here; nevertheless, this is the first serious attempt to identify the calligraphers who
served as models for the printing types of the fifteenth century and points to a new
direction for research in the field.

The work is beautifully printed and illustrated with examples of the different
fonts discussed, together with the samples of the handwriting of the various calligra-
phers. In the appendix there are seven documents relating to the development of
Greek printing, such as patents and licenses obtained by Aldus and other printers.
The book contains four original leaves from Aldine editions, each an example of the
four different types cut for Aldus by Francesco Griffo.

**Evro Layton**

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Christopher de Hamel. *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts.* Boston:

What Christopher de Hamel means by 'a history of illuminated manuscripts' is
really 'the production and use of the illustrated book in the Middle Ages.' And since
he is primarily interested in coloured illustrations, his study overwhelms the reader
with several hundred glorious examples, many of them full page folio facsimilies,
which glow and shimmer with all the colours available to the rubricator of a medi-
eval *scriptorium.*

Contrary to what the title suggests, the author does not give a chronological
account of manuscript illustration from the earliest appearance in the fourth cen-
tury of a 'codex' [a rectangular object with pages, rather than the roll or 'scroll' of
Classical Antiquity] to the last codices of the late fifteenth century, when hand-
made manuscripts began to compete with books mass-produced on the newly
invented printing press. Rather, he organizes this mass of visual material generi-
cally. Manuscripts are categorized by chapter according to whether they are
intended for missionaries, emperors, monks, students, aristocrats, 'everybody,' pri-
est, or collectors. A chronological basis to this arrangement, nevertheless, does
emerge, for among the earliest extant are some sixth-century illustrated manu-
scripts associated with St. Augustine of Canterbury's mission to the Anglo-Saxons:
the Gospels in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College ms. 286 [Pl. 7]; the Bible in Dur-
ham Cathedral ms. B.IV. 6 [Pl. 13]; or the Lindisfarne Gospels in London, British
Library, Cotton ms. Nero D.IV [Pl. 29], dated ca. 698. The last chapter focuses on
manuscripts commissioned or owned by such humanist bibliophiles as Cosimo
de'Medici or the Englishman William Gray, who, from 1444 to 1453, ordered
illuminated manuscripts of all the 'great works' from the Florentine bookseller,
Vespasiano da Bisticci. Indeed, these latest manuscripts cyclically complete a chro-
nological account of manuscript illumination, because Vespasiano's scripts imitate
Carolingian script of the tenth to twelfth centuries (with Pl. 237, cf. Pl. 75) and his
illumination reproduces the interlaced initials and borders of early Celtic and
Anglo-Saxon rubricators (with Pl. 237, cf. Pl. 22). An amusing yet appropriate conclusion to de Hamel's account is the facsimile page from a late, fifteenth-century copy of Eusebius' *De Temporibus*: the illuminator has represented the text as written on an ancient scroll, unrolled and laced against a Classical arch (Pl. 242).

The organizational principle of the intervening chapters might be described as 'hierarchical,' and so reflects the very medieval socio-political structures out of which these manuscripts were produced. Whether the author's intention or not, it is a useful way to organize a great body of disparate material. Chapter 2 begins with a description of the manuscript found in Charlemagne's tomb in A.D. 1000. Written in gold on purple vellum and decorated with mural-like miniatures, the Vienna Coronation Gospels (as they are now called, Pls. 34-35) manifest close association with Byzantine and ultimately Classical painting. De Hamel's account of the Ottonian empire and its role in book production, pp. 56-72, illustrates an important shift from Carolingian book production at court to individual monasteries, which allowed for more self-conscious imitation of Roman, empirical styles and, at the same time, the development of different schools such as those at Reichenau and Echternach.

Monastic schools and libraries provide the basis for discussion in Chapter 3. Invaluable to such an assessment are extant medieval library catalogues, like that for Reading Abbey. In this chapter the author describes how the monastic *scriptorium* produced books, first by making vellum sheets; folding the sheets to produce quires; gathering the quires and sewing them together; pricking the pages to established ruling patterns; illustrating them; and then writing on them. Some manuscripts offer clues as to how these various stages of production were carried out, like the unfinished page from the opening of St. Luke's Gospel in a mid-twelfth-century Canterbury manuscript (Pl. 110), which shows the stages of penciled design, rubrication in blue and red, and Latin notes — subsequently unheeded — to the scribe. In describing these steps, de Hamel indicates their significance for two major concerns that modern scholars may have in assessing manuscripts: their date and provenance. Chapter 3 also illustrates use of books in the monastic or university library. Within the disciplines of *trivium* and *quadrivium* and subsequently of law and medicine, students had a great need for books, and the author provides representative illustrations of how such books were produced (e.g., a cleric instructing a secular artist working on a manuscript, from a Moralized Bible, Pl. 110) or read (e.g., Hugh of St. Victor lecturing to three students from the *De Archa Noe*, Pl. 103).

Chapters 4-6 consider type and quality among books owned and used among Aristocrats, 'Everybody,' and Priests respectively. As one would expect, dominant genres among the aristocratic manuscripts concern love, history, and romances; here are some of the more spectacularly beautiful illustrations, such as the *Roman d'Alexandre* (Pl. 141); the Manasse Codex (which contains the Minnesinger poems, Pl. 142); and the *Bible Historiale* (Pl. 152). The 'Everybody' manuscripts are confined to Books of Hours, again filled with lavish illustration. Most familiar among these are the *Très Riches Heures* of Jean, Duc de Berry, with pages from 'February' reproduced as Pls. 157-8. More specialized liturgical books are the subject of the penultimate chapter, on 'Priests.' The two largest groups include Missals, such
as that made for Cardinal Bernardino de Carvajal (ca. 1520, Pl. 200), and Breviaries, such as that made for Jean sans Peur (ca. 1415, Pl. 208). Useful is the author’s brief account of the distinctions between and specific uses of these books, which in turn provided the medieval rationale behind differences in script and illumination.

Such specialized and scholarly information will be of use to the reader who wishes more than enjoyment of the beauty, ingenuity, and at times humour of manuscript illumination. It prevents the book from being a ‘coffee-table book,’ a lavish but useless production, bewildering to the layman and frustrating to the specialist. In keeping with its popular appeal, there are no notes, the lucid text is written in a simple, expository style, and technical description is kept to a minimum. But for the specialist, seeing the macrocosmic sweep of illustrations is valuable, and there are bibliographical resumes for each chapter covering historical, palaeographical, and codicological material. Although the level of coverage is uneven, it would not seem immodest to suggest that my Western Manuscripts from Classical Antiquity to the Renaissance: A Handbook (1981) should have been included along with other general bibliographies on p. 245, some of them less relevant.

A more serious fault lies in organization. Although de Hamel’s division of chapters into generic and social types is a useful and comprehensible analytical structure, it creates false divisions and misleading, compartmentalized conceptions. Some of the ‘missionary’ manuscripts, for example, would more properly be defined as ‘monastic’ (e.g., the Lindisfarne Gospels). Some of the ‘monastic’ manuscripts are definitely for ‘students,’ and many illustrations of manuscripts for ‘students’ refer only to stylized and generalized methods of book production within monastic scriptoria, rather than to methods of study. Moreover, the aristocratic Books of Hours were certainly not for ‘everybody,’ but produced according to very expensive and professional standards and limited in circulation. These should have been included in Chapter 5, and the ‘everybody’ manuscripts more logically and accurately devoted to popular books like Legenda Aurea or astrological almanacs, which nearly every book-collecting ‘body’ had.

Finally, while the book is attractively printed in double columns and virtually free from typographical errors, many of the black and white reproductions are blurred and the colour facsimiles poor in quality. Some colours especially are distorted, e.g., to a vibrant orange in Pls. 6-7, a sickly pink in Pls. 29, 41, 91, or a dull blue in Pl. 111; they are muddied in Pl. 155 or obscured in Pls. 113, 120, 143; even the Très Riches Heures (Pls. 157-8) fails to reveal the brilliant quality of colour and clarity of drawing so familiar to students of this famous manuscript. While the quality of colour reproduction is beyond the author’s control, it is certainly important in a book which depends primarily upon visual impact.

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