and the final decades of the twentieth century. But he goes much further than this in his “collaboration” (as he sees it). Bringhurst states that Chappell’s “plain elucidations of the complex interactions between humans and materials brought his story of the printed word alive,” yet those elucidations have been altered throughout by Bringhurst. In addition, although he claims the design is Chappell’s own, the margins are reduced enough to make pages feel cramped. Text and illustrations are often lost in the gutters. The page layouts and openings that Chappell had so carefully crafted are altered. Bringhurst states that he disapproves, in principle, with the practice of revising books of the deceased rather than writing new ones. One wishes he had not broken his rule here. However, copies of the first edition still can be found in the second-hand book market for those who want to appreciate Chappell’s text and design as he had intended it to be.

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The relatively fresh source of this book—edited and introduced by John Williams—was a conference entitled “Imaging the Early Medieval Bible” held in 1994 at the Department of the History of Art and Architecture at the University of Pittsburgh. Whereas the text is superb and noteworthy, to say the least, the appearance of the book is rather mediocre considering the few (not very convincing) colour plates and mostly black-and-white images of rather poor quality. There is, to be sure, a gap between the quality of text and image, dissimilar to the issues dealt with in the book. Certainly its looks and the hefty price tag of $75 US do not serve to proliferate the splendid contents of this book.

Five authors tackle thorny and complex issues which are marked by the authoritative research of most eminent scholars such as Anton Springer, Josef Strzygowski, Charles Rufus Morey, Wilhelm Koehler, and, above all Kurt Weitzmann—encompassing more than one
hundred years of the history of art history. All contributors “sought to reorient manuscript studies away from the research for archetypes and toward the type of studies ... endowed with richer and contextual evidence.” The focus is on the “Beginnings of Biblical Illustration” (John Lowden), the “Bible Illustration and the Jewish Tradition” (Katrin Kogman-Appel), “Biblical Manuscripts in Rome 400-700 and the Ashburnham Pentateuch” (D. Hoogland Verkerk), “Problems of Form and Function in Early Medieval Illustrated Bibles from Northwest Europe” (Lawrence Nees), and the “Bible in Spain” (John Williams). The book acknowledges, and then thoroughly breaks with the sanctioned tradition as tied to the above mentioned scholars and the Princeton or Weitzmann legacy. It not only proclaims the end of that conventional art historical approach, but sets examples of a new agenda, focusing on form, function, format, and, finally, although tentatively, the beholder.

Each chapter carefully and meticulously evaluates the complex history of research up to our present, on the one hand presenting the “tidiness of the evolutionary structure,” then “laying bare the state of our ignorance,” followed by “a leap into the unknown.” Of course, this cannot be the place to discuss each chapter in detail, but a few highlights should suffice to outline the productive and immensely thoughtful approach of the book and its authors. Not surprisingly, Lowden’s evaluation concludes with sentences such as: “early manuscripts show that there was no single normative procedure for biblical illustration alongside numerous variants. Every surviving manuscript differs from every other in important aspects.” The issues become more intricate because of the tendency to assimilate narrative art in a simplistic fashion with the written word, thus implying a dominance of the word over the image, and of literate over visual modes. Lowden draws our attention to the function of monumental images as “public art, in the form of the large and conspicuous cycles of biblical images that began to appear in churches around 400, ... and biblical manuscript illustration as a fifth- and sixth-century response to those changes.”

Similarly, the traditional approach to the Jewish tradition is thoroughly questioned, if not dismantled by Kogman-Appel—and reads like a fascinating (art) historical detective story. As Lowden before, she dilates the range of problems to be considered: Jewish-Christian contacts in Late Antiquity and their manifestations in biblical exegesis and Old Testament iconography. Whereas both religions had reservations about figurative art during the first and
second centuries; both religions later experienced a change of mind. But above and beyond the theoretical background, she asks: “Is it not possible that a cultural exchange between the two rival religions was more easily undertaken at the practical, everyday level of artistic workshops involving visual models than at the theoretical, exegetical, and theological level?” Hers is a valuable and lively account of the state of research regarding the Quedlinburg Itala and the Saint Augustine’s Gospels.

Hoogland Verkerk focuses on the Ashburnham Pentateuch and its connection to monumental painting: the frescoes in the catacombs of Via Latina and the lost fifth-century frescoes of San Paolo fuori le mura in Rome, and tentatively assigns its production in Rome, too. Lawrence Nees’s lucid, critical, and sometimes humourous and biting review of form and function in early medieval illustrated Bibles makes priceless contributions from a more elevated art historical perspective. He claims that “any single-volume Bible is, at least before the ninth century, unusual, and art historians ought to consider that a fortiori the luxuriously illuminated Bible is a very peculiar entity, especially in early medieval Western Europe.... The linked questions of function and audience have taken on a far keener edge, as in scholarly study generally.” He criticizes seemingly established terms, such as the “scriptorium conception”—with teams of scribes and artists and other workers, and some form of overlapping production, and that one book could serve as the model for the next. He argues that the “evidence of text and codicology suggests no such procedure and no such goal for these early medieval Bibles. Perhaps a better contemporary industrial metaphor would be (post?)modern ‘just in time’ production, emptying the warehouse so that each product is to a considerable degree an ad hoc creation.” He then raises the question regarding the actual role or performance of these manuscripts in a public context, i.e., their partial reading during certain occasions, preferably not in church (as the basis for a sermon), but in “church” understood as referring to the Christian community, whether monks or secular canons, meeting wherever they met, thereby allowing (loud) reading in chapter house or refectory as the meaning of reading “in church.” Next he discusses the Bibles’ function as gifts: “the single Bible codex represents Scripture as a complete corpus, the physical form of the volume representing a statement about Scripture as much as providing a resource giving access to Scripture. This new representational significance made the volume a suitable candidate for gift-giving, as
giving and receiving Bibles became, as it were, a sign of Frankish orthodoxy, a theme of the utmost importance in the circle of Charlemagne," and, of course, involving what we would label as political issues.

Regarding Spain, John Williams moves to the Muslim-Christian frontier near Léon and the Bibles of 920 and 960, "initiating an era of brilliantly illuminated Leonese manuscripts customarily gathered under the name 'Mozarabic,'" and states that "even if the evidence ... confirms that the Bible as artifact had an early and healthy life in the Peninsula, it does not point to a tradition of illustrated Bibles."

The labyrinthian quest for the assumed lost archetypes of the Bible and its illuminations involve, of course, the influential opinions of Weitzmann, Wilhelm Koehler, and Florentine Mùtherich, however concluding that the illustrations of this important Bible were composed in Valeranica rather than encountered as pre-existing cycles. In Williams's words, "the notion that the illustrations of a medieval Bible might be composed by a painter ad hoc is radically counter to the traditional ways of reconstructing the origins of that genre. Any tradition of illustration had to have its creator, of course, but an obsession with archetypes tends to relegate creativity to some prehistoric moment too remote to engage," and pointing out to the fact that "pictures add communicative power and immediacy to biblical narrative. Looking at images, in other words, was as integral to the experience of scripture as listening, reading, and chanting."

In sum: judging from a traditional perspective, this book is a literal bombshell in a nutshell, and must be read very carefully: in less than 200 pages of text it introduces the reader to a compressed diorama featuring an archetypical art historical development, tradition and innovation, and, between the lines, the power of art historical institutions in that field. Contrary to many art historical contributions it is very readable, in part fascinating, respectful and irreverent at the same time—and dedicated to the memory of Kurt Weitzmann. It requires some familiarity with the issues, but all authors take utmost care to guide the "novice" through the swamp of historical and art historical states of research, terms, concepts, and beliefs. This book belongs on the bookshelf of every (medieval) art historian. It points to a new direction of research (for that particular stream of research), and poses questions to be asked. It is no disgrace that not many definitive answers could be given, but old questionnaires had to be abandoned and dismissed, because they were serving more an idea of art history (iconography, history of forms, philology), instead of
examining the expurgated, and not so “conclusive” historical evidence (here I feel reminded of the Emperor’s New Clothes metaphor): the books, their pictures, and—equally important—their users. After the book, one should indulge in reading more of each author—not an easy task, because there is only an index but no general bibliography. Anyway, the book is a most welcome, nonchalant milestone in the field, for now.

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It is rare to find a collection of papers so consistently excellent and which complement each other so admirably. This volume of The Bible as Book is the second in a series based on conferences sponsored by The Scriptorium: Center for Christian Antiquities in co-operation with the Van Kampen Foundation. The first volume was The Bible as Book: The Manuscript Tradition, published in 1997 (reviewed in Papers/Cahiers 37:2 [Fall 1999]); the third volume was The Bible as Book: The Reformation, published in 2000. The present collection concentrates on the period of about sixty years from Gutenberg to Erasmus, “and in so doing constitutes an intense examination of this period which produced well over 100 Latin editions [of the Bible], and numerous issues in Hebrew, German, and other vernacular languages” (xi).

There are a dozen contributions, together with a foreword by the editors and a useful summary-introduction by Anthony Kenny of Oxford University. They begin with two essays on the glossed bible. J.P. Gumbert, of the Rijks Universiteit Leiden, presents a concise paper on the mise-en-page of glossed bibles and how the layout was designed to solve three problems. How do you fit the text and commentary on the page? How do you make it clear which bit of commentary refers to which bit of text? And how do you distinguish text from commentary? The answer—or one of the answers—to all