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*Vernacular Manuscript Culture, 1000–1500* ed. by Erik Kwakkel (review)

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and drawing. I myself have not been as awakened and enlightened by a monograph since I read Erwin Panofsky's *Early Netherlandish Painting* (1953) for the first time as a college undergraduate. Panofsky's book opened the door to a wonderful body of art that I hardly knew existed; *Painting the Page* has done the same, and I am now eager to explore that world further and in greater depth as soon as I possibly can.

Erik Kwakkel, ed. *Vernacular Manuscript Culture, 1000–1500*. Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Book Culture 4. Leiden: Leiden University Press/University of Chicago Press, 2018. 278 pp. + 21 color plates, 25 black and white illustrations. \$45. ISBN: 978-908-72-8302-5.

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CURATED BY THE DYNAMIC Erik Kwakkel, this wide-ranging collection of essays on vernacular manuscript production belongs to a series that “aims to discuss material features of manuscripts in relation to the cultural context of their production” (11). Featuring contributions by eminent scholars as well as early career researchers, the chapters focus primarily on the vernaculars of northern Europe, but also include traditions less familiar to the mainstream of manuscript studies, namely Frisian and Icelandic book production. Moreover, the textual contents comprise material often at the peripheries of literary studies, such as prayers and legal texts. Together this contributes to a broader and more nuanced presentation of book production across Europe.

The collection begins with Kathryn A. Lowe's intricate study of the copies of Gregory the Great's *Regula pastoralis* associated with the cathedral church of Worcester. By placing the philological and paleographical evidence in historical context, Lowe provides new insights into the reading and copying of this important patristic text in Latin and Old English. In particular, she demonstrates the important role of Wales for its transmission in Latin,

offering further evidence of the strength of Latinity in Wales during the ninth-century Viking raids. Lowe's principal focus is Glasgow, University Library, MS Hunter 431, a Latin copy of the text started in the early eleventh century and completed (and corrected) in the early twelfth century. Among the additions to the manuscript page are thirteenth-century annotations by the so-called Tremulous Hand of Worcester, who referred to it while working through two tenth-century Old English copies of the text. Lowe demonstrates how the exemplar of Hunter 431 was probably Welsh, containing a system of abbreviations unfamiliar to the original scribes. Lowe thus reveals how even at Worcester (a "bastion of learning") they "had to look elsewhere in order to acquire copies of key patristic texts in their original language" (44).

In the subsequent chapter, Nigel F. Palmer provides a magisterial overview of manuscripts and fragments containing Middle High German prayers copied between 1150 and 1250. Palmer distinguishes this corpus from the later vernacular prayer books that "assert themselves as a major component of German literature" (54). He traces the beginnings back to the insular tradition epitomized by Anselm of Canterbury, who played a key role "in the emergence of the 'prayer book'" (55) and whose Latin prayers were circulated and translated in German-speaking lands. In the twelfth- and thirteenth-century manuscripts under investigation, Palmer discovers a small "network" (70) of widely circulating German-language prayers often added to existing Latin collections. He traces evidence of female ownership and identifies a context of close interaction between wealthy families and the monasteries where the books were copied and illuminated. The chapter includes a useful inventory of the thirteen manuscripts in the corpus (73–85), as well as numerous figures and four-color plates. Through this important contribution, Palmer lays the groundwork for more extensive investigations of the corpus, while demonstrating its significance for our understanding of early medieval German literary culture.

The third chapter jumps forward to consider rubrics in the manuscripts of Jean Froissart's *Chroniques*. Godfried Croenen challenges the assumption that rubrication was a standard feature of late medieval manuscripts and calls for "a better understanding of the precise dynamics, chronology, and geography" of their "generalized" presence in books (105). Beginning with

a useful survey of the medieval and modern (scholarly) uses of the term “rubric,” he goes on to explore differences in practice across France. Croenen argues that Froissart did not compose the rubrics found in the manuscripts of his historical works. The impetus to introduce them is linked to Parisian modes of book production. Croenen compellingly articulates how rubrics became a conventional feature of Parisian vernacular manuscripts from the thirteenth century onward. By the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, rubrics were an aesthetic expectation of the clients of the Parisian *libraires*, and, as Croenen illustrates, their functionality was far less important. In the manuscripts of the *Chroniques*, he finds evidence of the circulation of independent sets of rubrics as well as impromptu additions, supporting and developing the important article by Richard Rouse and Mary Rouse on the copying of rubrics from distinct exemplars, often in the form of parchment rolls. Through his analysis of the complex manuscript tradition, Croenen reveals the different ways rubrics were added and the influence of the Parisian copies on the Burgundian manuscripts.

The manuscripts and fragments of Frisian legal texts are the subject of Rolf H. Bremmer, Jr.’s contribution to the volume. The only written evidence of the Frisian language is found in the extant manuscripts and fragments of the laws and customs of the region (with the exception of two glossed Latin Psalters). He analyzes the codicological and paleographical features of the five earliest Frisian legal manuscripts, dated between 1250 and 1350, exploring questions of their manufacture and ownership. Bremmer introduces the historical and geographical context for those unfamiliar with this anomalous self-governed region of northern Europe, formed of “a conglomeration of almost two dozen small autonomous districts” (143). He divides the corpus geographically, beginning with the “cultural backwater” (156) of Rüstringen, before moving westward via Brokmerland to Hunsingo and nearby Ommelanden. The manuscripts are characterized by their relatively broad dimensions, the low-quality parchment, the modest decoration, and the old-fashioned characteristics of the script that make dating a particular challenge. Bremmer offers a clear explanation of the paleographical details, revising the dating of two manuscripts and adding new findings on the paleographical features of the region. He associates the contents and material features of the corpus with individual peasant-landowners,

who required “a reminder of the prevailing legal traditions to be privately consulted when, in their capacity as judges, they participated in the administration of the districts for which these manuscripts were compiled” (179).

In the penultimate chapter, Sheryl McDonald Werronen paints a fascinating picture of the idiosyncratic manuscript culture of Iceland in her analysis of late medieval and early modern saga manuscripts. After introducing the historical context and fourteenth-century “golden age” of Icelandic manuscript production, McDonald Werronen’s attention is primarily directed, first, at the highly economical fifteenth-century saga codices and, then, at the seventeenth-century resurgence in manuscript culture. Following the post-Reformation decline in the second half of the sixteenth century, the later corpus evolves in response to the fact that nearly all printed items were religious and the publication of secular literature was prohibited. Copied by professional and amateur scribes, these large-format paper manuscripts reflect cheaper production costs as well as the influence of contemporary print culture in the form of title pages. In addition to examples of the direct copying of medieval books, McDonald Werronen demonstrates how older parchment saga codices were customized, dismembered, and updated.

The posthumous chapter by the renowned Dutch codicologist J. P. Gumbert concludes the collection on the topic of thick quires produced in Italy. Gumbert takes a different approach from the preceding chapters, in which the textual contents largely determine the manuscript corpus. He instead begins from the perspective of the manuscripts’ material characteristics, and then explores the texts they transmit. Gumbert’s particular interest is the use of thick quires for non-archival material as evidence of the infiltration of accounting and administration into “the world of books” (220). His starting point is a striking Florentine paper manuscript containing vernacular texts copied in *mercantesca* script (a cursive hand used by the merchants of Florence). After delineating a corpus of manuscripts with thick quires and those written in *mercantesca*, Gumbert determines that they are distinct phenomena, “although both derived from the world of administration and accounting” (225). He then analyzes the contents and characteristics of the two corpora discretely. Gumbert concludes by broadening the picture chronologically (to late antiquity) and geographically (beyond Europe) to illustrate the impact of the material of the page on the

presence of large quires, all the while emphasizing the need to investigate the phenomenon further.

This collection is full of scholarly rigor and renders complex material on diverse vernacular traditions accessible to those working in related fields. The introduction provides an excellent overview of the written development of European vernaculars. However, both the introduction and organization of the book associate language and place a little too neatly, overlooking the wide geographic scope of vernaculars such as French, which was used in northern Europe and across the Mediterranean, and the places where multiple vernaculars were being copied, for example, in the Italian peninsula. Nonetheless, the publication is a welcome illustration of the benefits of considering different types of vernacular book production in dialogue. The attractive small format of the book and the wealth of visual examples in the form of figures and color plates together complement the material focus of the collection, while providing an important resource for future scholarship.

Gaudenz Freuler. *The McCarthy Collection, Volume I: Italian and Byzantine Miniatures*. London: Ad Ilissum, 2018. 304 pp. (hardcover) + 250 color illustrations. £90. ISBN: 978-1-912168-07-1.

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THE MCCARTHY COLLECTION OF manuscripts has long been known to specialists, dealers, and other manuscript collectors. In recent years, select works have been exhibited around the world: European medieval and Renaissance leaves and cuttings have been featured in exhibitions at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, European miniatures and Armenian manuscripts and leaves have been shown at the Hong Kong University Museum and Art Gallery (Florian Knothe, *Illustrious Illuminations I: Christian Manuscripts from the High Gothic to the High Renaissance [1250–1540]*