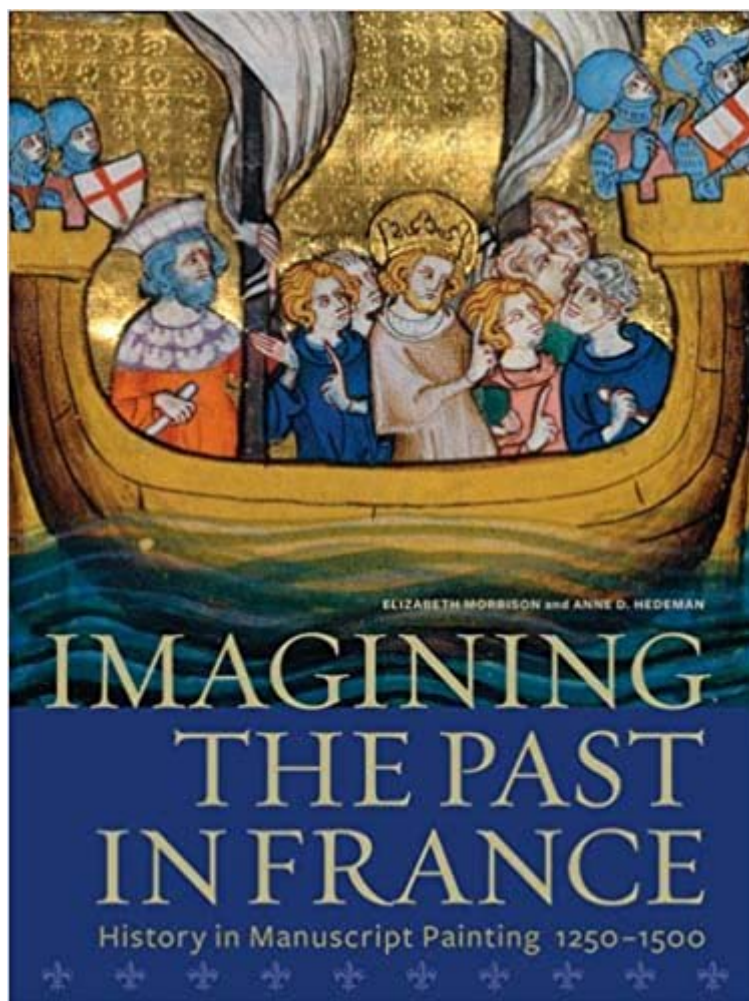


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# Imagining The Past In France: History In Manuscript Painting, 1250-1500



## Synopsis

From around 1250 to the close of the fifteenth century, the most important and original work being done in secular illumination was unquestionably in French vernacular history manuscripts. This volume celebrates the vivid historical imagery produced during these years by bringing together some of the finest masterpieces of illumination created in the Middle Ages. It is the first major publication to focus on exploring the ways in which text and illumination worked together to help show medieval readers the role and purpose of history. The images enabled the past to come alive before the eyes of medieval readers by relating the adventures of epic figures such as Hector of Troy, Alexander the Great, the Holy Roman Emperor Charlemagne, and even the Virgin Mary. Presented here are approximately fifty-five manuscripts from over twenty-five libraries and museums across the United States and Europe, supplemented by medieval objects ranging from tapestries to ivory boxes. Together they show how historical narratives came to play a decisive role at the French court and in the process inspired some of the most original and splendid artworks of the time. Additional contributors to this volume include Elisabeth Antoine, R. Howard Bloch, Keith Busby, Joyce Coleman, Erin K. Donovan, and Gabrielle M. Spiegel.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“The catalogue’s stimulating essays and entries are complemented by excellent reproductions and a generous bibliography that make it both a summary of the field and the foundation for the next generation of studies.”  
“The Burlington Magazine”  
“This Getty Museum exhibition catalogue, lavishly illustrated in color, goes a long way toward rectifying the neglect of

secular manuscripts in the study of medieval art history.âChoiceâThe works discussed in this catalogue are among the greatest treasures of Western, if not global, book history.âH-France Reviewsâ#147;[This book] celebrates one of the greatest chapters in the history of French art, when lavish illuminated manuscripts helped an entire nation to understand the present and plan for the future by revisualising the past. . . . This beautiful catalogue book convinces modern readers and viewers equally.â#151;European Review of History

Elizabeth Morrison is curator in the Department of Manuscripts at the J. Paul Getty Museum. Anne D. Hedeman is professor of art history and medieval studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Imagining the Past in France is a great collection of Illumination (Illustrations) from France in the Middle Ages, years given. Much information is given about each painting and about the book that each was originally in. Illuminators and artist will benefit from the examples and the history of the period's art. I am most pleased that I bought it.

It's the pictures that enthrall me in books like this, rather than the academic history, though that's interesting too. But the wonderful medieval paintings of towns and kings and saints and battles are plentiful in this heavy paperback, and there's nothing I don't love about it. Five stars, easy.

loved it!

The color plates in this book are gorgeous, some of little-known illuminated manuscripts. There are full scholarly annotations. Yet the introductory texts convey little sense of how history was conceived in Western Europe in the later middle ages. Given the lively interest in historiography nowadays, this omission seems unfortunate. Moreover, the essays fail to convey the way in which France was not a natural entity, but an "imagined community," upon whose varied territories the authorities only much later projected a sense of the inevitability of national unity. During the period covered by this book, "La France" as we know it was not at all an inevitable outcome.

Great book, lots of illuminations, a very huge coffee table book. Try to get the hardcover version though.

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