown say the same ..." [13](#) the image includes only the scene of the archbishop's kiss, the homage of the figure whose activities are described first in the rubric's text. The queen's acclamation is represented differently. Its rubric: "After this prayer the barons who support her crown lead her to her platform where she should be seated in the seat decorated for her. And the barons and the most noble ladies should be around [her]," [14](#) is illustrated by an initial which represents the queen enthroned in dialogue with a woman, rather than with one of the barons described first by the rubric. The importance of this anonymous woman in defiance of the pattern established throughout the manuscript suggests that she was an important protagonist, at least to the person who commissioned this *ordo*. The pairing of an armorial bearing for a woman from the house of Evreux with that of the newly-crowned queen strengthens this interpretation.

Unfortunately, the arms of this anonymous woman from the house of Evreux remain problematic. There is no record of a marriage between those two houses. [15](#) However, visual inspection of the coats-of-arms suggests that in three cases (fols. 10, 14, and 18v) the Laval sides of the arms may have been repainted, and in one case (fol. 20) the impaled arms may have been painted over a flourished initial. [16](#) If this were the case, then the Laval coat-of-arms may well have masked the Brabant or Boulogne arms of one of Jeanne d'Evreux's sisters who participated in the wedding: the Duchess of Brabant and the Countess of Boulogne.

A recent hypothesis offers a possible solution to the problem of this fabricated coat-of-arms. [17](#) In 1464 a branch of the Laval family--the first branch to be descended from the house of Evreux--was authorized to change its arms and add a quarter of Evreux to their traditional heraldry. [18](#) One prominent member of this family was Pierre de Laval, archbishop of Reims from 1473 to 1493. As Archbishop of Reims and descendent of Jeanne d'Evreux, Pierre had two reasons to be interested in the *ordo*, which he may well have inherited. If this were the case, then the heraldic repainting in this manuscript may be a reference to Pierre's new arms. [19](#) The earliest provenance for the *ordo* lends support to this theory because the manuscript's previous nineteenth-century binding had a label which stated that the manuscript was pillaged from the cathedral of Reims. [20](#)

This consideration of the relationship between text and image in the *ordo ad consecrandum* demonstrates how carefully structured its pictorial cycle was, despite the provincial qualities of its artistic style and the small scale of its illustrations. Tiny narrative initials scattered throughout the manuscript derive their iconography from the text's rubrics and from extra-textual sources: embellishments to the ritual that persisted at least until the coronation of Charles V in 1364. Non-narrative pictures demarcate textual units which center on prayers whose illustrations attempt to make the reader be present again at key moments of the ceremony. Certain initials of each type--most notably the non-narrative initials with armorial bearings and the initial representing the acclamation of the queen by a lady--even point beyond the text to hint at female patronage for the manuscript by a woman related to the queen who may have participated in the coronation.

The sophistication of this *ordo*'s pictorial cycle and the specificity of its iconographical content suggest that the manuscript does not merely commemorate Jeanne d'Evreux's coronation. Historical events support this interpretation because the sequential coronations of Charles IV and Jeanne d'Evreux that this manuscript presents never took place. Charles, who had been crowned in 1322 with his first wife, simply attended the ceremony when Jeanne d'Evreux, his third wife, was crowned in 1326. [21](#) Nonetheless, by showing Charles IV's and Jeanne d'Evreux's coronations in sequence, the pictures and text of the *ordo* imply that they happened on the same day. This juxtaposition shapes a memory that glorifies the queen by associating her coronation with the king's. Future readers of the book would naturally assume that a dual coronation had taken place.

What might be the motivation behind this presentation of the coronation ceremonial? If I am right in suggesting that a female relative of Jeanne commissioned the book, then a logical explanation presents itself. I suspect that the book is

designed to celebrate the newfound status of the house of Evreux which became more prominent once one of its members married into the royal house. The female patron for the book was doubtlessly thrilled to have a familial link to royalty and to have attended the ceremony. She may have commissioned the book to celebrate her family by linking the queen's coronation to the king's, and to celebrate her own increased social status by pairing her coats of arms with the queen's throughout the book.

The *ordo* in the collection of the University of Illinois does more than document royal ceremonial. This manuscript provides important insights into the ways in which private readers, like public viewers of the coronation, forged myths about royal ceremonies. Private myths, like the celebration of family pride that this book manifests, were by no means less common in France than the public myths about the coronation which became part of national consciousness. However such private myths are difficult to document. The *ordo*, with its glorification of the Evreux family, is thus an important and rare visual example of personal myth-making in the early fourteenth century.

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1. I would like to thank the Research Board of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for awarding me an Arnold O. Beckman Research Award to support research in France on this project.
2. On the French coronation, see Richard Jackson, *Vive le Roi! A History of the French Coronation Ceremony from Charles V to Charles X* (Chapel Hill, 1984).
3. For a list of surviving copies of royal *ordines*. see Richard Jackson, "Les ordines des couronnements royaux," *Le sacre des rois: Actes du Colloque international d'histoire sur les sacres et couronnements royaux (Reims, 1975)* (Paris, 1985), pp. 63-74; and Jackson, *Vive le Roi!*, pp. 279-80.
1. For instance, the colophon in Charles V's book makes clear that it was completed in 1365, the year after Charles V's and Jeanne de Bourbon's coronation. For this, see Claire Richter Sherman, "The Queen in Charles V's *Coronation Book*: Jeanne de Bourbon and the *Ordo ad Reginam Benedicendam*," *Viator* 8 (1977), 261-62.
5. The other books are: a manuscript described by Leroquais as a fragment of a pontifical from Châlons-sur-Marne (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. lat. 1246) which dates c. 1250 and contains fifteen miniatures and historiated initials illustrating the king's coronation ceremony; Charles V's *Coronation Book* in London (London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius, B. VIII) dated 1365 and containing forty miniatures commemorating Charles V's and Jeanne de Bourbon's coronation; and a manuscript in the Vatican (Rome, Vatican Library, Chigi 468) which has one illustration. For previous discussion of the *ordo*, see Harry Bober, "The Coronation Book of Charles IV and Jeanne d'Evreux," *Rare Books: Notes on the History of Old Books and Manuscripts published for the Friends and Clients of H. P. Kraus*, 8.3 (1958), 1-12. Bober's suggestion that the book was made for use in the coronation of Charles IV's third wife, Jeanne d'Evreux, on May 11, 1326, is the most frequently quoted of his claims in this article.
- For discussion of B.N. Ms. Lat. 1246, see Victor Leroquais, *Les pontificaux manuscrits des bibliothèques de France*, 4 vols.

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- Paris, 1937), vol II, pp. 145-46; Robert Branner, *Manuscript Painting in Paris During the Reign of Saint Louis* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1977), particularly pp. 211 and 225; Jackson, "Les ordines de couronnement royaux," p. 67; Jacques Le Goff, "A Coronation Program for the Age of Saint Louis: The *Ordo* of 1250," in J. M. Bak, ed. *Coronation: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual* (Berkeley, 1990), pp. 46-57; and Jean-Claude Bonne, "The Manuscript of the *Ordo* of 1250 and Its Illuminations," *ibid.*, pp. 58-71. Both Jackson and Bonne disagree with Leroquais's idea that the book was a fragment, and Bonne cites codicological evidence to support that B.N. Ms. lat. 1246 is complete.
- For discussion of Charles V's *Coronation Book*, see E. S. Dewick, ed., *The Coronation Book of Charles V of France (Cottonian Ms. Tiberius)*, Henry Bradshaw Society, 16 (London, 1899); Paris, Grand Palais, *Fastes du gothique* (Paris, 1981), pp. 342-25, no. 279; Claire Sherman, *The Portraits of Charles V of France* (New York, 1969), pp. 34-37; "The Queen", 255-98; and "Taking a Second Look: Observations on the Iconography of a French Queen: Jeanne de Bourbon (1338-1378)," in *Feminism and Art History*, ed. by Norma Broude and Mary Garrard (New York, 1982), pp. 101-17. I would like to thank Guy Lanoe for drawing Vatican Chigi 468 to my attention.
6. For a discussion of the last Capetian *ordo*, see Jackson, *Vive le Roi!*, pp. 26-27 and 223; and "Les ordines de couronnement," pp. 68-70. For an edition of the text, see Edmond Martène, *De antiquis ecclesiae ritibus*, 2nd edition, 4 vols. (Antwerp, 1736), II, 223-27. The *Ordo* at the University of Illinois is mentioned by Sherman, "The Queen," p. 261, n. 20, and p. 263; and by Jackson, "Les ordines," p. 69.
- Jackson has located fourteen copies of the *ordo* that date from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. No copies of the last Capetian *ordo* that predate that in the University of Illinois's collection are illustrated. For the most current list, see Jackson, "Les ordines," p. 73, n. 36.
7. The *ordo* is missing up to ten folios at the beginning and three folios after fol. 4. These almost certainly would have been illustrated. The collation of the manuscript as reflected in its signatures is as follows: gathering 1 missing, 2⁸ (1st, 2nd, 7th and 8th folios missing), 3⁸ (1st folio missing), 4⁸, 5⁴.

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8. The last Capetian *ordo* was the first of the French ordines to merge a directory (directions for applying the *ordo*) with the prayers, hymns, and antiphons that constitute the *ordo* proper. The directory describing the action is given in the form of rubrics. This practice of including the directory in the *ordo* continued in subsequent ordines. For this see Jackson, *Vive le Roi!*, p. 24-25 and 27.
9. Fol. 1: "Gladium debet rex humiliter recipere de manu archiepiscopi et offerre ad
10. Fol. 21: "Post istam orationem datur regine ab archiepiscopo sceptrum modicum alterius modi quem sceptrum regium. . For an earlier discussion of this same point in the *Coronation Book* of Charles V from 1365, see Sherman, "The Queen," p. 279.
11. Fol. 7v-8: "Hic ungitur unctione chrisimatis & olei de celo missi prius ab archiepiscopo confecti in pathena, sicut superius dictum est. Inungat autem archiepiscopus eum primo in summitate capitis de dicta unctione, secundo in pectore; tertio inter scapulas, quarto in ipsis scapulis, quinto in compagibus brachiorum, & dicat cullibet unctioni."
12. The arms of Jeanne d'Evreux are France (azur semé de fleur-de-lis or) impaled with Evreux (azur semé fleur-de-lis or, á la bande componné d'argent et de gules), and the other arms are Laval (or á la croix de gules chargée de cinq coquilles d'argent et cantonnée de seize alérions d'azur) impaled with Evreux. These arms pose certain problems which will be discussed more fully below.
13. The rubric (fols. 17-17v) reads: "His expletis, archiepiscopus cum paribus coronam sustentatibus regem taliter insignitum deducit in solium sibi

praepara turn, fericis stratum & omatum, ubi collocat eum in sede eminenti; unde ab omnibus possit videri: quem in sede sua taliter residentem mox archiepiscopus mitra deposita osculatur dicens: *Vivat Rex in aeternum*. Et post eum episcopi et laici pares qui eius coronam sustentant hoc idem dicentes. . . ."

14. This rubric (fol. 22) states: Post istam orationem barones qui coronam, eius sustentant, deducunt eam ad folium, ubi in sede parata collocatur, circumstantibus eam baronibus et matronis nobilioribus. . . ."

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15. I would like to thank Bridgette Bedos Rezak and Hervé Pinoteau for discussing this heraldic problem with me.

I found no record of marriage between these two families or representations of the Laval/Evreux coat of arms in Pere Anselme, *Histoire de la maison royale de France et des grandes officiers de la couronne*, 9 vols. (Paris, 1726-33); Bertrand de Broussillon and Paul de Farcy, *Sigillographie des seigneurs de Laval 1095-1605* (Mamers, 1888); Bertrand de Broussillon, *La maison de Laval 1020-1605*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1894-1903); or Brigette Bedos, *La châtelainie de Montmorency des origines à 1368* (Pontoise, 1980).

A *recuell* copying assorted documents recording court expenses (Bibliothèque nationale mss. fr. 7855-7856) contains a transcription of the payments for dresses and livery for the participants in Jeanne d'Evreux's coronation (found in B. N. ms. fr. 7855, pp. 297-325). This exhaustive list does not include anyone who might have borne impaled arms of Laval/Evreux, but it does attest that both of Jeanne d'Evreux's sisters--the "Duchesse de Braaban" and the "Comtesse de Bouloingne"--participated in the ceremony.

16. Unfortunately no visible evidence survives to make identification of the original arms possible. If the Laval side of the armorial bearings was added, the artist scraped away rather than repainted the preceding arms. There seems to be signs of repaint and the remnant of a previous outline for arms visible just to the left of the Laval side on fols. 10 and 14; and on fol. 18v the Laval/Evreux arms are squeezed into a one-line high initial of a type that only contains pen flourishes when it occurs elsewhere in the manuscript. The fleur-de-lis in this initial on fol. 18v are different in