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Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, *Renaissance Illuminators in Paris: Artists & Artisans 1500-1715*. London and Turnhout: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2019. 280 pp. Maps, genealogies, figures, notes, glossary, bibliography, and index. €125.00 (hb). ISBN 978-1-912554-28-7.

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Dedicated to the memory of Myra Orth, this volume responds to her 2002 request to produce a register of manuscript illuminators in Renaissance Paris and thereby complements Dr. Orth's *Renaissance Manuscripts: The Sixteenth Century* (2015). Well-known for their scholarship on the medieval book trade in Paris, these distinguished scholars venture here into later decades, applying their impressive mastery of archival records, material sources, and book history in tracking down individual Parisian *enlumineurs* and their family networks at a time when their profession confronted considerable challenges as a result of the advent of print. The ways in which associated risks and pressures affected artists' and artisans' lives and careers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are featured in five chapters in part one ("Paris Illuminators in the Age of Print: A *Métier* Redefined"), which provides a social history of illuminators' vocation during this period. Part two consists of a Register of some 500 book producer names and personal details drawn from contemporary documents. Exemplifying the distinctive trademark of Harvey Miller Publications, the volume is replete with some sixty illustrations, many of which are splendid color reproductions.[1]

The introduction provides a general picture of the disruption of Paris's successful commercial manuscript book trade by the print industry around 1500. While a small percentage of *libraires* became publishers of printed books and book-binders evidently transitioned well into the world of print, parchment-sellers continued to lose out to paper-sellers, scribes had to shift to other positions, such as notaries, and illuminators survived by redefining themselves. The strategies of these mostly anonymous artists, who, beside the rapid decline in manuscript book production, also faced the effects of foreign wars, domestic strife, and religious extremism, constitute the focus of this volume, whose authors seek to answer how and for how long illuminators were able to address the various threats to their industry.

In chapter one, "The Continuation of the Illuminator's Trade in Renaissance Paris," the Rouses report their unanticipated discovery of *enlumineurs* in records extending throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, even though their *métier* has traditionally been considered to have ended by the mid-sixteenth century. The authors note, nonetheless, that the illuminator's trade was gradually redefined as they assumed activities beyond the traditional painting of manuscript images. But the absence, after 1500, of records defining illuminators' profession, for which no

corporation existed, complicates the authors' ability to characterize this community, at once more flexible and more vulnerable without guild regulations. A close examination of contracts and other related documents, from which the Rouses draw specific examples to support their observations and analyses, was therefore indispensable. Their re-examination of records about a failed attempt to create an Illuminators' Guild in 1607-1608 reveals the power of the organized opposition of the Painters' Guild--whose members feared exclusion from profitable commissions to paint miniature portraits--, which played a role in persuading the *prévôt* of Paris (François Miron) to deny the petition. Some 300 illuminators (of which seventy names figure in the Register) joined the Painters' Guild as a result, with most registered as *peintres-enlumineurs*. Other titles surface as well in the archival material, one of which, *enlumineurs en taille douce*, essentially artisans adding color to black-and-white prints (p. 27), accounts for some thirty artists from the Register. With current debates among art historians about the quality of this procedure (enhancement or debasement?) coupled with the inconsistent use of this title, and the combination of original illuminations, painted prints, and illuminated images based on print sources functioning on a professional and commercial scale, the Rouses lament the lack of serious research on painted prints and painters of prints in Renaissance France. Their outstanding investigation certainly sets the stage for such future studies.

According to the authors, whereas *enlumineurs en taille douce* painted prints and copper engravings, mostly in books, often rising to the level of medieval illuminators, *enlumineurs d'images* (of which sixteen figure in the Register) tended to paint prints, often woodcuts on broadsheets, thus participating in the mass-production of images. In addition, painting with stencils was a particularly economical means to produce thousands of images. Sometimes the term *enlumineur* refers to those, like Nicolas Lefèvre, who created the designs for engravers to cut, but then painted and sold those very prints. Other less traditional and short-lived titles include the seventeenth-century *enlumineurs d'éventail*, painters of fans, and *brodeurs-enlumineurs*, who created patterns for embroiderers. These various examples underscore the complicated nature of distinguishing among the expanding tasks and multiple titles adopted by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century *enlumineurs*, who frequently took on work in adjacent crafts to survive. For example, Claude Lalouette, active in 1639-1670, is identified as a *maître enlumineur*, *imprimeur en taille douce*, *marchand de taille douce*, and *imprimeur du roi pour les tailles douces*. As the Rouses state, the illuminators' *métier* during the period under study was "stretched...increasingly redefined, increasingly broadly, until its meaning was diluted almost beyond recognition" (p. 46).

In chapter two, "Beyond Redefinition: Other Survival Strategies in the Illuminator's Trade," the Rouses explore the various approaches and alliances adopted by illuminators. From the early to mid-sixteenth century, the Hardouin brothers published multiple editions on parchment of French-language Books of Hours (Use of Rome), whose images were based on designs by the famous miniaturist Jean Pichore, while Florent Le Pelletier was hired by the Hôtel de Ville to illuminate six printed paper copies of an account of King Charles IX's Parisian entry in 1572. Guillaume Richardière created lavish illuminations for a missal printed on paper in 1586, but he also painted manuscript miniatures in a Gospel Book offered to Henry III and illuminated a printed missal on parchment. Parisian *enlumineurs* like Jean Pichore and Geoffroy Ballin also designed woodcuts for printers. Working simultaneously on several projects, illuminators were frequently multi-taskers (even if they swore oaths in contracts to the contrary), and some established partnerships with other book-makers to share the financial risks. Geoffrey Ballin, for example, worked for a long time with the illuminator Jean Pignot and the woodcutter Jean de Gourmont, and the Ballin-Gourmont team also partnered with the famous Christopher Plantin.

Perhaps the most dependable strategy for the preservation of the illuminators' profession was networking with family members in related book trade crafts. Such associations, representing one-third of the names in the Register, profited from inheritance laws making financial gain profitable for all members. The Rouses follow the book-trade members of the Hardouin family for three successive generations, several of whom were illuminators and *libraires*, the Chuppin family in the seventeenth century, whose many members were master illuminators, and the associations among the Ballin, Bézard and Mathonière families, all involving various book-trade skills.

In chapter three, "Contracts and Inventories," the Rouses' scrutiny of extant but less studied contracts and death records sheds light on the working conditions of illuminators. Contracts regarding manuscript illumination specify, for example, the musical notation and calligraphy of major initials for a gradual in 1538, with advances for materials purchased and payment upon completion of each quire (Pierre Fouzibes for the Chapter of Saint-Mellon of Pontoise) or spell out in surprising detail required artistic features in the illumination of a choir book in 1606 (Bonaventure Mezoulle for the curé of Saint Paul). Legal resolutions expose complications over the completion of four choir-book copies for Gilles de Gaudz, almoner of the bishop of Nantes, after the death of the first illuminator in 1540, and revisit in 1551 Macé de Merey's contract to illuminate and historiate two antiphonals for the Cathedral Chapter at Chartres, for which he had been overpaid. Contracts involving printed books reveal a commission to produce a manuscript copy of a printed French psalter in 1542 (Louis Delorme for illuminator Jean Legay) or the calculation of payment in 1543 for the illumination of a missal printed on vellum by the size of the requisite historiated letters, capitals, and pilcrows (Quentin Du Hanot's for the regent master of theology at the University of Paris, Jean de Tueil). Commissions ranged geographically from Paris and its environs to more distant regions of France like Toulouse and Nantes, suggesting that by the early seventeenth century, which saw a decrease in contracts, illuminators went to greater lengths to secure jobs for themselves. Although relatively scarce, extant post-mortem inventories provide insight into certain *enlumineurs'* production. Here the Rouses analyze Jean Leclerc's exceptionally detailed 1544 inventory, which reveals the flourishing nature of his enterprise, in contrast to the unremarkable inventory of the less successful Nicolas Richer (d. 1576). Of special interest are the 1601 will and inventory of Jeanne Basquelin, wife of illuminator Jean Loré, whose possessions indicate that she herself was an illuminator, although she is never described as such. According to the authors, this inventory "suggests the possibility that, to an even greater degree than had been true in earlier centuries, women illuminators may have operated invisibly, beneath the level of documentary notice, concealed by the commercial as well as the legal presence of men – husbands, fathers, or brothers" (p. 98).

Complementing chapter three is the Rouses' assessment in chapter four, "Apprenticeships," of documents that describe apprenticeships, more than one hundred of which are extant from this period, confirming that the career of an illuminator was still valued into the mid-seventeenth century. Such contracts were generally drawn up between the adult sponsor of a youth in his early teens bound in service for four to five years—although at least one contract involved a 5 ½-year-old's service for twelve years—and a master illuminator, who would guarantee shelter, the teaching of his trade, and sometimes an education. Payment of the sponsor to the illuminator varied, although the former might provide clothing and guarantee provisions for a runaway, an apparently recurring problem. Towards the end of his training, an apprentice might become a financial asset to his master, earning his own keep and more, some of which the master might retain. Many apprentices failed to serve their time, but annulment of contracts through mutual

agreement was not exceptional. Adult apprentices were rare and the few female apprentices in the seventeenth century were usually bound to female illuminators. The standard illuminator's workshop was usually modest, consisting of one hired journeyman, one apprentice, and a master. Illuminators' sons and daughters might be apprenticed to masters in different trades, but sons were often trained by their fathers in the family business. Unknown is whether or not illuminators trained their own daughters.

In chapter five, "The Vanishing Point," the authors acknowledge the subjective nature of determining when the illuminator's profession actually ended, given the survival of the title as late as the twenty-first century. Stating that "[i]n our judgment, the history of illumination and illuminators in Paris, in the original sense of those terms, ceased when a routine procedure became an affectation," that is, when it was replaced by "something quaint or nostalgic or picturesque" (p. 120), the Rouses propose the reign of Louis XIV (1643-1715) as the end-date. They advance multiple examples of how the French king valued painting on parchment and frontispieces for its novelty and grandeur rather than a tradition that merited preservation and emphasize the change during this period from the enhancement of books by beautiful images to the painting of gorgeous images seeking their place in books.

Part one concludes with four appendices providing a list of University of Paris officers c. 1505-1518 involved in the print book trade, taken from a hybrid book (BnF fr. 18783); the text and translation of the 1608 denial of the petition for an Illuminators Guild; the text and translation of the 1546 contract between Macé de Merey and the Chapter of Chartres Cathedral; and the text and translation of the 1541 contract between Nicolas de La Ruelle and the illuminator Jean Legay concerning the apprenticeship of Guillaume, aged 5 ½.

In Part two the authors introduce the Register with an exposition on the dramatic increase in documentation during the sixteenth century, thanks to the emergence and regularization of the notary's role in public record-keeping, and the consequential challenges facing researchers (illegibility, abbreviations, the enormous numbers of articles containing hundreds of entries). Although an exhaustive survey of sources is therefore impossible, the Rouses meticulously provide details of their various guides and resources, simultaneously acknowledging the inevitably incomplete nature of their undertaking. The Register itself, an impressive archival achievement that reflects endless hours of painstaking research, provides a list of Parisian manuscript-book artisans and scribes usually identified as *enlumineurs*, along with related binders, *libraires*, notators, parchmenters, and paper-sellers.

Richard and Mary Rouse have succeeded in addressing Myra Orth's request--often incorporating her own research into their investigation--in two valuable ways. They have excelled at accessing and extricating pertinent data from complicated collections of documents. Not only mastering the inherent difficulties of such archival material, they have also fashioned from it a remarkable narrative that affords fresh insight into the lives and livelihoods of illuminators in Renaissance Paris.

NOTES

[1] Note that Fig 2.6, p. 60, does not portray Guillaume Richardière's depiction of the Crucifixion with the Virgin and St. John, as announced on p. 58, but rather his representation of the Pentecost.

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