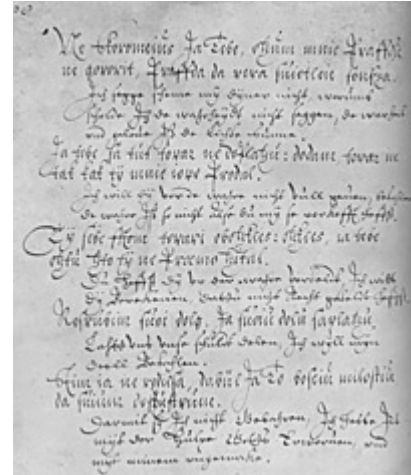


Lieftinck Lectures

Handwritten Text Recognition Meets the Crowd: Transcribe Bentham and tranScriptorium (22 April, 2015)

Dr. Melissa Terras (University College London)

The challenges for the automated reading of handwritten scripts, and for the computational recognition and transcription of archival material, are enormous. In this lecture, an example of hopeful advances in Pattern Recognition, Computer Vision, Document Image Analysis, Language Modelling, Digital Humanities, and Archival Research which are coming together to develop Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR) will be presented: The European FP7 Funded tranScriptorium project. Central to its development has been the reuse of crowdsourced transcriptions from Transcribe Bentham: over 5 million words transcribed by volunteer labour provide a “ground truth” with which we can train computers to read handwriting. The lecture will cover the aims and development of the tranScriptorium project, and ask: what next for HTR as applied to archival manuscripts?



For more information about Dr. Melissa Terras click [here](#). Lieftinck Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#) by 17 April.

Rubricating History in Late Medieval France (16 May, 2014)

Leiden University Library, 3-4 pm

Dr. Godfried Croenen, University of Liverpool (Senior Lecturer in French Historical Studies)



Most of the manuscripts produced in late medieval Paris, including the many with historiographical texts, contain a more or less complex system of textual divisions articulated partly by rubrics. Some of these texts include a stable set of rubrics that reappears in most surviving copies, but the textual traditions of others show a wide variety in their paratextual systems. Starting from an analysis of the rubrics in two of the best known historical narratives in Middle French that have survived in large numbers – the *Grandes Chroniques de France* and the *Chroniques of Jean Froissart* – this lecture will consider the various functions rubrics had for both authors and readers of late medieval French manuscripts in general and of historical texts in particular. As well as trying to understand why rubrics became a standard part of textual production in the 14th and 15th centuries, it will also look at the particular stages of the manuscript production processes concerned with both drafting the rubrics and copying them into the manuscript books.

For more information about Dr. Godfried Croenen click [here](#). Lieftinck Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).

The Manuscripts of the Earliest German Prayers, 12th/13th Century (4 April, 2014)

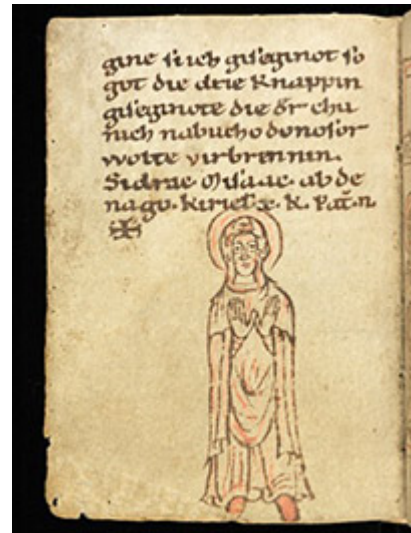
Leiden University Library, 3-4 pm

*Nigel F. Palmer (Emeritus Professor of German Medieval and
Linguistic Studies, University of Oxford)*

Only a single German prayer book has survived intact from the twelfth century, the Gebetbuch von Muri (Prayer Book of Muri). On the other hand, quite a large number of individual German prayers survive from this period, some of them fragments of what might originally have been booklets of vernacular prayers, others integrated into Latin prayer books, in which they form part of the story of how the Carolingian and Anglo-Saxon style prayer books evolved into new codicological forms, such as the Book of Hours. The lecture will be a first attempt to achieve a new overview of the surviving material, considering it from a codicological point of view, by contrast with previous scholarship which considered these texts as examples of early vernacular prose writing.

Nigel Palmer is Emeritus Professor of German at the University of Oxford. He has written widely on the medieval literature of the German lands, both German and Latin. His special interests lie in the areas of palaeography and codicology, late medieval religious literature, and the history of early printing.

Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).



The Missing in the Early English Psalter Tradition (31 January, 2014)

Leiden University Library, Vossiuszaal (3:45 pm-4:45 pm)

Prof. dr. Elaine Treharne (Stanford University)



This paper will discuss Psalters from the tenth to the twelfth centuries, particularly those containing English glosses. Using a phenomenological approach, the focus will be on 'the missing' in these Psalters: lexical omissions, blankness, gaps, elisions, and voids. My argument is that in order to fully understand the manuscript book, we need to look, in a literal sense, outside the words and images we traditionally regard as the only semantic containers. Scholars would be served well by paying greater attention to what absences and emptiness can reveal about the extensity and plenitextuality (the full interpretative potential) of the codex.

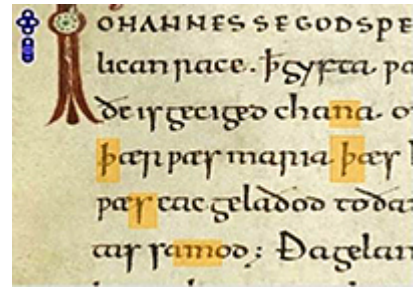
Lieftinck Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).

This Lieftinck Lecture is part of the Colloquium 'Vernacular Books in the Middle Ages' (31 January, 2014, 10:00 am-5:30 pm). Click [here](#) for more information.

Computers and Palaeography: the Art and the Science? (22 November, 2013)

Leiden University, Lipsius Building, Room 228 (16.00-17.00)

Dr Peter Stokes, Principal Investigator of DigiPal Department of Digital Humanities King's College London



For much of its history, palaeography has sat uneasily between 'science' and 'art'. It will be argued in this lecture that it is both, or perhaps neither: different palaeographical questions require different approaches, some of which emphasise more the 'science' and others the 'art'. This argument will be presented through the DigiPal project, in which computers are used not for automated analysis but instead in an attempt to capture more of the 'art' along with the 'science' of palaeography. Such an approach not only seems to be more acceptable to palaeographers, but it is also perhaps more appropriate for research questions beyond grouping hands and scribal identification. The lecture will therefore show how DigiPal is being used in practice to model, describe, and represent script and decoration, allowing a history to be written of eleventh-century English Vernacular minuscule (among others), despite this script being described hitherto as 'show[ing] no obvious course of development'.

Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).

This Lieftinck Lecture is part of the Colloquium 'The Science of Medieval Script' (22 November, 2013, 1:00pm-5:00pm). Click [here](#) for more information.

"How a few manuscripts made a big difference": the Aristotelian Revolution of the 12th and 13th Centuries (3 September, 2013)

Leiden University Library, Grote Vergaderzaal, 3:30-4:30 pm



Dr. Sten Ebbesen (University of Copenhagen)

The early 12th century witnessed the beginning of an educational boom that issued in the creation of the first universities about the year 1200 and the reception of the full Aristotelian corpus Aristotelicum later in the 13th century. Crucial to the development was the discovery of long-forgotten Latin translations of three of Aristotle's works and the translation from Greek of all the rest of the corpus between ca. 1125 and 1280. The three old translations may all have been contained in one manuscript. The new translations will have required a score of Greek manuscripts or so. The resulting archetypes of the translations (perhaps two-score in all) started to multiply as soon as their ink was dry, and they were to have thousands of descendants before the end of the manuscript era. It thus took a few scores of manuscripts to launch a revolution in Western philosophy and, more broadly, in higher studies.

Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).

This Lieftinck Lecture is part of the 'Writing the Classics' Manuscript Colloquium (September 3, 2013, 10:30 am-6:00 pm). Click [here](#) for more information.

Assessing a Fifteenth-Century Bestiary Manuscript: The Hague, MMW 10 B 25 (22 March, 2013)

Leiden University Library, Grote Vergaderzaal, 3-4 pm

Prof. em. dr. Wim Gerritsen



The Latin bestiary is a creation of the twelfth century whose popularity lasted until the middle of the fourteenth century. Of a total of about 90 preserved manuscripts, about 50 belong to a version containing some 130 short chapters and is known as the 'Second-family Bestiary'. Most of these manuscripts have been illuminated with a series of images of animals. The majority of the illuminated bestiary manuscripts stem from English workshops, copies of Continental origins being rarer. The popularity of the work declined in the fourteenth century, giving way to a new sort of book, the encyclopaedia of Nature like Thomas Cantimpratensis' Liber de Natura rerum or the voluminous works of Bartholomeus Anglicus and Vincent of Beauvais. From the fifteenth century stem only a few illuminated manuscripts of the Latin Bestiary, among which is the Meermanno Bestiary in the collection of the Museum Meermanno at The Hague (MS 10 B 25). In this lecture the place of the latter manuscript in the tradition of the Latin Bestiary will be investigated.

For more information on MS 10 B 25 (and more pictures the manuscript) click [here](#).

Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).

Eureka! The Archimedes Palimpsest (11 February, 2013)

Leiden University Library, 4-5 pm

Dr. William Noel (Director of the Schoenberg Institute at the University of Pennsylvania)

This lecture centers on a manuscript of extraordinary importance to the history of science, the Archimedes Palimpsest. This thirteenth century prayer book contains erased texts that were written several centuries earlier still. These erased texts include two treatises by Archimedes that can be found nowhere else, The Method and Stomachion. The manuscript sold at auction to a private collector on the 29th October 1998. The owner deposited the manuscript at The Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland, a few months later. Since that date the manuscript has been the subject of conservation, imaging and scholarship, in order to better read the texts. The Archimedes Palimpsest project, as it is called, has shed new light on Archimedes and revealed new texts from the ancient world. These new texts include speeches by an Athenian orator from the fourth century B.C. called Hyperides, and a third century A.D. commentary on Aristotle's Categories. The lecture also considers more broadly the digitization of medieval manuscripts, and the impact that this will have on the study of history and literature before 1500.

Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).

Medieval Bestiaries and their Original Purpose (1 February, 2013)

Leiden University Library, 3:45-4:45 pm

Dr. Christopher de Hamel (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge)

Christopher de Hamel's lieftinck lecture will be given as part of the third manuscript colloquium ['Books of Natural History in the Medieval World: A Manuscript Colloquium'](#).



Bestiaries are medieval encyclopaedias in Latin of all the animals (or beasts) in the world, with enchanting and often credulous accounts of their habits and attributes. They are usually illustrated with spectacular pictures of creatures such as elephants, unicorns, tigers, wyverns, crocodiles, and other animals, known (or hardly known) from ancient legends and travellers' tales. Most Bestiaries are English, and date from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The lecture considers the original purpose of Bestiaries, which would have been to understand God's purpose in creating animals. The habits of each creature were understood in the Middle Ages as divinely encoded messages, planned from the beginning of the world, to provide prophecies and instructions to people. Properly used, Bestiaries were not so different from Psalters, in that they were devotional texts to be mediated over in private.

Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).

Scribes and Patrons in Latin Manuscripts Before 800 (10 December, 2012)

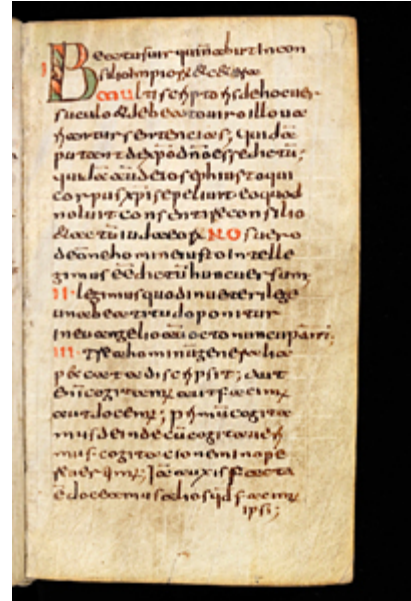
Leiden University Library, 3-4 pm

Prof.dr. David Ganz

This lecture will examine the evidence for the copying of manuscripts to be found in the earliest Latin books, and in the colophons copied from earlier manuscripts in the Carolingian age. Scribes not only copied books, they collated them, though it is not always clear what that process involved. Were these scribes professionals or amateurs? What evidence do we have for a book trade in Late Antiquity? The evidence of surviving manuscripts supplements the evidence of texts, and shows ways in which classical and patristic texts were studied in the early middle ages.

David Ganz is emeritus professor of palaeography and is a specialist of Carolingian manuscripts and their production. His lecture will be accompanied by a display of relevant manuscripts from Leiden collections.

Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).



Dirty Books: Quantifying Patterns of Use in Medieval Manuscripts Using a Densitometer (4 October, 2012)

Leiden University Library, 3-4 pm

Dr. Kathryn Rudy (University of St. Andrew's)

Early users of medieval books of hours and prayer books left signs of their reading in the form of fingerprints in the margins. The darkness of their fingerprints correlates to the intensity of their use and handling. A densitometer—a machine that measures the darkness of a reflecting surface—can reveal which texts a reader favored. Kathryn Rudy introduces this new technique, densitometry, to measure a reader's response to various texts in a prayer book. Tracking what medieval book users handled with their grubby hands shows us what they read and cared about.



KATHRYN M. RUDY is lecturer in Art History at the University of St Andrews. She has written extensively about the ways in which medieval users handled their manuscripts. Her two forthcoming books are provisionally titled “Touching Skin: How Medieval Users Rubbed, Kissed, Inscribed, Dunked, Begrimed, and Pricked their Manuscripts”; and “The Postcard, the Pallium, the Amulet, and the Altar: the Flexible Autonomous Image in the Late Middle Ages,” which will be published by Yale University Press.

Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).

Reading the Unreadable: Lay Literacy and Negotiation of Text in Anglo-Saxon England (4 May, 2012)

Leiden University Library, 3-4 pm

Dr. Kathryn Lowe (University of Glasgow)

Evidence supplied by records of lawsuits and settlements of disputes during the Anglo-Saxon period demonstrates that laymen were prepared to expend considerable efforts to acquire title-deeds to their estates. But what, if anything, did such laymen actually make of these charters? How readily would a diploma give up its secrets to someone who could neither read nor write? What might the layman make of such a text himself unaided? In the paper, I illustrate changes made to the form of the diploma from the seventh to the eleventh century. I utilise research into print recognition and the grammar of visual design as well as studies such as Paul Saenger's *Space Between Words*. The paper, informed by research into print recognition and child literacy acquisition, argues that the developments I identify would have allowed the layman to engage with a charter's text in an unmediated way, thus facilitating growth of what Michael Clanchy has so memorably called the 'literate mentality'.

Lectures are free and open to all. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).

[Event Poster](#)

The Intellectual World of the Leiden Pliny: A Book from York? (23 March, 2012)

Leiden University Library, Grote Vergaderzaal, 3-4 pm

Dr. Mary Garrison (University of York)

This lecture focuses on one part of one of the most remarkable of the Vossiani: the enormous eighth-century Northumbrian Pliny, *Historiae Naturales* i-vi, in Leiden Voss. Lat. F. 4. It is the earliest text of Pliny's Natural History to survive from North of the Alps. It is also one of only three extant early Anglo-Saxon manuscripts of a classical text and one of the largest late antique or medieval manuscripts of a classical text. A remarkable book in every way, but also a mystery.

Although there is no controversy about the Northumbrian origin of the book, its date, and the place, circumstances, and purpose of its production have never been ascertained. Where and why a gigantic copy of a book about natural history might have been produced is a riddle. Hitherto, scholarly conjectures about the origin of this manuscript have been brief unsubstantiated assertions. Likewise, comparanda for the script have been unconvincing. The mystery of the book's origin has never been properly investigated. This lecture will explore the circumstances that might have led to the production of such a gigantic copy of a classical text and will attempt to demonstrate for the first time, by arguments from palaeography, text history, textual transmission, and cultural context, where this most remarkable and beautiful book was produced. The manuscript's well known close relatives, as well as a never before adduced script-match will furnish clues.

Only two early medieval Northumbrian monasteries have manuscripts securely attributed to them: Wearmouth-Jarrow and Lindisfarne. Yet books were certainly made elsewhere and there were many other libraries, not least at the renowned school of York. The devastating destruction of Northumbrian written records by the Vikings, the harrying of the North after the Norman Conquest, and the Dissolution of the Monasteries means that less than half a dozen Northumbrian manuscripts still survive in situ. Thus the material for systematic comparisons is scattered across Europe and often in fragments. Despite these problems with the evidence, the lecture will propose and defend a new hypothesis about the origin of the VLF 4 and sketch in a context for its production.

Lectures are free and open to all. Each lecture is accompanied by a display of manuscripts from Leiden collections pertaining to the topic. Please RSVP to [Erik Kwakkel](#).

[Event Poster \(23 March, 2012\)](#)

What Does 'Literacy' Mean in Insular and Anglo-Saxon Culture? (27 January, 2012)

January 27th, 2012 (3-4 pm, University Library)

Prof. dr. Michelle Brown (University of London)

The history of Pre-Conquest Britain is, in part, one of post-colonialism and shifting demographics. As such, its cultural and social achievements tend to be measured against two artificial benchmarks: the Roman imperial entity within which it had previously been subsumed and our own times. An area in which this is particularly the case is the consideration of literacy. All too often this is restricted to a discussion of the ability to read and write - or the comparative lack thereof. And yet, interdisciplinary investigations into literacy and cognition have consistently stressed that reading and writing are but two independent facets of communication that are inextricably interwoven with linguistics, orality, visual narrative and semiotics.

What then of the diversities encountered during the early Middle Ages? Is literacy the functional ability to create and decipher graphic marks that equate, either phonetically and / or ideographically to the spoken word? If so, should this ability also be deemed to extend to the decoding of other visible graphic manifestations of thought, designed to be transmitted across time and space, such as signs and images? Or should literacy be considered more broadly, to encompass the ability to retain a coherent body of cultural memory and to transmit it intact, through the spoken or written word, or images? Conversely, should it be interpreted more narrowly, as the ability to engage with high-level bodies of knowledge and literature - to be, effectively, 'well read'?

This paper will examine aspects of the evidence for attitudes towards literacy and the acquisition of literate skills in Britain, c. 550-1050, with particular reference to manuscript sources.

This Lieftinck Lecture is part of the 'Books and their Readers in Anglo-Saxon England' Manuscript Colloquium (January 27, 10:15 am-5:00 pm). Click [here](#) for more information.

English Manuscripts in the Century After the Conquest (December 2011)

December 2nd, 2011 (3-4 pm, University Library)

Dr. Teresa Webber (Trinity College, Cambridge)

This lecture focuses upon one of the masterpieces of English palaeography: N. R. Ker's *English Manuscripts in the Century after the Norman Conquest*, published just over fifty years ago, and based upon his *Lyell Lectures in Bibliography* (Oxford). It provided a framework and methodology for studying the communal books produced at English religious houses between 1066 and the 1170s, a period that Ker regarded as 'the greatest in the history of English book production', and it has inspired a number of scholars to respond to Ker's observation that detailed studies could and should be made of the late-eleventh and twelfth-century manuscripts of each of the twelve English communities from which adequate materials have survived to make such study worthwhile.

This lecture will reflect upon the significance of Ker's *English Manuscripts*, and how it has influenced subsequent studies of English book production and libraries in England in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Lectures are free and open to all. Please rsvp to e.kwakkel@hum.leidenuniv.nl. The lecture is accompanied by a display of manuscripts from Leiden collections.

[Lieftinck Lecture Invitation \(PDF\)](#)



The 1500-Year Life of Insular Script, A European Phenomenon: Issues of Script-Development and Cultural History (October 2011)

Prof. dr. David Dumville (University of Aberdeen)

Friday, October 28th (3-4 pm, University Library)

Insular script came into being between the mid-fifth century and the mid-sixth, whether in sub-Roman Britain or in Ireland. Its sources were Roman Cursive and Pre-canonical Half-uncial. The system of Insular script was polymorphic (of 'protean variety', as a baffled E.A. Lowe put it) and in its early mediaeval heyday enjoyed two main phases dividing chronologically around 750. We can see varying regional and perhaps ethnic usages, but terms such as 'Anglo-Saxon script', 'Irish script', and 'Welsh script' are (before the tenth century in England and the eleventh century among the Insular Celts) highly inappropriate. Insular script also enjoyed significant usage across Latin Christendom, being written here and there from the late sixth century to the twelfth. After 1100 it retreated wholly into a Gaelic context (albeit with occasional Continental excursions: it could have been written at Kiev before 1240!) for the remaining 850 years of its history. It was copied in print from the later sixteenth century to the mid-twentieth. The last hereditary Gaelic scribe died in 1880, having in his last decade made commissioned transcripts of three of the great Irish vernacular codices as the basis of published lithographic facsimiles. Nevertheless, the script enjoyed a popular revival and was adopted for the Gaelic vernacular on the foundation of the independent Irish state in 1921/2, whose successive governments encouraged and officially supported its use until 1948.

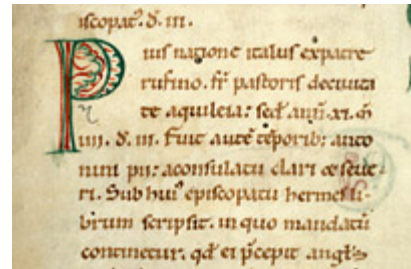
David N. Dumville is a Sixth-century Professor in History, Palaeography & Celtic and Director of the Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies and Centre for Celtic Studies at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. His main interests lie in the History of Britain, Ireland and Scandinavia in the Middle Ages and the analysis of the sources for that history. His many publications include *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar* (1992) and *English Caroline Script and Monastic History* (1993). He is co-editor of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (1995-...).

All are welcome but potential audience members are asked to send an email to e.kwakkel@hum.leidenuniv.nl before 24 October 2011.

Between Carolina and Gothica: The Problem of Praegothic Script (March 2011)

March 15th, 2011 (3-4 pm, University Library)

Albert Derolez (Professor Emeritus, Universities of Ghent and Brussels)



The Western European handwriting of the twelfth century is for reasons of commodity called Praegothica. Because of its extreme multiformity, ranging from what is still Late Carolingian and what comes close to Gothic Textualis, it is difficult to grasp its character and to describe its features. In this lecture the departures from Carolingian script will be discussed, while stressing the fact that the books in which they appear are not really different from the books of the Carolingian Renaissance. Only a few codicological novelties can be observed - the fundamental changes will not take place before the thirteenth century. The basic question of the causes of the transformation of Carolingian script into (early) Gothic script is still unsolved. The division of Western handwriting into a Northern and a Mediterranean branch, however, is visible from the twelfth century onwards and will be a fact of lasting importance.

The Lieftinck Lectures in Medieval Manuscripts are organized by the Vidi-project "Turning Over a New Leaf: Manuscript Innovation in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance" (Erik Kwakkel, ICD) in collaboration with the Scaliger Institute and the University Library Leiden. After the lecture the audience will have the opportunity to examine some manuscripts pertaining to the topic of the lecture. All are welcome but potential audience members are asked to send an email to e.kwakkel@hum.leidenuniv.nl.

Mid-Twelfth-Century Manuscripts of Translations from Arabic made in Northeast Spain (January 2011)

January 24th, 2011 (3-4 pm, University Library)

Charles Burnett (Professor of the History of Islamic Influences in Europe at the Warburg Institute, University of London)

We are very fortunate in that we have a few early manuscripts of translations from Arabic (or texts based on Arabic material) made in the Northeast of Spain in the vicinity of the former Islamic kingdom of Saragossa, by Hugo of Santalla, Plato of Tivoli, and Abraham Ibn Ezra. These manuscripts exhibit some interesting features, such as the use of the Eastern forms of the Arabic numerals, the insular 'g' used for transliterating an Arabic letter, and a compendium for the roman numeral '40'. This lecture will address the questions of where and by whom these manuscripts were written. Are there any signs that they could have been drafted or supervised by the translators/authors themselves? How do the scribes manage symbols and diagrams which are new to the Latin tradition, and what strategy did they use for transcribing Arabic words?

Charles Burnett is Professor of the History of Islamic Influences in Europe at The Warburg Institute, London. He is a prolific author of over 25 monographs and (co)edited volumes and over 150 articles and book chapters on such topics as Arabic-Latin translators, natural science and philosophy, arithmetic and geometry, astronomy and astrology, medicine and magic in the Middle Ages.

The Lieftinck Lectures in Medieval Manuscripts are organized by the Vidi-project "Turning Over a New Leaf: Manuscript Innovation in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance" (Erik Kwakkel, ICD) in collaboration with the Scaliger Institute and the University Library Leiden. After the lecture the audience will have the opportunity to examine some manuscripts pertaining to the topic of the lecture. All are welcome but potential audience members are asked to send an email to e.kwakkel@hum.leidenuniv.nl before 21 January 2011.



Carolingian Book Production: A Revolution? (November 2010)

Tuesday, November 9th, 2010 (3-4 pm, University Library)

Rosamond McKitterick (Professor of Medieval History, University of Cambridge and a Professorial Fellow, Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge).

This paper discusses the relationship between Carolingian copies of ancient texts and their exemplars (extant or not). It also discusses new kinds of books being produced in the Carolingian period, as well as new texts. For some books, when the earliest extant manuscripts are Carolingian but they are certainly or arguably based on older exemplars no longer extant, there is the question of their relationship to these older (or possible) exemplars. How should one think about readers of these manuscripts? How may we eliminate, or at least allow for, our inevitably subjective assessments of manuscript page layout as modern scholars? Such questions will be addressed by focusing on history books and world Chronicles from late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, *libri vitae* (an entirely new type of book in the late eighth century), and encyclopedias and glossaries. The latter two are well represented in the extraordinarily rich and important Leiden collections. The manuscripts offer interesting puzzles in themselves about the transmission, not only of knowledge but also of the presentation of specific kinds of information.

Rosamond McKitterick is Professor of Medieval History at the University of Cambridge and a Professorial Fellow, Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. She has written over fifteen books, discussing such topics as the Frankish church, the Frankish kingdoms, literacy, history, perceptions of the past, and memory in the Carolingian world. Her most recent monograph is the French translation of *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), published as *Histoire et memoire dans le monde carolingien* (Turnhout 2009). She was awarded the Heineken Prize for History in 2010.

The Place of Germany in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: Books, Libraries & Scriptoria (September 2010)

Wednesday, September 15th, 2010 (3-4 pm, University Library)

Professor Dr. Rodney Thompson (School of History & Classics, University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia)

In seeking to describe and account for the 'Twelfth-Century Renaissance,' historians have generally concentrated upon northern France and Paris in particular, on the rise of scholasticism, and on brilliant individual figures such as Peter Abelard. The German-speaking areas of western Europe have been comparatively neglected, with the implication that they were conservative and backward-looking. One way of refuting this view is by drawing attention to the tremendous growth of libraries both new and old, and the high-quality production of books, across most regions of the Empire north of the Alps. This lecture is a preliminary attempt to describe the phenomenon.