Klaus Krüger, *Politik der Evidenz. Öffentliche Bilder als Bilder der Öffentlichkeit im Trecento* (Historische Geisteswissenschaften. Frankfurter Vorträge, vol. 8), Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2015, 125 pages, 54 color illustrations, € 9.90, ISBN 978-3-8353-1570-9

The study of the visual culture of central Italian cities of the late Middle Ages has long worked without a robust theory of how pictures and other acts of representation operate in relation to political ideals. The available models, which tend to focus on Ambrogio Lorenzetti's frescoes for the Sala dei Nove in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico, read images either as illustrations of political theory, or as constitutive of a pictorial order that represents, more or less directly, the order of a political regime. Klaus Krüger's new book, *Politik der Evidenz. Öffentliche Bilder als Bilder der Öffentlichkeit im Trecento*, breaks the pattern in fundamental ways, first, by focusing on the art and urban fabric of fourteenth-century Florence, and, second, by confronting the question of images and the dynamics of their reception. Krüger's building blocks include both well-known and lesser-known instances of Florentine architecture and painting: the developing fabric and spaces of the Piazza della Signoria; the pictorial record of the betrayal of the Florentines by the governors of Colle di val d'Elsa in the grain trade between the two cities; the fresco of *Misericordia Domini* in the Loggia del Bigallo; the decorations of the meeting halls of the Arte dei Medici e Speziali and the Arte dei Giudici e Notai; and, finally, the paintings commemorating the expulsion of the Duke of Athens. The aim of the book is not to offer exhaustive interpretations of individual works or sites. It is rather to introduce readers to the ways in which images and their publics worked dialogically in the ongoing production and making visible of a public sphere within the physical fabric and symbolic structures of the city.

Although it stands as an independent contribution to the study of the art of cities of late-medieval Italy, the present book can also be read as an excursus to Krüger's 2001 work, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren*.[1] Both books develop from seeds planted by Hans Belting in the 1980s. On one hand, *Politik der Bilder* is the most theoretically coherent outcome of a project inaugurated by Belting and Dieter Blume in 1989, with the publication of *Malerei und Stadtkultur der Dantezeit*.[2] On the other hand, as Péter Bokody rightly emphasizes, the thinking about political images that underlies *Politik der Bilder* is continuous with thinking about religious images that emerged in Belting's books on sacred images and their publics in the Middle Ages. Whereas *Das Bild als Schleier* gives the latter tradition both a theoretical armature and a new focus on the art of Early Modern Italy, *Politik der Bilder* takes up and gives specific form to the set of ideas evoked in the phrase "die Argumentation der Bilder," the subtitle of Belting and Blume's book on painting and civic culture.[3] The term that connects the two projects in Krüger's work is *Medialität*.

It is possible to read the present book for its parts, without taking on the theoretical framework that rests on the image theory designated by *Medialität*, but a great deal will be lost in such a reading. Very often, important points depend on the reader's perception of medial operations, as cued in compact plays of words the sense of which cannot easily be translated. In order to understand crucial passages, for example where Krüger describes the simultaneous annulment of the public image condemning Colle di val d'Elsa and perpetuation of its *Darstellung* in the illuminations for Domenico Lenzi's *Specchio Umano* (30 – 32), it is necessary first to recognize the weight that the discourse of *Medialität* assigns the difference between image as *Bild* (the "perceived thing identity") and image as *Darstellung* (the "illusory phenomenon created by its pictorial means").[4] Before taking on this book, those who are not versed in the discourse of *Medialität* may wish to turn to the primer offered by Reindert Falkenburg

in his review of *Das Bild als Schleier*. As Falkenburg explains, the discourse attributes "revelatory power to the dialectic between 'thing' and 'illusion' as it becomes manifest in the beholder's aesthetic awareness of, and reflection on the image."[5]

In *Politik der Evidenz* two pieces of the general image theory running through Krüger's work come to the fore, and are captured in the key words of the title. The term *Öffentlichkeit* derives ultimately from Jürgen Habermas' account of the emergence of a public sphere as the defining characteristic of bourgeois social structures in the eighteenth century. For Habermas, *Öffentlichkeit* designated a culture that constituted itself outside the control of an organized state, in public spaces, where individuals engaged in discussion and the exchange of knowledge. In the classic formulation, the modern culture of *Öffentlichkeit* replaced a pre-modern "representational culture" in which the interests of a ruling body are unilaterally represented to and exerted upon its subjects. Rather than setting up a direct analogy between Habermas's bourgeois society and the social world of fourteenth-century Florence, Krüger abstracts the crucial pieces of the definition of *Öffentlichkeit* culture: its critical nature and its constitution in an ongoing dialogue involving individuals and groups within society (7–8, and passim). To describe the medium of the dialogue (both its means of production and its products) he then appeals to the field of rhetoric and adopts from it the term *Evidenz*. Evidence appears here not in its positivist sense, as empirically verifiable or objective data, but rather in its rhetorical sense, as *enargeia* or vivid description. *Enargeia* aims to conjure effective presence by appeal to the faculty of imagination, thereby putting absent, distant, or otherwise inaccessible things "visually" before an audience (9–30). Krüger's use of the term "evidence" is both literal, in the sense that it refers to visible pictures, and metaphorical in the sense that it applies to an evidentiary function that is not identical to the physical object. In this and other ways, Krüger partakes of what Heinrich Plett calls "the 'enargetic' approach to the arts."[6] His project is

thus aligned Krüger's branch of aesthetic discourse that finds its ground not in a metaphysical ideal, but rather in the perception of a renewable link between evidence and imagination.

The constellation, of terms in *Politik der Evidenz* should alert readers to the philosophical commitments of Krüger's project, and of the ways in which it is to be distinguished from the primarily North-American tradition of scholarship, sometimes called "New Historicism," that took its lead from Michel Foucault's archaeology of power.[7] Krüger's first essay overtly depends on Marvin Trachtenberg's work on architecture and urbanism in fourteenth-century Florence, but the rooting of his project in philosophical hermeneutics, and his concern for the discursive means and ethical burdens of representation, differentiate his work from Trachtenberg's. Krüger's use of the term *Blickregime* to describe the emerging visibility of public space that resulted from the articulation of physical spaces in late medieval Florence certainly nods to Trachtenberg's thesis, and specifically to the notion of a "dominion of the eye," but it does not directly translate the terms of Trachtenberg's argument. Here, as so often, terms are loaded in ways that may not be evident to a casual reader. The use of the term *Blickregime* shifts the discussion away from Trachtenberg's version of Foucault's power analytics. While reflexivity is implied in both models, *Blickregime* assigns more weight to the notion of something coming into view than it does to the structure of power. Krüger's *Blickregime* draws its sense from media studies, and brings his discussion of Florentine architecture and urbanism conceptually in line with his demonstration of the evidentiary function of images (9–16).

Krüger's treatment of individual works and sites is selective and discursive rather than comprehensive and explanatory. His discussion of the decoration of the meeting halls of the major Florentine guilds is typical. Rather than reconstructing whole sites, as Imke Wartenberg does in her study of the decoration of the meeting halls of late medieval Italy,[8] Krüger directs the reader to the places where the imagery

of a specific site opens to a dialogue that expands beyond its walls. In the case of the guild halls, he focuses on the vault decorations, and the circular diagrams that lay out the relation of the guilds to the city in symbolic terms. Turning attention to the meeting hall of the Guidici e Notai, Krüger dwells on the special inflection of the generic representation of participation in a whole. He notes that, in this instance, the diagram is encircled by a wall (complete with gates and a moat) which simultaneously evokes the physical space of the city and symbolically defines its limits (56 – 60). His unpacking of the image of the bounded city neither begins nor ends with the discussion of the decoration of the hall of the Guidici e Notai. The process, which begins in his analysis of the representation of the body politic in the Bigallo image of *Misericordia Domini*, comes to a conclusion in his account of the painted records of the Expulsion of the Duke of Athens. This final piece of the book moves us through a contextual discussion of the picture once displayed on the tower of the Bargello to a consideration of the copy of that picture made for the entry hall of the Stinche, the walled prison-island of late-medieval Florence. Whereas the original painting is characterized as a public record evincing the re-instatement of the legitimate rule of the people, the copy emerges in Krüger's account as one of various loci of a dialogue involving physical walls, pictorial walls, and the image of the walled city, that comes to grips, in this case, with the question of inclusion and exclusion. Here, and throughout, we are afforded a view of the permeability of individual works as they open to the pervasive, evolving dialogue that produced the image of the city.

While the present book is made up largely of previously published essays, it does not read as a series of independent case studies. The pieces are held together conceptually, by the overriding concern to demonstrate how images work as evidence, and structurally, by a dialectical framework of definition and distinction. Interspersed color illustrations, with sequences of details, work in concert with the author's close descriptions. The notes are generous and broadly representative of the differ-

ent traditions of scholarship (Italian, German and English) that have contributed to the field. They both acknowledge Krüger's debt to the research of other scholars and direct readers to essential bibliography. Among other gifts the book bestows upon its readers in this way, and by its own example, is the impetus to take up the work of a generation of scholars whose work it was to bring to light lesser-known places in the Florentine landscape, like the Palazzo del Proconsolo (formerly the palace of the Arte dei Guidici e Notai). Moreover, even if the manuscript itself is not the main focus of Krüger's attention, it is refreshing to see the splendid illuminations of Domenico Lenzi's *Specchio Umano* represented by something other than the frequently-reproduced miniature of the *Madonna of Orsanmichele*.

The quiet wit that animates Krüger's concatenated argument culminates in the juxtaposition of two portraits of the Duke of Athens: a detail of the brooding face representing the internal psychology of the tyrant Walter of Brienne in Stefano Ussi's nineteenth-century history painting, and a close-up of the faces that collectively characterize the Duke of Athens as a usurper of legitimate rule in the fourteenth-century fresco (96). The reward for reading the book closely and following Krüger's example as an attentive student of images becomes apparent in this moment, when the latter figure becomes recognizable as offspring of the foxy Pisan mule-driver in the double-faced portrait of the treachery of Colle di val d'Elsa, which is to say as a familiar player in the "enargetic" space within which the definition of the city is produced and periodically renewed. For those willing to do the work and read interactively, Krüger's book offers a new means of approaching the art of the cities of fourteenth-century Italy. It serves as a prolegomenon to the study of a field whose riches are far from exhausted. Perhaps more importantly, however, this unassuming but beautifully designed handbook provides a much-needed bridge between the historical field of study and the aesthetic discourses that inform art history as a humanistic discipline.

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1 Klaus Krüger, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren. Ästhetische Illusion in der Kunst der Frühen Neuzeit in Italien*, Munich 2001.
2 Hans Belting and Dieter Blume (eds.), *Malerei und Stadtkultur in der Dantezeit. Die Argumentation der Bilder*, Munich 1989.
3 Péter Bokody, [Rev.] Klaus Krüger, Politik der Evidenz. Öffentliche Bilder als Bilder der Öffentlichkeit im Trecento, Göttingen 2015, in: *sehepunkte* 16, 2016, issue 7/8, URL: http://www.sehepunkte.de/2016/07/28286.html (date of last access 5 December 2016); Hans Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum im Mittelalter. Form und Funktion früher Bildtafeln der Passion*, Berlin 1980; idem, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst*, Munich 1990.
4 Reindert L. Falkenberg, [Rev.] Klaus Krüger, Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren. Ästhetische Il-lusion in der Kunst der Frühen Neuzeit in Italien, Munich 2001, in: *The Art Bulletin* 89, 2007, 593 – 597, here 594.
5 Ibidem, 593 – 594.
6 Heinrich F. Plett, *Enargeia in Classical Antiquity and the Early Modern Age: The Aesthetics of Evidence*, Leiden 2013.
7 Randolph Starn, The Republican Regime of the Sala dei Nove, Siena, 1338 – 40, in: idem and Loren Partridge, *Arts of Power: Three Halls of State in Italy, 1300 – 1600*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1992, 9 – 80; Marvin Trachtenberg, *Dominion of the Eye: Urbanism, Art and Power in Early Modern Florence*, Cambridge 1997.
8 Imke Wartenberg, *Bilder der Rechtsprechung. Spätmittelalterliche Wandmalereien in Regierungsräumen italienischer Kommunen*, Berlin 2015.

Anna Degler, *Parergon. Attribut, Material und Fragment in der Bildästhetik des Quattrocento*, Paderborn : Wilhelm Fink, 2015, 324 pages avec 78 illustrations n&b et 30 illustrations couleurs, € 39,90, ISBN 978-3-7705-5756-1

Il est rare et enthousiasmant de lire un livre qui permette de mieux voir les œuvres d'art, même celles qu'on croit déjà connaître ; un livre qui associe théorie et description, analyses d'œuvres détaillées et points conceptuels précis. C'est une telle joie que m'a procurée la lecture du livre d'Anna Degler, *Parergon. Attribut, Material und Fragment in der Bildästhetik des Quattrocento*.

Je me suis longtemps interrogé sur le sens possible de la fissure qui traverse le sol de marbre sur lequel le trône de la Vierge Marie est posé, dans le tableau que Carlo Crivelli a peint et qui se trouve aujourd'hui à la Pinacothèque Vaticane (fig. 1). Comment comprendre ce commencement d'altération, cette micro-destruction, dans une image où tout est censé être parfait, à l'image des êtres divins qui y sont représentés ? J'avais une explication satisfaisante pour tous les détails curieux dont la peinture de Crivelli est pleine : la mouche, le concombre, les fleurs, etc. Je les faisais rentrer dans une « pensée ornementale » crivellesque où ils faisaient système, autour des personnages principaux, et indépendamment d'une certaine raison iconographique à laquelle les historiens de l'art les ont souvent réduits[1]. *Mais la fissure de la Vierge à l'Enfant du Vatican n'y rentrait pas.*

Il ma fallu la lecture du livre d'Anna Degler pour enfin comprendre de quoi il s'agissait : c'est un *parergon*. Le mot, bien sûr, rappelle l'essai éponyme de Jacques Derrida et son commentaire sur *La critique de la faculté de juger* de Kant[2]. Mais si Derrida s'inscrivait dans le champ de l'esthétique, comprise comme un discours sur l'art en général, Anna Degler inscrit le *parergon* dans le discours de l'histoire de l'art. Son ouvrage *Parergon* nous montre, comme les meilleurs livres d'histoire de l'art, que théoriser sur l'art n'est pas une façon de s'éloigner des œuvres, mais une manière de renouveler notre regard. Contrairement à ce qu'on pourrait croire, le mot est utilisé par les auteurs qui écrivent sur la peinture bien avant Kant. On le trouve employé par exemple par Paolo Giovio (cité p. 46), à propos des paysages peints en arrière-plan des tableaux de Dosso Dossi, le Ferrarais, dans ses *Dialogues* (v.