



# *Re-Inventing Traditions*

On the Transmission of Artistic Patterns  
in Late Medieval Manuscript Illumination

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EDITION

## Introduction

The present book assembles a series of new studies on the transmission of artistic patterns in late medieval manuscript illumination north and south the Alps, a means of artistic production that has played an essential role throughout the Middle Ages. Despite a constantly changing and developing process of production the recourse on older works of art, the reproduction, variation and adaptation of artistic patterns shaped the methods of work of medieval scribes and illuminators. Art history always had a particular interest in the study of artistic transmission and concepts of pictorial traditions in order to outline artistic developments, regional particularities and even individual biographies. But even the most elaborate works of art can never be sufficiently understood in their historic context when separated from the history of their motifs.

This book assembles individual case studies delivered at the conference “Re-inventing Traditions – On the Transmission of Artistic Patterns in Late Medieval Manuscript Illumination” held at the Gemäldegalerie Berlin and the Freie Universität in Berlin on June 8–10, 2012. It was generously supported by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, Cologne. The idea for the conference developed from many discussions in the lively environment of Prof. Eberhard König’s chair of Late Medieval and Early Modern Art History at the Freie Universität Berlin. The conference coincided with the exhibition “Die Kunst der Beschreibung. Handschriften aus fünf Jahrhunderten kommentiert von Eberhard König. Eine Faksimile-Ausstellung” at the University Library of the Freie Universität.<sup>1</sup> The exhibition may paradigmatically stand for this volume’s goal: every single manuscript opens another chapter and it is precisely this plurality, which can help us to further diversify our perception and our understanding of processes of transmission.

The contributions are divided into five sections, each of them focusing on one particular aspect in the study of artistic patterns. The first section is dedicated to the transmission of pictorial cycles that are transformed both by intellectual cultures and stylistic development throughout time. Bertrand Cosnet studies the iconography of the virtues in Italian manuscripts in the French *Somme le roi*, showing the particular artistic and intellectual influence of the Italian tradition on the illuminated cycle. Sandrine Pagenot concentrates in her paper on the progressive change and stylistic development in the pictorial cycle of the *Livre des deduis*, a French hunting treatise.

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1 For an overview on the exhibited facsimiles, see ex. cat. *Die Kunst der Beschreibung. Handschriften aus fünf Jahrhunderten kommentiert von Eberhard König. Eine Faksimile-Ausstellung*, ed. by Joris C. Heyder, Christine Seidel and Caroline Zöhl, Berlin, 2012.

The role played by the demands of the manuscript layout and secondary decoration in relation to the transmission of artistic models is investigated in the contributions in the following section. Decorative patterns in charter decoration that share the same motifs as manuscript decorations are the center of Nataša Kavčič's study. Gemma Avenozza and Marion Coderch investigate the reuse of compositional patterns throughout several editions of Castilian bible translations. Katja Monier examines in her paper the approach of the Master of Spencer 6 to create a locally specified iconography by the transformation of a standardized pattern in accordance with the text. Maria Ferroni studies the development of Sano di Pietro's historiated initials in relation to both the requirements of the manuscript layout and the inspiration drawn from monumental wall paintings. All four contributions focus on different aspects of interdependencies between the textual traditions and images or decorations as a reaction to either the content itself or its appearance within the book as a specific visual reference.

The use of workshop models as well as local and transregional transmission of artistic patterns are analyzed within examples of French late medieval manuscripts between the time of Jean Fouquet and the 1520s workshop. Samuel Gras shapes the new artistic personality of the Master of Jeanne de France out of a hitherto little defined group of manuscripts in the entourage of Jean Fouquet, focusing on the exchange of artistic models between different masters, among them the Master of Christophe de Champagne, whom he identified with the Tournese illuminator Guillaume Piqueau. The court painter Jean Bourdichon who worked for three French kings and his collaboration with his contemporaries is the center of Nicholas Herman's study. By retracing the use of compositional models within the so-called 1520s workshop, Elizabeth L'Estrange strengthens the inclusion of a little known manuscript in Liège into the group of Anvers and Parisian artists active in Paris in the first half of the 16th century.

The volume is supplemented by studies on itinerant artists and the transformation of their artistic repertoire through the contact with new artistic environments. Frédéric Elsig presents the case of Antoine de Lonhy, a French painter-illuminator who worked in Burgundy, Toulouse, Northern Spain and Savoy. The case of the Master of the della Rovere Missals studied by Valérie Guéant, a French illuminator working in Tours and in Rome, reveals the influence of Roman fresco painting on the work of the painter. Intermediary model sheets are likely to have played an important role in the integration of monumental designs into manuscript illumination, as Marion Heisterberg examines in her contribution on the passion cycle of the martyrology of the Cini Foundation in Venice. The influence on decorative patterns used to illuminate liturgical manuscripts, thus the transmission of patterns of illumination into large-scale painting and vice versa, belongs to a still largely unexplored field of research and the study by Nataša Golob on Slovenian church ceilings and their artis-

tic relation to manuscript decoration at the end of the Middle Ages is a particularly revealing contribution.

The last section is dedicated to books of hours in particular and the adaptation of diverse artistic patterns into this very particular type of late medieval book that offered, much more than one might expect, various possibilities for experimental layout designs and pictorial models borrowed from different media. In the highly personalized manuscript of Lodewijk van Boghem, architect of the duchess Margaret of Austria in Brou, Laurence Rivière-Ciavaldini studies the influence of van Boghem's own architectural designs on the decoration of his book of hours. That particularly the newly invented and widely dispersed prints were also an important source of inspiration for medieval illuminators is shown by Brigitte Roux who retraces the influence of Dürer's prints on the miniatures in the book of hours of Philibert de Viry produced in Lyons.

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