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Vester, Matthew, ed. Sabaudian Studies: Political Culture, Dynasty, and Territory 1400–1700

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elles attestent aussi l'érudition et la perspicacité de Céard lui-même, qui a su identifier dans *Mantice* les passages ou bien dérivés de sources souvent arcanes, ou bien parallèles à des textes contemporains. Somme toute, Jean Céard ne nous a pas donné seulement une excellente édition critique d'un texte en lui-même intéressant, il nous a fourni de la matière pour dresser un tableau complet d'un vrai XVI^e siècle tenté par la raison mais pas encore prêt à se libérer des connaissances pré-scientifiques.

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Vester, Matthew, ed.

Sabaudian Studies: Political Culture, Dynasty, and Territory 1400–1700.

Early Modern Studies 12. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2013. Pp. 333 + 7 ill., 7 maps. ISBN 978-1-61248-094-7 (paperback) US\$49.95.

It is likely that general readers will not be the only ones puzzled by the term “Sabaudian studies” in this book’s title. Even specialists who have published research in the areas this label seeks to represent may, at first glance, have to scratch their heads a little to grasp its meaning. The adjective is drawn from the Latin proper noun *Sabaudia*, the name given to the lands ruled by the House of Savoy from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. While the fourteen essays in this collection all deal with this diverse geographical area—stretching from Vaud and Bresse in the north and west to the Mediterranean in the south and east—they also aim to give a distinct shape and coherence to the study of this territory which has all but been forgotten in modern historiography. As editor Matthew Vester points out in his contribution “Sabaudian Studies: The Historiographic Context,” the study of those territories had been subsumed in the nineteenth century into the national histories of France, Italy, and Switzerland, with the result that the unifying threads of these lands—political, cultural, and economic—have been obscured. More recent historians have increasingly revealed the persistence of these threads, and Vester argues cogently that this reflects the need to study these territories from a distinctly Sabaudian perspective in order to understand them clearly. After all, during this period these territories represented a large scale dynastic holding.

The editor has grouped the articles into three thematic divisions: “Policies and Institutions,” “Representing the Dynasty,” and “Territorial Practices.” The four essays in the first division give a cross section of Sabaudian institutions and the policies they produced. Eva Pibiri explores the diplomatic policy of the fifteenth century Amadeus VIII of Savoy, and argues that it laid the foundations for a distinctly Sabaudian style of diplomacy. In a study of the administration of the apanage of Genevois (which encompassed a large territory south of Geneva) during the sixteenth century, Laurent Perrillat argues that administrative advancements made during the French occupation of 1536–59 were key to the transformation of Sabaudian territories from a feudal to a modern state. Rebecca Boone’s essay shows the reach of Sabaudian policies to the New World through the figure of Mercurino de Gattinara, a grand chancellor of Charles V between 1518 and 1533. The author argues that those policies enacted in Tenochtitlan reflected the contemporary concerns of Northern Italy ravaged by dynastic wars. In the final essay in this division, Alessandro Celi identifies a challenge to Sabaudian hegemony in the seventeenth century in the claims of the bishop of Aosta, Philibert-Albert Bailly, to the autonomy of the people of the Vallée d’Aoste.

The essays in the second division have a more cultural focus, and all investigate, in some way, representations of the dukes of Savoy. The first one by Thalia Breno investigates court festivals in the sixteenth century. Stéphane Gal and Preston Perluss offer an analysis of a variety of documents connected to Duke Charles Emanuel I’s voyage to France from 1599 to 1600. Michel Merle discusses the religious discourses surrounding the depictions of the fifteenth-century Amadeus IX of Savoy and Marie Christine of France in the seventeenth century. The representation of the House of Savoy at the papal court during the seventeenth century is the subject of Toby Osborne’s essay. Finally, Kristine Kolarud returns to the figure of Marie Christine de France and offers an analysis of her long regency for Charles Emanuel II.

The essays in the final division are linked by the theme of territoriality and each in its own way discusses the geo-political realities of the Duke of Savoy’s lands. Guido Alfani traces the tax payments of the city of Ivrea to the Duke of Savoy between the fifteenth and the seventeenth century, and argues that collections tended to favour the rich at the expense of the poor. Marco Battistoni gives an analysis of the role of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation in reshaping public space in the marquisate of Saluzzo in Southwestern Piedmont

between 1530 and 1620. Another contribution by editor Matthew Vester returns to the Vallée d'Aoste, which he presents as an example of the composite politics of the dynasty. The final essay by Blythe Alice Raviola does something similar, using the area of Piedmont as the example.

Rounding out the volume are touching tributes by four of the contributors to the scholar and publisher Robert Oresko, one of the leading experts (surely the leading Anglophone expert) on the Sabaudian lands, who died in 2010.

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