The Commercialization of the Medieval Ideal: The Spanish Forger and Handbooks of Illumination

Amy E. Dawson

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses

Part of the Medieval Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses/4214
THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF THE MEDIEVAL IDEAL: THE SPANISH FORGER AND HANDBOOKS OF ILLUMINATION

by

Amy E. Dawson

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
The Medieval Institute

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
December 1996
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the members of my thesis committee, Dr. Otto Grundler, Dr. Paul Szarmach, and Dr. Joyce Kubiski for participating in this project. Their efforts and insights led to the timely completion of this project. I would also like to thank Beatrice Beech, former Special Collections Librarian of the Edwin and Mary Meader Rare Book Room at the Waldo Library, for her encouragement and support. The Interlibrary Loan Department at the Waldo Library deserves a round of applause for assistance granted. Members of the staff located and obtained materials invaluable to this work.

This thesis could not have been completed without the personal support, encouragement, and good will of George Hart, Pamela and John Scofield, Kim Wittenstrom, Povilus Palunas, Fernanda Perrone, and Joseph G. Glass. To each of them I owe my gratitude.

I would also like to thank my parents, Joanne and Robert Dawson, as always, for their encouragement, love, humor, and support. Is this steel?

Amy E. Dawson
This study analyzes the commercialization of popular medievalism that occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. By examining the works of a forger of medieval manuscripts this research identifies a market created for works that expressed a particularly "Romantic" vision of medieval society. Moreover, this study offers a discussion of late nineteenth century handbooks that teach techniques of illumination. These works are examined to gain an understanding of the audience for which "medieval" works were created. Publication information reveals the popularity of these handbooks. The prefatory material examined here pinpoints the idealization of the "medieval" that made handbooks and forgeries popular. It is my thesis that medievalism, a constructed idea—an idea that changes and adapts when manipulated by each group in control of that structure—explains the popularity of the handbooks produced in the late nineteenth century and the proliferation of forged works created to appear medieval.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spanish Forger and Medievalism</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medievalism, a Definition</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medievalism and the Spanish Forger</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works of the Spanish Forger</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medievalism, the Nineteenth Century</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patronage and Forgery</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Forger</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source and Sanctuary of the Spanish Forger’s Work</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. HANDBOOKS OF ILLUMINATION AND MEDIEVALISM</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nineteenth Century Handbooks, the Fore-runner</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Jacob Lacroix and the Spanish Forger</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Lara, Bradley, and Lucien</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Audsley and M. Digby Wyatt</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Medieval / Nineteenth-Century Images</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"A work of art is for us firmly rooted in time, space, and the personality of its author conditioned by the special circumstances of the creative moment."

A post-medieval reconstruction of the Middle Ages occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries accompanied by the production of forgeries of manuscript miniatures and the publication of handbooks that guided the modern reader in the production of "medieval" illuminations. Their success resulted in the commercialization of a Romantic, medieval ideal. This study examines the work of a particular forger, the Spanish Forger, as well as several illumination handbooks in the context of a cultural phenomenon and its commercialization and identifies an audience for which these works were produced. While several scholars have attempted to identify sources that the Spanish Forger relied upon to create medieval-style miniatures, none place these works within a cultural context or deconstruct the

---

1 In Hans Tietze, Genuine and False: Copies, Imitations and Forgeries (New York: Chanticleer Press, 1948) 44.
popular, non-academic medievalism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that allowed such a forger to prosper. Popular medievalism is difficult to research because it is difficult to identify. Yet, this cultural phenomenon is vital to the history of medieval studies. This study explores the commercialization of popular medievalism encouraged by the production of forgeries and handbooks of illumination. Chapter I outlines the development of a popular medievalism with a discussion of the purchase, by private collectors, of "medieval" artifacts created by the Spanish Forger. Chapter II examines the prefatory material of a number of handbooks of illumination that reveal the sentiments created by the popular medieval revival.

The Spanish Forger and Medievalism

Medievalism, a Definition

Medievalism emerged as a passion for the study of the late Middle Ages--predominantly the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries--as an historical epoch, yet became, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an attempt to recreate an idealized era. By recognizing the value of a period that encouraged spirituality, achieved structure through the demands of feudalism, and expressed refinement through the nuances of chivalry, revivalists
at the turn of the century attempted to combat the negative aspects of the Industrial Revolution by embracing this idealized medievalism.

With the first issue of Studies in Medievalism, which appeared in 1979, Leslie Workman encouraged the study of medievalism "as a comprehensive cultural phenomenon analogous to classicism or romanticism."² Alice Chandler details the aesthetic attitude toward the Middle Ages that existed from the close of that period and describes the scope of medievalism:

Although medievalism involved varying and sometimes contradictory ideas and programs, its basic aims remained very similar throughout an existence that stretched from the Renaissance into modern times and that embraced England, the Continent, and even America. Its manifestations can be traced to art and architecture, literature and philosophy, economics politics and religion. At the height of the revival scarcely an aspect of life remained untouched by medievalist influence.³

The beginning of medieval scholarship in North America were a part of this revival. Pioneers of American medieval studies in the late nineteenth century, such as Henry Adams, had been exposed to medieval culture through study and travel in Europe and shared the ideal-


ism of the medieval revival which drove their scholarly work. With the creation of chairs in medieval history, literature, and Latin the popular interest in medieval culture became "legitimized" by the academic establishment. Nevertheless, this "academic" medievalism had its roots in the same popular medievalism that influenced the proliferation of forgeries of medieval manuscript illuminations and the popular practice of illuminating fostered by the publication of handbooks of illumination.

Recently, Norman Cantor has argued that the phenomena of "medievalism" influenced research, literature, art, and even cinema. Cantor's examination of the medievalists of the twentieth century traces the impact these scholars had on the creation of academic programs and departments that included medieval studies.

This early scholarly medievalism, imported along with the antiques, collectibles, books, and manuscripts that infiltrated the special libraries and museums of the

---


5 Courtenay 15.

United States during the late nineteenth century, was rooted in an ideology of the Middle Ages that affected the public at large. It is my thesis that medievalism, a constructed idea—an idea that changes and adapts when manipulated by each group in control of that structure—explains the popularity of the handbooks produced in the late nineteenth century and the proliferation of forged works created to appear medieval.

**Medievalism and the Spanish Forger**

Images and perceptions of the Middle Ages are often tinged with a Romanticism nurtured during the late nineteenth century. To achieve a greater understanding of this distorted image of the Middle Ages, this study examines the work of a forger who adopted this oblique and Romantic view. Ironically, the works created by this forger contributed to misconceptions about the Middle Ages. Misconceptions, in turn, helped to create the Romantic vision of the era. An increase in the market for such works was the result.

Miniatures created by the Spanish Forger in a particular manuscript, M.786a, which is a fifteenth century antiphonary owned by the Pierpont Morgan Library, are featured in Appendix A. The manuscript, which features eleven folio illuminations created by the forger, was
purchased from a book dealer in New York who sold it to the Pierpont Morgan Library with the understanding that it was of fifteenth century English origin. Yet, the miniatures of M.786a, added to the actual medieval manuscript, turned out to be the work of a prolific forger.

As Arthur Dwight Culler explains the nineteenth century medieval ideal was as much a reaction to current issues such as industrialism and perceived social decay as it was to actual historical fact. In an attempt to understand the past through a filter of utopian idealism, medievalism was born. Culler reveals that:

what was important was that this 'old order' which "yieldeth place to the new should be chivalric in manners, and sentiments, feudal in social structure, agrarian in economy and unspoiled in natural scene. Its religious nature was open to question."

Each of these concepts--chivalry, feudalism, agrarianism, and religious consciousness--were sought by embracing neo-gothic architecture, faux-medieval poetry, and the romantic re-telling of tales of chivalry and honor drawn from the Middle Ages.

Miniatures found in M.786a that express many of these ideals are included here to provide examples of the Forger's Romantic style and artistic technique. These images are:

Donors and Their Patron Saints Before the Altar; the Resurrection; Pentecost; Gnadenstuhlh Trinity with Two Music Making Angels; Harrowing of Hell; Last Supper; Coronation of the Virgin; Hunt of the Unicorn Annunciation; St. Martin Dividing his Cloak; Consecration of St. Martin of Tours; and the Flagellation of St. Stephen.

Works of the Spanish Forger

Works by the Spanish Forger have been attributed to the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries; have been seen as expressing a number of different styles; and have been said to be derived from a number of different locales. Furthermore, the forger's identity is as elusive as his/her affiliation. These facts allowed the work to be assimilated into collections as representative of many different styles and regions. Indeed, the Forger's works often adopt nationality to please a prospective buyer. For this reason, and others to be discussed, his works were best sellers.

Belle da Costa Greene gave the Spanish Forger his name in 1930 during her tenure as Director of the Pierpont Morgan Library. The Forger was so named because a work owned by the Pierpont Morgan Library had been attributed to Maestro Jorges Ingles, a Spanish artist of

\[8\] Not much is known about this artist's work or life. As the Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs indicates "cet artiste travailla a Grenade; le marquis de Santillane lui fit décorer le chappelle de l'hôpital Buitrago. De cette
the mid-fifteenth century. Ingles work is described as incorporating a Hispano-Flemish style, an assessment that incorporates several distinct expressions from several regions and periods. Charles Cuttler explains that:

the new manner is known as the Hispano-Flemish style. Its influence on Catalonia and Valencia was of relatively short duration, but it is the dominant movement in the second half of the century, particularly in Castile, the most ardent followers of the Netherlandish conceptions. The mystic naturalism of the Netherlands appealed to the religious conservatism of Spain. In the second half of the century the Netherlandish point of view crowded out Italian concern with scientific perspective and the perfectibility of natural forms.9

As Cuttler indicates, the Hispano-Flemish style borrows from Flemish and Italian influences to form a "hybrid."10 Ironically, the term hybrid could be aptly applied to the forgeries created by the Spanish Forger. The Spanish Forger, a catalog of the Forger’s works


10 Thus the Hispano-Flemish style is only an episode in the history of Netherlandish painting, though it lasted half a century. It achieves its finest moments in the normally Italian oriented outlook as to produce a hybrid but splendid art." Cuttler 260.
compiled by William Voelkle traces the source of many of the images manipulated by this forger to images included in a nineteenth century anthology of the history of the Middle Ages. Moreover, he indicates that, perhaps, these works deserve a French association, foremost, since they were often attributed to two well known French artists:

since the majority of his works have been thought of as French--two were even attributed to Jean Miraillet and Jean Fouquet--he could just as easily, and with greater justification, have been called the French Forger. The works, whether attributed to Spain, France, Belgium, or Italy, in point of fact, all share a common style.\(^{11}\)

Indeed, as Voelkle has demonstrated in research on the Forger, the characteristics exhibited by the painter are unique, recognizable, and undeniably datable to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Stylistic "alarms" that signal the Forger’s work include:

sugary faces and daring decollete of the ladies, the page costumes of the men, the limited number of colors of the costumes and superficial treatment of the folds, the theatrical posture and hand gestures of the stock figures, the tapestry-like foliage, the stage-set architecture, and the swirling water.\(^{12}\)

Works by the Spanish Forger have been featured in exhibitions at both the Pierpont Morgan Library--in 1978--


\(^{12}\) Voelkle 11.
-and at the Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1987-88.¹³

The preface to The Spanish Forger, a catalogue that accompanied the 1978 exhibition, notes that works by the Spanish Forger have long been the particular study of the Pierpont Morgan Library. Charles Ryskamp, Director of the library, states in this preface that:

The detection and recording of paintings by the Spanish Forger have long been associated with the Pierpont Morgan Library. While identifying the works of this remarkably talented artist has involved several generations of scholars and collectors, it was Belle da Costa Greene, the first Director of the Library, who gave him his name, brought his work to greater professional attention, and compiled a basic list of his works. The number of paintings on her list was then tripled by John Plummer, our Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts, and now William Voelkle, Associate Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts, has endeavored to establish the stylistic and iconographic sources of the Forger’s works and has again tripled the number of items which can with confidence be attributed to him or his workshop.¹⁴

Indeed, this exhibit, and the one at the Haggerty Museum in 1987, established the Pierpont Morgan Library as the authority in identifying the Forger’s work.

William Voelkle proved that the Forger was relying on printed material published in the nineteenth century


¹⁴ Voelkle, Spanish Forger 7.
for iconographical images used to create miniatures. Voelkle’s research established stylistic and iconographic sources for the Forger’s creations and uncovered the link between the Forger’s work and that of Paul Jacob Lacroix.

Paul Jacob Lacroix was a nineteenth century book lover and writer of historical novels, histories, and miscellaneous works. His series on the arts, customs, and sciences of the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance—originally published in France—were popular and reprinted in many editions.

In the catalogs that accompany both exhibits, Voelkle not only presents the images that the Forger may have lifted from the Lacroix texts, but also offered evidence to indicate that the forger may have combined a series of details from Lacroix volumes to create unique works.

---


16 "Son ouvrage le plus important et le plus considerable est le beau livre intitule: Le Moyen Age et la Renaissance, qu’il a publie dans l’intervalle de 1847 a 1851, avec le concours des savants et des litterateurs les plus estimes. Ce travail, qui forme cing gros volumes in 4 [sic, quarto], avec un grand nombre de figures, executees d’apres les monuments par les soins de Ferdinand Sere, offre le tableau des moeurs, des arts, des sciences et des lettres en Europe jusqu’a la fin du seizieme siecle" 599. Nouvelle Biographie Generale depuis les temps les plus recules jusqu’a nour jours (Paris: Firmin Didot Freres, Fils et cie, editeurs, [n.d.]. Tome Vingt-huitieme) 595-602.
The forgeries featured in the 1978 catalog include six manuscripts, 42 panels, and 100 manuscript leaves, with over half painted on the same vellum stock taken from an Italian Antiphonary of the fourteenth or fifteenth century to create expertly executed palimpsests. William Voelkle served as guest curator for a 1987 exhibit at Marquette University marking the discovery of forgeries owned by the Haggerty Museum. The catalog featured thirty seven productions by the Forger, a majority of which had appeared in the 1978 exhibit at the Pierpont Morgan Library. Voelkle elaborates on techniques used by the Spanish Forger in the production of manuscript leaves. He indicated that the works appear to be "more genuine" than other known forgeries because they were produced on older vellum which had original text scraped off and replaced with bold, new miniatures. This is indeed the case with the miniatures that appear in manuscript M.786a.

Voelkle stresses that the market for manuscript leaves account for the volume produced by the Forger in this format. He states:

---


18 See *The Spanish Forger: Master of Deception*, 28, 75.

19 *Master of Deception* 16.
The taste for collecting and framing single leaves, which had blossomed by the end of the nineteenth century, probably accounted for the Forger's creation of pairs and larger sets of leaves. The members of such a set are generally thematically related and the same size, have the same border, and are on the same manuscript stock.\(^{20}\)

This commercialization of pseudo-medieval artifacts reinforces the idea that the Forger was well aware of the market that prized medieval items.

Prior to the two exhibitions of the Forger's work, Robert L. McGrath had published an article in the Dartmouth College Library Bulletin in which he discussed a manuscript leaf owned by the Dartmouth College Library which had been attributed to the Spanish Forger\(^{21}\). He stated that this leaf, which details the "Presentation of the Christ Child at the Temple" is a correct adaptation or rendering of the subject although it was identified as false because of its nineteenth century stylistic "alarms".\(^{22}\)

Justifying the difficulty of identifying the Forger's works because of the variety of dates and styles incorporated, McGrath describes this artist as:

\(^{20}\) Master of Deception 16.


\(^{22}\) McGrath 12.
an author of a voluminous production in tempera painting on panels, (portraits and historical subjects), illuminated single leaves and even fully illustrated manuscripts, the "Spanish Forger" worked with equal facility in the styles of Italian, Spanish, and Franco-Flemish painting of the late fifteenth century.\(^\text{23}\)

In 1968, Janet Backhouse contributed an article on the Spanish Forger to a special issue of the *British Museum Quarterly*.\(^\text{24}\) In this article, she discusses a miniature bought by the British Museum and two others already part of the museum's collection:

the 'Spanish Forger' miniature from Dr. Mil-lar's collection (Add. MS. 54248; Pl. xxi) is the third to be bought by the British Museum. One was bought privately in 1966 (Add. MS. 53783; Pl. xxii) and another was purchased as genuine as long ago as 1905 (Add. MS. 37177).\(^\text{25}\)

Revealing implications of the tremendous output of the Forger, Backhouse states that:

there can be little doubt, however, that his motives were strictly commercial. His works was obviously designed to pander to those who are unfamiliar with genuine medieval art."\(^\text{26}\)

She indicates that an audience could be found among those who are "impressed with a profusion of gold and pretty colours and a general air of the romantic."\(^\text{27}\)

---

\(^{23}\) McGrath 9.


\(^{25}\) Backhouse 65.

\(^{26}\) Backhouse 65.

\(^{27}\) Backhouse 65.
Backhouse notes that one of the Forger leaves was reportedly purchased from an English dealer, who bought it from a French dealer, who reportedly received it from a Polish count. This provenance is as mythic, it seems, as a medieval derivation. Backhouse's brilliant run-down of the possible nationalities of a number of particular works reiterates—with grand panache—that the diversity of the works can reveal nothing about the identity of the Forger. She states:

The queen of Dr. Millar's miniature seems to be based on an Italian model, but probably through the medium of a French or English book of costume. The two musicians are definitely German, both drawn from the Manesse Codex which has always been very popular and is frequently reproduced. A miniature of the Annunciation disguised as a unicorn hunt, derived for the Hortus Conclusus, which is part of a manuscript bought by Miss Greene for the Morgan Library's collection of fakes, was probably modelled on a German painting since this theme was most popular in Germany. It actually bears close resemblance to a panel of the altar-piece at Friesach in Austria. The Fogg panel and one of the Lewis 'Historical' miniatures both include the lion badge of Venice, and the border of the British Museum 'Saintly' scene and the outlines of the two historiated initials in Philadelphia share a relationship to North Italian quattrocento manuscript decoration.

The manuscript mentioned above, which includes the "Hunt of the Unicorn Annunciation," is M.786a now at the Pierpont Morgan Library.

---

28 Backhouse 66.
29 Backhouse 69.
Voelkle has identified the source material from which most of these images were drawn—the Lacroix volumes—but this tour around the globe of possible national identities for the Forger remains reveals the difficulties incurred in establishing provenance for these works.

M. S. Soria exposes a work created by the Forger, in "The So-Called 'French Primitive': An Exposure and Recantation" which appeared in Connoisseur in 1946 and Otto Kurtz speaks of the Spanish Forger's activities in his book Fakes, published in 1948. Hans Tietze also offers statements on the Forger's activities in his monograph Genuine and False: Copies, Imitations and Forgeries, also published in 1948. Published in 1973 by the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Fakes and Forgeries touch on the works of the Forger, and an article titled "Les emules des primitifs" by C. Sterling, printed in La Revue de l'Art exposes new discoveries of the Forger's works. Backhouse published another article describing a work by the Forger—

---


32 See Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Fakes and Forgeries (Minneapolis, Minn.: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1973).

er, "A Miniature Masterpiece by the 'Spanish Forger,'" in *Quarto: Abbot Hall Art Gallery Quarterly Bulletin* in January of 1975. Response to the exhibits highlighting the Forger's work also appeared in the press, such as John Ashberry's commentary on the aesthetic value of works of forgery which appeared in *New York Magazine* in 1978.

A number of these sources reveal that the Forger's works were sold and collected as works in their own right, yet William Voelkle indicates that these works continue to be presented on the market as originals.

Stylistic characteristics cause the works of the Forger to stand out, as does the repetition of conventional scenes. The scenes are typically those of hunting and falconry, music, feasting, courtly, love, and tournaments. Regularities in technique and subject matter indicate that the Spanish Forger produced these works in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The

---


36 Voelkle has indicated that two works were being offered this year, 1995, one as the work of the Spanish Forger was offered by Maggs Brothers, London, the other was offered by a French dealer as a fourteenth century original.
overly Romantic view of the Middle Ages characterizes these distinct stylistic features, which include:

a similar flatness to the composition, emphasizing surface decoration rather than spatial recession, and a nearly identical treatment of hills, trees and the architectural setting. A markedly bold decollete for the ladies is also a distinguishing mark of his style as is the repetition of certain stock formulas in both works, as, for example, the poses and costumes of the attendant males figures at the extremities of either group. 37

Although forgeries are often identified by chemical testing or X-Ray analysis, experts nonetheless indicate that the most immediate and reliable method of detection is aesthetic reaction to a work. Indeed, when the values of a period are no longer current, forgeries become recognizable. Anthony Grafton speaks of the eventual identification of literary forgeries in *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship*:

If any law hold for all forgery, it is quite imply that any forger, however deft, imprints the pattern and texture of his own periods life, thought, and language on the past he hopes to make seem real and vivid. But the very detail he displays, however deeply they impress his immediate public, will eventually make his trickery stand out in bold relief, when they are observed by later readers period superimposed on the forger’s. Nothing becomes obsolete like a period vision of an older period. 38

37 McGrath 9.

The Spanish Forger's works were judged forgeries when the medievalism that filtered the medieval scenes was exposed.\textsuperscript{39} Because these works have been identified and revealed as forgeries\textsuperscript{40} they supply a vast library of material from which to extrapolate the sentiments current in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century regarding the medieval period.

Romantic treatment of the scenes and the dominance of secular events confirms what L. Jeppson states about forgery as well. Assuring that:

the forger can never see what the original artist saw. He can never feel what the artists felt. He can never paint or sculpt with the

\textsuperscript{39} "The first test, an aesthetic one, is the most debatable way to judge authenticity, yet it is still sometimes the only test upon which ultimate judgement can be based . . . . The critic relies on esthetics claims that, even when forgery can not be detected technically its lack of stylistic logic will offend the connoisseur." Grafton 35.

\textsuperscript{40} The American Heritage Dictionary defines "forge" not only as "to fashion or reproduce for fraudulent purposes," but also "to give form or shape to," or "a workshop where pig iron is transformed into wrought iron." Indeed, the forgery produced be this nineteenth century artist consists of works created for fraudulent purposes, but they also served as an instrument for the shaping and forming of a contemporary, and modern, idea of the Middle Ages. Without a doubt, the nineteenth century culture embraced the late medieval period. This era served as a "forge" in which ideas about the Middle Ages were transformed into ideals. Feudalism was sanctified and chivalry honored. Truly, the "pig iron" of fact was finely "wrought" into an image of an era. See The American Heritage Dictionary, Second College Edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985) 525.
spontaneity of the original artist, and so his pieces are always a little dead.41

Medievalism, the Nineteenth Century

The Middle Ages have been subjected to study since the seventeenth century. During this period the Bollandists42 and the Maurists43 began to assess documents from archives and began projects of textual editing to create the Acta Sanctorum and made records and works stored in monastic archives available for scholars. The eighteenth century saw an increase in critical textual study and an increase in interest in the period. Yet, as Van Caenegam notes it is the nineteenth century that saw


42 Paul Kevin Meagler states in Encyclopedia Dictionary of Religion, the Bollandists were a group of "Belgian Jesuit editors charged with the publication of the Acta Sanctorum. . . . These men and their successors gathered MSS from all over Europe and the publication of new volumes continued." See (I, 485).

43 The Maurists were "Benedictines of the French Benedictine Congregation of St. Maur. . . . Strict observance of the Rule of St. Benedict and emphasis on education, preaching, and scientific research were its objectives. . . . The high ideals of Gregoire Tarisse, superior general (1630-48), set the standard for the Maurists' work for almost 2 cent. in Sacred Scripture, dogmatic and moral theology, patrology, canon law, Christian and monastic asceticism, history and its auxiliary disciplines, liturgy, and hagiography." Meagler 2306.
the greatest growth in scholarship and historical study into the period of the Middle Ages:

the greatest century of Europe’s historical writing, the nineteenth century, has also been the greatest in medieval research. Historical thinking not only penetrated all other disciplines, but outstanding progress was made in discovering, editing, and understanding the sources of medieval history.\(^4^4\)

He notes that the universities began to play a prominent role in medieval inquiry\(^4^5\) and private scholars continued to produce a great deal of scholarship. Libraries and archives became national repositories for the accumulation and dissemination of materials of all kinds and of the Middle Ages in particular.

The era witnessed the birth of the modern journal for the presentation of research and state sponsored projects examining the medieval roots of nationalism occurred throughout Europe during this period:

The academies also began to play an important part, which had been foreshadowed in the eighteenth century. Scholars could meet and discuss their problems and publish their conclusions in reports and edit historical texts, which was seldom done by the universities. . . . Another important characteristic of the


\(^{4^5}\) "the universities, and the academies which became increasingly filled with professors, took over the leadership of medieval studies. The nineteenth century saw the beginning of the professorial period." Van Caenegem 186.
nineteenth-century medieval studies, foreshadowed in the eighteenth, was the publication of official, or at least state-supported, collections of texts in various European countries.\textsuperscript{46}

Nationalism in the nineteenth century—both encouraged and affected by these projects—gave impetus to a strong commitment to seek out, publish, and display the ancient roots of a civilization bound to national glory.

at this time Paris already boasted a remarkable museum devoted to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, installed in the former residence of the abbots of Cluny, a fifteenth-century hotel. . . . Here and there in Europe museums of this genre began to appear; their creation was stimulated around 1850 by the new sense of nationalism manifest everywhere.\textsuperscript{47}

New fascination for the historical past, rooted in the Middle Ages as nations began to take shape, left a legacy for future scholars to nurture and access. The art of history and historiography of the Middle Ages remain imprinted with the indelible stamp of the nineteenth century.

Many scholars saw history as an objective display of facts and figures that create an almost scientific truth

\textsuperscript{46} Germany produced the \textit{Monumenta Germanica Historica}, the British produced the \textit{Monumenta Historica Britannica} (1842) and the \textit{Roll Series} or \textit{Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores} (1858-1911), and the French produced the fifty one volume collection \textit{De textes pour servir à étude et à l’enseignement de l’histoire} (1886-1929). See Van Caenegem 187.

\textsuperscript{47} See Germain Bazin, \textit{The Museum Age} (New York: Universe Books, 1967) 221
unencumbered by opinion or bias. Such a view was ex-
pressed by George Peabody Gooch in his description of the
development of modern historiography.48 His assessment of
the appropriateness of objective historical research
infected much of the early studies into the Middle Ages.

historical science is the interpretation of
documents, for which an unbiased mind and a
mastery of the language of the originals are
sufficient. In the next place, the historian
must look at things as contemporaries saw them,
not as they appear to the modern mind, and his
readers should never know if he is republican
or an anarchist, liberal or reactionary.49

Revisionist historians have revealed the absurdity
of such a position and have encouraged a reassessment of
the medieval period. It has become evident that the goal
of objective history is as unattainable as the presenta-
tion of medieval manuscripts recreate to fool experts!

Forgery and criticism also share a fundamental
limitation. The critic cannot escape time and
place anymore than the forger can. The forger
imposes personal values and period assumptions
and idioms on his evocation of the past; that
is why his work must eventually cease to seem
credible as what it once purported to be, and
becomes instead a document of its own time. But
the critic rejects fakes for personal reasons
and on the basis of period assumptions about
the world they claim to come from; that is why

48 See George Peabody Gooch, History and Historians in
the Nineteenth Century (New York: Longman, Green and Co.,
1913.

49 Gooch 211.
at least some of his rejections of texts will be rejected in their turn.\textsuperscript{50}

**Patronage and Forgery**

During the late nineteenth century a new consideration was given not only to critical editions of texts, archival documents, and historical narratives but also to works of art that reflected a national pride--mostly through the purchase and display of sumptuous works of art. The wealth produced by the Industrial Revolution allowed these works to be purchased and the respect for the Middle Ages current during this era made these works particularly valuable to collectors. In many cases the new respect for medieval history encouraged the commercialization of "medievalism" and private entrepreneurship caused an accumulation of sacred works by secular collectors.\textsuperscript{51} In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries art was being collected with a vigor never before seen in the history of artistic production.\textsuperscript{52}

Art collecting in this era was accompanied by a Romantic idealization for all things medieval which found

\textsuperscript{50} Grafton 125.


\textsuperscript{52} Wildman, 15-53.
adherents among the middle and upper class communities of Europe and the United States—the same classes who had access to new wealth gained from industry. Medievalism surfaced, in part, as a reaction to the industrialism of the era which caused rapid urbanization and created social evils the nineteenth century social fabric was ill-suited to envelop and control. Social critics invoked a rural way of life, the order of feudalism, the dignity of chivalry and the honor of patronage as cures to social injustice. The social ills of poverty, child labor, over crowded living conditions—all a by-product of a more mechanized industry and thus intrinsically related to a call for a renewal of handicraft—were understood to deny individuals of rights owed to all. A revival of agrarianism, feudalism, and chivalry was prescribed by men such as John Ruskin, William Morris and Thomas Carlyle as a cure for these ills.


54 Callen 2-4. Culler 152.

the behavior of the Christian Socialists can in act reasonably be described as chivalrous. Not only did they come to support the underdog in causes which brought them no worldly rewards, gave them considerable unpopularity amongst most of their class, and in some cases lost them a great deal of money or actively harmed them in their careers, in addition, most of them were alive to the concept of chivalry, and regularly used its metaphors.\textsuperscript{56}

In truth, this idealization was based primarily on a Romantic notion of medieval society.

Wealthy civic leaders of the late nineteenth century began to accumulate art, organize collections, and plan for exhibitions. These magnates sought to have examples of great art at their fingertips. Furthermore, the heroes of the newly emerging industrial class, not art "experts," decided, what was of value, and their new found wealth made value, created value, where none had previously existed. Indeed:

The early part of the nineteenth century was the golden age of collectors, of true amateurs whose instincts led them to make good purchases for little money. Such a practice was possible then and prevailed, with regard to certain categories of objects, until the beginning of the war in 1914. Before 1860, when an older attitude was revived, the work of art ceased to ceased to be an object of speculation as it had been at the end of the seventeenth century an all through the eighteenth. In creating rapid accumulations of fortune and, therefore, readily available assets, an economic vigor based on the upsurge of industry gave impetus to the art

\textsuperscript{56} Girouard 132.
market, while in the first part of the century the constant revenues from wealth dependent on the exploitation of land little favored this kind of speculation.  

In many cases, the art they chose to champion was art that featured medieval themes or expressed an ideology steeped in the medievalism. Indeed, the creation of the Birmingham Art Museum was part of the trend that promoted art as a sinecure for the woes of industrialism. Indeed, "the creation of the City’s Museum and Art Gallery was born out of the prosperity of that period; it was motivated by the belief that industrialists and designers needed to have examples of great art and design from throughout the world as inspiration to their labours."  

And:

although the movement had a few aristocratic patrons, among them Sir Walter and Lady Trevelyan, George Howard, Earl of Carlisle, and the "souls" who later bought the work of Edward Burne-Jones, collecting their work was essentially a middle-class activity, quite unlike the aristocratic patronage of portraitists and sporting artists that had dominated British painting in the eighteenth century.  

Works that depicted medieval tales were successful during this period, as were actual medieval works such as illuminated Books of Hours, breviaries, antiphonaries,  


Wildman 10.  

Wildman 38.
and other liturgical books, and panels, ivories, and tapestries, which were produced in monasteries and later by members of medieval guilds.

The Arts and Crafts movement which emerged in the late nineteenth century in England was a reaction to the Industrial Revolution. This movement, which idealized an agrarian, pastoral, rustic lifestyle and respected an almost "monastic" avocation for manual labor to benefit the spirit, clearly influenced and increased respect for medieval works of art. It is to England and the United States that we turn to examine this brand of medievalism (although it also occurred in Germany, and France) because the ideology current in England was imported to the United States by industrial magnates—particularly J. P. Morgan and his son. The Morgans revered and often attempted to imitate a British styled "new nobility" fostered by the wealth and power gained through industry.

Lyndel Saunders King indicates that support of art production and collecting was no longer the sole privilege of the church or the nobility.

It is as much a truism that in the nineteenth century British patronage shifted from an exclusively aristocratic population to include

---

60 In his chapter on "Ruskin and Medievalism" Culler states, "it is through nostalgia such as theirs for an older, simpler form of society which was being replaced by the competitive commercialism of the industrial age that this myth arose." Culler 152.
more and more of the newly wealthy middle class as it is that the Industrial Revolution was the primarily force that transformed England from a rural to an urban society. Since the eighteenth century, state patronage, as opposed to royal patronage, had been almost nonexistent.  

This truism also became a reality in the United States, which had no historical precedent for art collecting or patronage so that leaders of the Industrial Revolution laid the foundation for all art collections in the United States.

In the nineteenth century Europeans snickered when Americans spoke of art collection. There were too many men like Alexander Turney Stewart, the New York merchant, who filled his mansion of Fifth Avenue with that would later be called 'nineteenth century junk.' There were too many, like William Henry Vanderbilt, who commissioned paintings to be done for them, stipulating the size and scene. Human taste being changeable, it was certain that no matter what a man collected in the way of objects of art, he ran the danger of having public world taste devalue his collection at any time.

Such an individual, one particularly linked to the Spanish Forger, was John Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913).

The Pierpont Morgan Library, fashioned into a permanent foundation and administered by a board of trustees

---


in 1924, was created from a collection of works amassed by J. P. Morgan, considered America's most famous collector, who purchased over six hundred early codices in the last fifteen years of his life.

The Pierpont Morgan Library, before it was incorporated as an educational institution, already contained the finest gathering of manuscripts existing in private hands in any country. It now houses both the most extensive and the most beautifully selected series of manuscripts existing on the American Continent, and it may truthfully claim to be superior in general quality to all but three or four of the greatest national libraries of the Old World.

The collection amassed by Morgan is both startling and impressive. Impressive, because of the importance of such a collection of manuscripts and startling for the rapidity with which this collection was created and the scope of its holdings. Needless to say, Morgan emerged as the quintessential American collector. He modelled his collecting habits on those of a class of men who had risen to an elite position in British society. Francis Henry Taylor explains a link to Britain which reveals a great deal about Morgan's character:

The Europeans who have tried to explain the Morgan passion for luxury and collecting in


64 De Ricci 86.

65 De Ricci 86.
terms of their own experience—that is to say in light of the tastes and activities of the new haute bourgeoisie of the post-Napoleonic Industrial Revolution—have never understood, nor made any effort to understand, the background of his upbringing. Only in England, where the great commoner families of the landed gentry always occupied a far more influential position that the noblesse de la robe, was there any real insight into Pierpont Morgan’s character and motives.  

Medievalism coincided with Morgan’s rapid economic ascent and explains why such works are widely represented in his collection. Furthermore, Morgan, as collector, was not immune to the inadvertent support of forgery. Histories of the collector indicate that he fell prey to forgers because of the methods by which he purchased his pieces. Andrew Sinclair outline Morgan’s collecting habits and indicates that “Morgan’s lust for the best in the fastest time sometimes created forgeries to meet his demands.”  

John Douglas Forbes speaks of the collecting habits and method of acquisition employed by Morgan’s son, John Pierpont Morgan, Jr., (1867-1943), who continued to collect manuscripts and fine art at the death of his father. Forbes writes of John H. Plummer, a member of

---


the Morgan staff, explaining the process by which items were selected for the collection.

John H. Plummer of the Pierpont Morgan Library has a very reasonable explanation of the ill-defined acquisition policy prevailing under the Morgans, father and son. He suggests that they are carrying on a tradition, with which both were familiar, of the British nobleman's library where attention was paid to collecting individual works of excellent quality rather than to organizing a purchasing program directed towards completeness or specialization in specific fields.⁶⁸

Edwin P. Hoyt explains that "all during the collecting years, and they lasted nearly a quarter of a century, Pierpont Morgan was dogged over Europe by art dealers," and that "among them where those who produced fakes and misrepresentations" so that sometimes Morgan was "gulled." He concludes, "who would not be if he undertook to buy seventy or eighty million dollars' worth of art work in a lifetime?"⁶⁹

The expansion of the practice of art collecting by private individuals who did not need to justify purchases to a board of trustees or the public made the acquisitions, and thus the sale, of forged works more prevalent. In many cases these new artistic entrepreneurs had little training in art history. Although they may have been

---


⁶⁹ Forbes 193.
blessed with a "good eye," forgers were clever enough to fool many an "expert."

Spanish Forger

The identity of the Spanish Forger is shrouded in mystery. But, Backhouse assures us that these forgeries were deliberate.

Certainly he has every intention of deceiving would-be purchasers. At the end of the last century there were many private collectors whose tastes would have embraced the kind of work in which he specialized and no doubt he was aware of this fact. His attempts at making his paintings look old are, at least to an amateur's eye, fairly convincing. His panel paintings are artistically chipped and worm-eaten at the edges and both gold and colour have a fine network of cracks.  

George Savage explains the significance of this cracking, or craquelure, in the dating of paintings. Speaking of a well-known forger of works attributed to Vermeer he states:

Van Meegeren purchased old and relatively worthless paintings for his work. These already had the numerous cracks (craquelure) which arise from shrinkages and movement of the ground, the paint-layer, and the varnish relative to each other, and these old cracks assisted in the later formation of the craquelure which was artificially induced by Van Meegeren. . . . Not entirely without reason craquelure is regarded as a sign of age. It arises in different ways. A paint-film will react differently to variations in temperature, for example, from canvas to panel; varnish will con-

---

70 Backhouse 69.
tract to a greater or lesser extent than the paint-film. The cracks may be in the varnish, in the varnish and the paint film, or may go down to the support.\textsuperscript{71}

There can be little doubt that works created by the Spanish Forger were meant to deceive the potential buyer. Although, John E. Conklin defines fakes as "works of art made to resemble existing ones" and forgeries as "pieces that are passed off as original works by known artists,"\textsuperscript{72} I deem the Forger’s works to be forgeries—even though no known artist is being imitated—because traditionally medieval illuminations were created by anonymous artists. Indeed, this fact made it easier for the Spanish Forger to sell works that appeared to be products of the Middle Ages.

Furthermore, Conklin explains that a market for works encourages forgeries and that this forger was certainly aware of the enthusiasm for medieval pieces. Indeed,

the appearance of fakes and forgeries on the art market fluctuates with cycles in taste and price. High prices for authentic art makes it more worthwhile for artists and dealers to take


\textsuperscript{72} See John E. Conklin, \textit{Art Crime} (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1994) 48.
the trouble to produce, document, and sell counterfeit pieces.\textsuperscript{73}

Thus taste dictates what forgeries will be produced—paintings produced by the Spanish Forger are no exception. And, although techniques of dating have been developed to assist in the identification of forgeries, critics insist that the most accurate way to identify forgeries is to be aware of stylistic cues that indicate a spurious work.

the value of a work of art, reflected in a round about way in its financial valuation, is by no means dependent on its formal qualities alone, but chiefly on the emotions and associations it releases. A work of painting or sculpture means more to us than a combination of lines and planes, of colouristic and plastic values, it represents a personality, an epoch, a nation.\textsuperscript{74}

It is perhaps the adaptability of the Spanish Forger's works, and the emotional qualities they elicit, that led to their popularity.

\textbf{Source and Sanctuary of the Spanish Forger's Works}

Several sources have suggested that the Spanish Forger's area of production may have been France, particularly Paris. Provenance, provided by Voelkle's catalogs, seems to links works to Paris, and the Spanish

\textsuperscript{73} Conklin 50.

\textsuperscript{74} Tietze 73.
Forger drew from sources originally published in Paris. Yet examination of the data that Voelkle presents indicates that this conclusion is an arbitrary one. No clear evidence exists that could eliminate either England or the United States as the site of production. In this regard, the Lacroix works were translated and published in England with amazing rapidity. Furthermore, the provenance of a great many of the Forger’s works can be traced to the United States, London, Nice, and Switzerland, as well as Paris.

Furthermore, the information available on where, and from whom, these works were purchased remains scant. Provenance indicates that the largest number of works originated in Paris—a total of thirty. Eleven of those works were sold in 1930—possibly as a group—and another set was sold in 1962—again, most likely as a set, as they appear to have been sold to one collector. Furthermore, fifteen works have a provenance based in New York, and sixteen have a provenance that points to London. Voelkle’s catalog indicates that sixty-four works are in the possession of individuals, galleries, museums, and libraries in the United States. Thirty-one pieces are owned by individuals, galleries, museums or libraries in Europe; and fifteen are owned by individuals or institu-
tions in England and thirty six works are listed as "location unknown."

Knowledge of provenance is important in order to isolate and possibly identify the Forger but location of works becomes more significant when seen in the context of medievalism. In this regard, figures indicate that the largest number of works by the Forger are owned by collectors--private or public--in the United States, with Europe and Britain following in holdings. This leads to the conclusion that the medievalism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century crossed geographical boundaries.

Conclusion

Romanticized virtues of the Middle Ages were invoked in the manuscript miniatures painted by the Forger. This romanticization contributed to commercialization of medievalism to which private and public collectors fell prey. Collector's of the work of the Spanish Forger influenced the general public's impression of the Middle Ages when private collections were made available to the public viewing. A prime example of this process is found with the purchase and display of the Spanish Forger's work by the Pierpont Morgan Library. As we have seen, this forger prospered by capitalizing on the emergence of a
medievalism that began as a popular, sentimental movement that influenced the development of an academic and scholarly community. The popular, cultural phenomenon of medievalism, then, was greatly influenced by these collectors, many of whom had little experience in artistic appraisal.
CHAPTER II

HANDBOOKS OF ILLUMINATION AND MEDIEVALISM

As we have seen, the medievalism of the late nine­
teenth and early twentieth century was expressed in forgeries created by the Spanish Forger, a painter of "medieval-style" manuscript illuminations. Model-books and guides of illumination that flourished during the period also represent the popular, sentimental medieval­ism of the era. Indeed, handbooks of illumination fos­
tered a respect for medieval artistic craft. These were guides for lettering, the creation of borders, and gil­
ting and painting of manuscripts in a "medieval" style. These works, sometimes quite elaborately designed and bound, were prefaced with praise for the medieval period not only as a source of admirable art, but of moral superiority. Prefatory comments are particularly en­
lightening in a discussion of the development of popular medievalism.

Nineteenth Century Handbooks, the Fore-runner

Mary P. Merrifield’s Original Treatises of the Arts of Painting is one of the most impressive studies expli-
eating aspects of the art of illumination for the modern practitioner. She enumerates both "traditional and practical information concerning painting including oils, miniature, mosaic, gilding and dyeing, and the preparation of colours" and offers technical methods from the periods of the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries. A forerunner to works that will later be produced, Merrifield's voluminous and exacting treatise offers details of the history of manuscript production garnered from a host of "Italian professors" who remain anonymous—like so many medieval scribes—thus adding a sense of the exotic to Merrifield's detailed descriptions. Promising to offer the "oral testimony of living persons, who although possessing much valuable knowledge acquired by their practice and researches, and much information derived from tradition and the study of works on art,"

75 See Mary Philadelphia Merrifield, Original Treatises Dating from the XIIth to XVIIIth Centuries on the Arts of Painting, in Oil, Miniature, Mosaic, and on Glass (London: J. Murray, 1849) vi.

76 Merrifield vii.

77 Merrifield indicates that she "considered it unnecessary to mention the names of the professors who favoured [her] with the communications," yet she assures the reader that they are "competent judges eminent in their profession" (viii).
Merrifield's text is a modern guide to Medieval and Renaissance techniques.

This appeal to authority, a common rhetorical technique, generates a belief that the artistic methods utilized by artists of the Middle Ages have a living tradition surviving unto Merrifield's day. Merrifield assures us that these traditions--once uncovered--will stimulate a much desired revival in Medieval and Renaissance craft.

Original Treatises includes a chapter on the "State of Society and the Arts During the Middle Ages" and subsequent chapters detail techniques used for assorted media, for example glass ("Early History of Glass Painting in Italy," "Windows," and "On Jewish Glass"); gilding and other arts ("On the Use of Wax in Painting," "On Painting Statues," and "On the Implements Used in Painting"); painting in oils ("Colours Used in Painting," "On Dryers and Drying Oils," "On Resins," and "On Varnishes"). The work then singles out four prominent artists who had written guides encompassing a discussion of the use and preparation of colors. In this later section Merrifield offers much of the text of these artist in translation.

Merrifield's own chapter on painting in oils is introduced with a section titled "Opinions of Eminent
Italian Artists to the Practice of the Old Masters." In this chapter offers opinions of several artists concerning techniques used by fifteenth century artists such as Titian, Gian Bellino, Giorgione, Bonifazio and the two Bassans and outlines their methods. She indicates that "traditional practices might possibly preserve the remembrance of technical processes not recorded in books, or at least serve to confirm those which have been described by writers on art"\textsuperscript{78}: thus, she will offer record of these practices.

Merrifield forcefully states her motivation for composing a work exalting the crafts of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Referring to the diverse and dynamic influences on oil painting through the ages, she indicates that techniques were perfected only after the fifteenth century and through contact with Flemish masters.\textsuperscript{79} Modifications in these techniques, themselves drawn from the earlier Middle Ages, have accumulated over time and positively impacted painting.

In the course of the years the Flemish process underwent various modifications, some of the old practices were altered, and new ones introduced, until the example of Titian and Paolo Veronese occasioned a radical change in the technical methods of the Italian painters. After their time new methods were again modi-
fied and changed by succeeding painters, until not only the original Flemish process, but those of the Venitian painters, had fallen into oblivion, and but few traces of the old practices remained. Some of these have been handed down traditionally from master to pupil; others may be collected from works on painting. It is with a view to collect these scattered reminiscences of art that the present work was principally undertaken.  

This attempt to delineate some trace of medieval methods through the history of painting was indeed the preoccupation of many of the authors of handbooks that encouraged the art of illumination and miniature painting in the medieval style. Recognizing the industrialization of many aspects of culture, these works aimed to retain a link to their medieval, artistic past. This link, as we shall see, was encouraged by a nationalism that was both a product and factor in popular medievalism. It is clear that for Merrifield the art of the Middle Ages was modified and improved by an association with Italian artists influenced by the Flemish.

80 Merrifield cxvi.

81 Several works that discussed the influences of the Italian Renaissance were completed during this era. John Addington Symonds and others writing on the Renaissance during this period acknowledge that the Renaissance was less than a fracture from the past and that medieval currents underpin much of the revival. It should also be noted that Symonds description of the rise of humanism focuses on national distinctions. For works on the Renaissance that derive from this period see Symond’s The Renaissance in Italy, (London, 1875) and Jacob Burckhardt, Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien.
The next section of *The Original Treatises in the Arts of Painting* discusses techniques for the preparation of color outlined in manuscripts by four individuals. These individuals are Jenah Le Bague, Master Peter of S. Audemar, Eraclius, and Archerius. A discussion of *Experimenta de Coloribus, Liber Magistri Petri de Sancto Audemaro de Coloribus, De Coloribus et Artibus Romanorum,* and *De Coloribus Diversis Modis Tractatur* is included.

Notwithstanding this exhaustive account of reflections on the use of color in oil painting and the exacting details about the preparation of distinct colors, Merrifield infused her text with the Romantic sentiment found in later, less historically-grounded works. Nevertheless, Merrifield's introductory chapter fashions a Middle Ages as dark as any outlined by Renaissance enthusiasts. Her respect for the arts of the age seems drawn from the fact that they survived for the edification in later generations. This description, indeed, is no less Romantic than the positive version that will emerge from later medieval idealists. In her assessment of the close of the Middle Ages Merrifield states:

---

82 These titles are translated in Merrifield's text as *Experiments on Colors,* by Jehan Le Begue; *The Book of Master Peter, of S. Audemar, on Making Colors; On the Colors and Arts of the Romans,* by Eraclius; and *A Treatise on preparing many kinds of Colors,* by Archerius.
history gives but a melancholy view of the
state of society in Europe towards the close of
the dark ages. The domestic habits and accommo­
dations of the people were rude in the extreme.
The nobles were devoted to the pursuit of arms,
and when not actually engaged in war their time
was occupied in hunting and hawking, of which
they were passionately fond.\textsuperscript{83}

A critique of the less-refined aspects of society may be
reflected in this statement, as Merrifield offers an
idealized view of the practice of the arts maintained in
the monastic community:

\begin{quote}
The cloister, while it afforded a shelter and
retreat from the more active pursuits of life
afforded also to the monks leisure and opportu­
nity for cherishing the arts, the technical
processes of which were preserved in their con­
vents.\textsuperscript{84}
\end{quote}

Indeed, monastic foundations did preserve the arts
during the Middle Ages although the role of the script­
orium in monastic life had less to do with a deliberate
attempt to preserve artistic techniques and more to do
with a belief in and worship of God through artistic
expression. Notwithstanding her respect for the arts
preserved by monastic communities, Merrifield judges that
the arts created by the monks was less than elegant. She
states that "great, however, as the technical skill of
the monks undoubtedly was at this period, their paintings

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[83]{Merrifield xviii.}
\footnotetext[84]{Merrifield xviii.}
\end{footnotes}
were distinguished neither for accuracy of drawing nor for elegance or variety of design." 

Nevertheless, Merrifield makes a connection between the extension and improvement of the arts during the Middle Ages and the improvement of social conditions generally. Her critique is similar to the view expressed by nineteenth century supporters of the Arts and Crafts movement—revivalists of medieval techniques and idealists of the medieval lifestyle—who equate the valuation of artistic craft with improved social conditions.

The Arts and Crafts movement attempted to link the arts with production in general, believing in the beautification of even useful, everyday objects. The benefits of labor were preached, in much the same fashion, by members of several branches of reforming monastic movements during the Middle Ages.

Rising socialism was a powerful force in England during the 1880's and 1890's and not only was it an underlying theme but often an overt factor in the ideology behind the Arts and Crafts revival. Many of the leading members of

---

85 Merrifield xxii.

86 "The good taste of Cimabue introduced in the thirteenth century a better style of art, which was much improved by his gifted pupil Giotto; and such was the influence of their example that the Byzantine style was banished from Tuscany, and whenever the works and influence of these artists extended. The improvement in the civil condition of the people followed, if it did not keep pace with the advancement of the arts," Merrifield xxii.
the Arts and Crafts movement were also leading socialists.\textsuperscript{87}

David Morse indicates the significance of the arts to middle class society in the late nineteenth century.

In Victorian culture the applied arts became extremely significant. Such activities as book illustration, the production of decorative china, of ornamental tiles, of fabric and materials, the design of furniture and other everyday objects begin to make a considerable impact on the everyday world. From a certain point of view the world had never before seen so much art.\textsuperscript{88}

It is clear that social reformers encouraged the production of art by all levels of society, not just professional artists, and the medieval arts in particular were encouraged. Works such as those produced by Merrifield attest to this fact. Art production had increased as did the purchasing power and interest of the public. All of these factors also influenced the production and sale of works by the Spanish Forger.

Paul Jacob Lacroix and the Spanish Forger

As William Voelkle has explained, the Spanish Forger was indebted to a series of texts produced in the late nineteenth century that discuss the habits, customs, art, dress, and leisure of members of the Middle Ages and the

\textsuperscript{87} Culler 214.

Renaissance. Speaking of texts that may have influenced the Spanish Forger, Voelkle states that "of these publications the most important and frequently employed were five volumes on medieval and renaissance life and culture by Paul Lacroix (1806-1884). These are: Les arts au moyen age at a l'époque de la renaissance, Paris 1869; Moeurs, usages et costumes au moyen age et a l'époque de la renaissance, Paris, 1871; Vie militaire et religiouse au moyen age et a l'époque de la renaissance, Paris, 1873.; Science et lettres au moyen age et a l'époque de la renaissance, Paris, 1877; Louis XII et Anne de Bretagne, Paris, 1882." While this reliance may seem to point to production by a French artist as these works were produced and published in France it should be noted that their popularity caused their subsequent translation and publication in England with relative speed.

These works by Paul Jacob Lacroix, printed in France, England and the United States in the late nineteenth century served as a repository for images that the Forger appropriated for his miniatures and panel paintings.  

89 Voelkle 10.

90 It should be noted that a diverse selection of artists relied on textual reproduction for aspects of medieval culture and imagery for a particular painting. As indicated in, "The Pre-Raphaelites and Medieval Manuscripts" by Julina Treuherz "medieval miniature painting was much
The preface to the 1874 edition of *Manners, Customs and Dress of the Middles Ages During the Renaissance Period* amplifies the contemporary view of art as an expression of culture:

> art must be the faithful expression of a society, since it represents it by its works as it has created them—-and make witness of its spirit and manners for future generations. But it must be acknowledged that art is only the consequence of the ideas which it expresses; it is the fruit of civilization, not its origin.⁹¹

Rather than searching to understand this cultural truism, advocates of creative medievalism inverted production and attempted to influence culture through art rather than letting art serve as an expression of culture. Addressing the desire for medieval objects current during the era, and the commercialism of all things medieval—-things that produce a sense of well being as they link the individual not only to a pastoral past but to a national past—-Lacroix's statement as to the motiva-

---

⁹¹ See Paul Lacroix *Manners, Customs, and Dress During the Middle Ages, and During the Renaissance Periods* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1874) v.
tion for his histories is particularly enlightening. He states:

We are in fact, no longer content with the chronological narration and simple nomenclatures which formerly were considered sufficient for education. We no longer imagine that the history of our institutions has less interest than that of wars, nor that the annals of the humbler classes are irrelevant to those of the privileged orders... Can you not place before us their pastimes, their hunting parties, their meals, and all sorts of scenes, sad or gay, which compose their home life? We should like to follow them in public and private occupations, and know their manner of living hourly, as we know our own. 92

This demand for a new type of history, one that presents the deeds of individuals in graphic form at all sorts of tasks and endeavors, is matched in many of the revivalist compositions produced in this era. The need for visual contact, the desire to inundate all the senses in things medieval--reflected not only in the arts but in architecture as well--creates an idealized view of period of history. A Romantic representation influenced the reader's assessment of the Middle Ages, just as it permanently impacted the historiographic interpretation and scholarly regard of the period.

The Lacroix anthologies regarded the Middle Ages in a Romantic light. This interpretation inadvertently--as well as deliberately--affects the works of the Spanish

92 Lacroix, Manners vii.
Forger. Images used by the Forger were reconstructed from the pages of Lacroix's works and this appropriation offers a direct link between Lacroix and the Spanish Forger. An example of such a link can be found between the "Hunt for the Unicorn Annunciation" that appears at folio sixty four and a similar composition featured in Lacroix's Les Arts. Although modified by the Forger, this scene has too many similarities to ignore a direct parallel. Unwittingly, Lacroix encouraged a newly wealthy middle class, with little artistic background or training—except for that obtained through works such as Lacroix's and other handbooks—to covet visual images of the medieval period described in chronicles, biographies, and historical studies. Factors that contributed to the dissemination of these works were: a purchasing power created by a boom in industry, a desire for objects that displayed an idealized medieval vision, and scant training in assessing true medieval artistic production.

A number of the Forger's manuscript miniatures depict secular scenes—those that would appeal to the purchasing public—and, again, reflect the choice of topics covered in the Lacroix anthologies. More a display of romantic ideals than of medieval reality, the scenes include deeds of all classes of society.
The popularity of Lacroix's works can be attested by the rapidity with which they were sold\textsuperscript{93} and indeed, the handbooks that encouraged medieval-style illumination were extremely popular and were printed in many editions. In the preface, translated and printed in London, Lacroix states that the "numerous illustrations that adorn the work will engage the eye, while the text will speak to the intelligence,"\textsuperscript{94} and that the chromolithographic images included are derived from particular manuscripts and engravings drawn from a vast array of sources. Indeed, the visual resources of these volumes are extensive. Explaining the motivation for such an exhaustive work he states:

We now present to the public one of the principal positions of that important work, and perhaps the most interesting, in a form easier, and more pleasing; within the reach of youth who desire to learn without weariness or irksomeness, or females interested in grave authors, of the family that loves to assemble round a book together instructive and attractive.\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{93} The preface to the Arts of the Middle Ages indicates that "how far his labours were appreciated in France is evident from the fact that, when the first edition made its appearance, it was exhausted within a few days." See Paul Lacroix, The Arts of the Middle Ages, and the Period of the Renaissance (London: Chapman and Hall, 1870) v.

\textsuperscript{94} Lacroix, Arts X.

\textsuperscript{95} Lacroix, Art (1875) viii.
The edification of youth and ladies—a truly romantic ideal—emerges as the recurring theme in the preface of many of the handbooks created during this period. Lacroix's texts did not teach or guide the reader in the creation of medieval style borders, letters or miniatures, but his works did create a desire for such guides and provided sources of scenes, settings, and costumes of a medieval nature for nineteenth and twentieth century artists to copy.

De Lara, Bradley, and Lucien

D. Laurent De Lara, who published a work titled *Elementary Instruction in the Art of Illuminating and Missal Painting on Vellum: A Guide to Modern Illuminators* (1850), which was reprinted in a "considerably enlarged" second edition in 1856, describes the success of his work in the preface to the text. Identified on the title page as the "Illuminator to the Queen" De Lara indicates that his pupils are many.

I was induced in 1850, to publish my first edition of this little work, a thousand copies of which were speedily sold. Since that period upwards of three thousand pupils have been under my tuition, amongst whom I have counted some of the first nobility of the land.96

---

96 See David Laurent De Lara, *Elementary Instruction in the Art of Illumination and Missal Painting on Vellum: With Illustrations for Copying, for the Student* (London: Ackerman, 1856) 10.
The relevance of the work established, De Lara maps out practical steps to create work that resembles those produced in the Middle Ages. In his chapter titled "Advice to Beginners," De Lara recommends that "beginners should not be too ambitious, let them be therefore contented to copy first before attempting original designs," which "will give them experience and method. In the higher walks of art copying is always resorted to; the painter has models, casts, and drapery to guide him." The procedure, this method of copying was followed by the Spanish Forger with the anthologies of Lacroix.

While artists train by imitation, many original manuscript miniatures would have been unavailable for examination and could only be accessed through texts such as Janet Backhouse indicates the Spanish Forger’s works may be identified because of the debt to such a practice. Backhouse states:

Basically the style of the 'Spanish Forger' could be derived from elements in French, Flemish, Spanish, and some Italian manuscript work executed during the second half of the fifteenth century. It is quite possible that Tietze is right that the general effect of the hardness (and the smooth doll-like faces) is really due to copying almost exclusively from reproductions. In fact the stylistic evidence, perhaps slightly weighted in favour of France, really amounts to very little and was probably merely designed to have maximum public appeal. Backhouse 68.
as Lacroix's. Moreover, as if directing instructions to the Spanish Forger, De Lara recommends that each artist elaborate on the medieval technique, image or design and thus improve on the "medieval" product.

In his chapter on composition, De Lara reiterates the importance of copying and rationalizes the "improvement" of medieval works:

It is from the study of these, that our own ideas will be developed and improved, and that our modern notions of beauty and effect may be advantageously thrown in to produce original and classical productions, abandoning that which is absurd and meaningless, and substituting that which is rational, effective and beautiful. The pedantic absurdity of retaining any class of ornamentation solely because it was used in the early ages by our ancestral predecessors, because of their notions of drawing and perspective were imperfect, is as reasonable, as to become a drunkard because our father unhappily happened to have been one before us; and whilst we may justly admire the ingenuity of their efforts in producing the historic records of their skills, we may at least elevate our taste in improving on that which plainly bears the stamp of their imperfection.

Although it should be noted that De Lara encouraged his students to visit museums to view works:

I have made it a practice to accompany my pupils at least half a dozen times to the manuscript rooms, during their course of instruction, for the purpose of calling the attention to what to him or her is essentially to know, and to afford an opportunity of making such extracts of which they afterwards may usefully avail themselves. De Lara 56.

De Lara 29.
Improving on the "medieval" image to create an elevated, Romantic product was the goal of this guide to illuminating.

De Lara's *Art of Illuminating* includes advice to designers; general rules for illumination; the arrangement of colors; composition; preparing vellum; tracing and raised gold ornamentation. Several of these sections detail methods employed by the Spanish Forger.

Featured in his section on general illumination techniques are instructions indicating that after the miniature has been designed and painted gilt may be applied.\(^{101}\)

> the parts to be gilt are to be prepared and finished before laying on any colour, except in the case of illumination of a late period, where streaks of gold are found painted over the colour. This however is not gilding, it is painting with gold.\(^{102}\)

The sequence of steps that feature gilding after painting are a noted characteristic of the Spanish Forger—quite the opposite of miniatures created in the Middle Ages in which the gold was laid down before any painting

---

\(^{101}\) "after the whole being thus far finished, the raised gold may be introduced, finishing the matted or dead gold with burnished ornamentations, dots, scrolls, arabesques, or any other design. This should be the last process of all, since the atmosphere is somewhat apt to deaden its brilliancy, and therefore should be the concluding operation." De Lara 22.

\(^{102}\) De Lara 18.
occurred. Furthermore, De Lara recommends a method for tracing the design onto the vellum before painting. Another distinct characteristic of the Spanish Forger's miniatures is the outline traced around the images. Voelkle has attributed this stylistic characteristic to the possibility that the forger may have been trained as a lithographer. De Lara recognizes the importance of the work of the lithographers in the revival of medieval arts--particularly miniature painting--and the creation of facsimile reproductions for the general public.

The application of lithography for purposes of coloured printing of chromo-lithography in the last fifteen years, has done much, if not all, to awaken the attention of the artist and the lovers of art to the treasures moldering in our libraries and museums. By its aid we have been enabled to obtain copies and specimens of illuminated painting, almost perfect facsimiles of the originals.

Another feature of De Lara's work that encourages not only the art of illumination for the modern practitioner, but also the commercialization of things medieval is his enthusiastic endorsement of art supplies for the contemporary miniaturist and illuminator. He recommends the "Chromographic colour-box" manufactured by Mssrs.

103 "good, correct and delicate tracing makes it pleasurable to paint, a coarse deep red one gives the artist an infinite deal of trouble, and the drawing in this case will always look smeared and dirty, which with a little attention can easily be avoided." De Lara 38.

104 De Lara 59.
Ackermann and Company that offers a particular brilliance of color. Since many of the handbooks on illumination focus on the need for true color, this product must have been successful.

Another work that detailed the methods of illumination for the modern artist is *A Manual of Illumination on Paper and Vellum* produced by J.W. Bradley and T.G. Goodwin which treats many of the same topics. Chapters include "Materials;" "How to Set to Work;" "Colouring;" and "Gilding." In the preface to the ninth edition, the authors indicate that the art of illumination is an evolving one that becomes more precise and better understood every day.\textsuperscript{105}

Voelkle mentions Bradley's manual in his discussion of the Spanish Forger and noting a possible influence of guides of illumination on the arts of the period. He states:

> it is interesting to note that manuscript illuminations were not generally forged before about 1860, when John Bradley's *Manual of Illumination* first appeared in London. The thirteenth edition (c.1880) of this immensely influential work, which had a French counterpart in Karl Robert's *Traité pratique d'enluminure* (1889), . . . The proliferation of the Forger's manu-

\textsuperscript{105} See John William Bradley, *Guide to the Art of Illuminating and Missal Painting* (London: George Rowney & Co., 1867). "Since the publication of the first edition of this work, great advancement has been made in the practice of the Art of Illumination:--an Art daily becoming better understood and more appreciated." Bradley [1].
script illuminations, thus, documents the taste and collecting interests of his time.\textsuperscript{106}

In the introduction, Bradley and Goodwin state that the purpose of the work is to revive an art from a past age and to create a practical guide that "will be found not only interesting, but to a certain extent most requisite, so as to enable the reader better to understand the points and purposes of our practical understanding."\textsuperscript{107}

Bradley and Goodwin advocate a true revival of Medieval art and stress that artistic training should not be the breeding ground for those of less than honest intentions.

it may be mentioned as most important that this should be a true revival. Much injury has been done by charlatanism having undertaken to teach the art, and by the production of examples of no ancient manner, unless it be from the worst periods. In reviving an art, we must go back to the point at which it began to fail; and must humble ourselves to copy first, to become acquainted with its elements, before we can design well, as the artists in architecture, glass-painting and illumination of one period did from those of the former."\textsuperscript{108}

Indeed, it is this comment that alerts us to the fact that this art is linked not only to education but to commerce. An attempt to protect the standards of the art

\textsuperscript{106} From exhibit labels that accompanied a display of the Forger’s works at the Pierpont Morgan Library in 1978.

\textsuperscript{107} Bradley 1.

\textsuperscript{108} Bradley 2.
not only reveals the possible problems caused by the rise of less skilled teachers, but also alerts us to the existence of deception and false representation within the community of medieval revivalists. Clearly, the practitioners were many, varied and of diverse experience.

Once again writing of the revival of illumination and its implications and influence on aspiring artists Bradley denotes:

Many people very ignorantly condemn the revival of illumination as needless, now that printing exists, but they may rest assured that its practice is—especially for young people—most disciplinary and delightful, and tends, even as an accomplishment, to strengthen those qualities of patience, thoughtfulness, and delicacy which shed so salutary an influence upon our daily life.\(^{109}\)

This incredibly value-laden statement again reflects the view that participation in this art form—because it is derived from the Middle Ages—can lead to spiritual and social benefit for the practitioner. The arts these arts in particular will encourage values which have been declining as a result of the Industrial Revolution. It reflects the sentiment of many of the social critics of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who encouraged an association with medieval processes for personal and social edification. The miniatures, infused

\(^{109}\) Bradley 5.
with Romantic sentiments, became a symbol of civic health. They may indeed have symbolized the patience, thoughtfulness and delicacy society craves, thus raising its value and solidifying the market.

Speaking of an audience to which such works may have been aimed, Peter Davey details the importance of the upper middle class in the support of both art and architecture.

the Arts and Crafts movement was of and for the Victorian upper middle class. . . . The upper middle classes were the only people who could enjoy individual freedom in Victorian England; they were free of the grinding poverty of the lower orders, the inverted snobbery of the lower middle classes and the increasingly rigid formality of the aristocracy. Because Britain was the richest and most powerful nation, they were probably the most free people of the world. It was for them that Arts and Crafts architecture worked, evolving a new easy style which was most often seen in the small country houses of a free, proud, individualistic breed, who, in three decades from 1880 to 1910, were the patrons of some of the finest and most original architecture and artifacts ever produced in Britain.\textsuperscript{110}

\textit{A Manual of Illumination on Paper and Vellum} not only established the popularity of the practical employment of the art of illumination but also encouraged a facility with the characteristic features of different artistic periods within the Middle Ages.

\textsuperscript{110} See Peter Davey, \textit{Architecture of the Arts and Crafts Movement} (New York: Rizzoli, 1980) 9.
Henry Lucien’s work on illumination offers much the same fare. Titled *Hints on Illuminating with an Essay on the Art of Ornamenting in Gold or Metals Describing a New and Easy Method of Brilliantly and Durably Imitating the Illuminated Gilding of the Middle Ages* and published in 1860, this brief work offers a series of suggestions upon which the artist may embellish. Lauding the benefits of producing medieval-style art, Lucien remarks that:

> the taste for artificially studying the illuminations of the Middle Ages is rapidly increasing. The revival of the Art of Illuminating is to be hailed as a sign of the times. That we begin at last to appreciate the exquisite models handed down to us by our forefathers shows a decided step in public tastes; indeed, the fine arts generally have sprung prominently forward within the last few years.\(^{iii}\)

This expression of national pride, this harkening after a national heritage showing breeding and taste links art to the linear progression of social good. Yet it is ironic that this progress is in truth a reversal—an idealization of an era passed.

William Audsley and M. Digby Wyatt

The sixth edition of William G. Audsley’s *Guide to the Art of Illuminating and Missal Painting* was published in 1861. It featured an introductory statement reiterat-

ing the fascination with illuminating\textsuperscript{112} and proceeding to outline the materials and processes of illumination. Audsley begins his text with praise for the nineteenth century and insists that the arts are in a revival, "awakened from a sleep of nearly three centuries."\textsuperscript{113}

Furthermore, he indicates that it is manuscript illumination, over all the other arts of the Middle Ages, that has achieved a particular prominence in this revival:

> of all the arts which flourished during the Middle Ages, that of illumination may be said to be the most glorious; this cannot be wondered at when we consider to what purpose it was mainly applied, namely, the decoration of the scriptures, the revered work of the Deity to the creature.\textsuperscript{114}

Audsley expresses an appreciation of the sacred that has so far been missing from the texts that encourage the work of illumination. Most handbooks offer little comment on the use of the sacred books that were adorned with miniatures during the Middle Ages and, except for Audsley's, are concerned with the production of art as a

\textsuperscript{112} See William James Audsley, Guide to the Art of Illuminating and Missal Painting (London: George Rowney & Co., 1867). "Owing to the rapidly increasing love for the beautiful Art of Illumination, and the devotion with which it is being studied throughout the length and breadth of the land--no apology is required for the appearance of this little volume." Audsley [v].

\textsuperscript{113} Audsley 5.

\textsuperscript{114} Audsley 7.
secular pursuit and with a secular understanding. Indeed, an exclusively secular form of worship surrounded the production of this art.

In an essay written on the Decorative Arts, William Morris refers to the sentiments of a generation that considered the social and personal benefit of this type of labor. He feels that we should let:

the arts we are talking of ornament our labour, and be widely spread, intelligent, well understood both by the maker and the user, let them grow in one word popular, and there will be pretty much an end of dull work and its wearing slavery; and no man will any longer have an excuse for talking about the curse of labour; no man will any longer have an excuse for evading the blessing of labour.\(^\text{115}\)

Speaking of the decline of craft in general, but obviously touching on the value of medieval craft, Morris states:

Time was when the mystery and wonder of handicrafts were well acknowledged by the world, when imagination and fancy mingled with all things made by man; and in those days all handicraftsmen were artists as we should now call them. But the thoughts of man became more intricate, more difficult to express; art grew a heavier thing to deal with, and its labour was more divided among great men, lesser men, and little men.\(^\text{116}\)

\(^{115}\) See William Morris, The Decorative Arts, Their Relationship to Modern Life and Progress; an Address Delivered Before the Trades' Guild of Learning (London: Ellis and White, 1878) 5.

\(^{116}\) Morris 10.
As Culler has described, this sentiment had great currency among socialists who urged the production of art on the masses—not only as a means of securing employment but as a way to transform labor into pleasure.

Perhaps the most impressive handbook compiled to encourage the art of illumination and miniature painting is that produced by M. Digby Wyatt, who had his training as an architect and later served as Slade Professor of the University of Cambridge. His *Art Of Illuminating as Practiced in Europe From the Earliest Times. Illustrated by Borders, Initial Letters, and Alphabets* was published in 1860. Although it served the same purpose as many of the other handbooks of illumination it stands out because of the care taken in the publication. This volume includes borders, initials, and letters selected and lithographed by W. R. Tymms and an essay on the practice of illumination written by Wyatt.

117 As indicated in *Artists of the Nineteenth Century and Their Work* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1889) Digby (1820-1877) was a pupil at the Royal Academy and "his first important work as an architect was the Crystal Palace in London in 1851, and in 1852 to '54 he was superintendent of the decorations and Fine Arts Department of the same building on its erection in Sydenham. . . . He was knighted in 1869. Among the most important works published by him are, 'The Industrial Arts of the Nineteenth Century' (1851), 'Art Treasures of the United Kingdom' (1857), 'Fine Art' (1870), 'An Architect's Notebook in Spain' (1872)" (363). See also Samuel Regraves, *A Dictionary of Artists of the English School: Painters, Sculptors Architects, Engravers and Ornamentists* (Bath: Kingsmead Reprints, 1970).
Referring to those who have produced similar works in the past, Wyatt relates:

it is necessary only to glance at the ponderous folios of those pioneers in paleographical research, the Benedictines, or at the noble and costly volumes of the Count Bastard, Sylvestre and Champollion, Owen Jones\(^{118}\) and Noel Humphreys\(^{119}\) to recognize the futility of attempt-

\(^{118}\) "Owen Jones brought lithography back on to the scene in 1836 when he issued the first 12 parts of his colossal work on the Spanish Alhambra. These were not completed until 1842 after Jones had made a second visit to the Alhambra and had sold some land to pay for the cost of production" (154). In Percy Muir, *Victorian Illustrated Books*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971. See also *Artists of the Nineteenth Century And Their Works: A Handbook*, by Clara Erskine Clement and Laurence Hutton, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1889. "Born in Wales (1809-1874) . . . . He was one of the superintending architects of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, erected in 1851, devoting himself particularly to its decoration, and in 1873 he received a medal for designs furnished for the Exposition building at Vienna" (15). And, *A Dictionary of Artists of the English School*, which printed a second edition in 1870, states: "His works, the result of fifty years earnest labour, were founded upon the true principles of structural ornamentation and symmetry in line with harmony of colour. Possessing great fertility of invention, his art tended greatly to the decorative improvement of our manufactories, such as wall-papers, carpets, and furniture" (243) and of his association with Wyatt that the two travelled to the Continent together after the completion of the Crystal Palace (491).

\(^{119}\) "H. N. Humphreys is a considerable figure in this period. He was in one sense a forerunner of Morris in his enthusiasm for the art of the Middle Ages and his attempts to reproduce and imitate it. Unfortunately he sometimes adulterated the former with the latter. *The Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages* (1844) is a magnificently successful attempt to convey the flavour of some of the masterpieces in this genre; but there are unforgivable interpolations of Humphreys' own invention almost throughout . . . . Humphreys himself produced an elaborate although comparatively modestly priced do-it-yourself manual on the subject called *The Art of Illumination*
ting in such a work as this to do justice to the antiquarian interests of this subject, or give a series of examples sufficient to convey an adequate idea of the magnificence and peculiarities of the rich store of monuments of art, treasured in the great public and private libraries of Europe.  

Indeed, both Jones and Humphreys were friends of Wyatt's. Each participated in projects that touched on the arts of the Middle Ages. An advertisement that appeared in the 1844 edition of the *Illuminated Illustrations of Froissart*. Selected from the MS. in the British Museum, which was prepared by Henry Noel Humphreys reads:

> the ideal of publishing these illuminations was suggested by the great success which has attended the reprint of the chronicles of Montretet and Froissart; the extensive sale of which books bears strong testimony to the searching spirit of inquiry now abroad. We are no longer content to read our early history through the filtered medium of a compilation, but seek it in the vivid pages of the chroniclers, who drew from life, and sketched off in simple and quaint, but earnest language, the stirring panorama of their times. But the pleasures of reading such an historian as Froissart, in an ordinary printed book, is small when compared with that of reading him in one of the curious manuscripts of his own time. To unclose the gilded clasps of one of those ponderous velvet bound volumes, to turn over the crisp vellum, and read the story of those exciting times traced in quaint Gothic charac-

---

and Missal Painting (1849), and W. R. Tymms and M. Digby Wyatt produced another in 1860. There were many others, which indicates how popular it had become." See Muir 155.

ters by careful clerks; but above all to admire the curious and elaborate bordering of the illuminated pages and dwell on the miniature pictures, wrought with the greatest care and beauty of the most skillful contemporary liners, to embody more tangible the narration of the author, is indeed a pleasure; --yet one which few can enjoy. To afford that enjoyment to the many, and place before them some of the most interesting of these rare illuminations, is the object of the present publication.121

While it is clear that Humphreys is not encouraging forgery or the production or sale of such works, this statement makes clear the influence medieval artistic production had on the artists of the late nineteenth century and the respect given to such manuscripts.122

The sumptuous work created by Wyatt and Tymms satisfied the desire for graphic representation of medieval manuscript illumination. Their handbook was created to present this art to a larger audience and to encourage the art of illumination. Each page of Wyatt's text includes a different decorative border, chapter headings feature decorative vignettes, and decorative initials abound. The volume also includes a section of quotations

121 See H. Noel Humphreys, Illuminated Illustrations of Froissart Selected from the Mss. in the British Museum (London: William Smith, 1844) 3.

122 It should be noted that Ruskin felt much the same way concerning manuscript miniatures. He states "a well-illuminated missal is a fairy cathedral full of painted windows, bound together to carry in one's pocket, with the music and the blessing of all its prayers besides" (490) Praeterita, iii: Works, ed. Cok and Wedderburn, xxxv, 1908,
that are appropriate for the illuminator to copy and indicates the suitable location for these items once executed.\textsuperscript{123}

Following this is a chapter on "How The Art of Illuminating May be Practiced" which includes instructions for gilding, how colors are tempered, and the use of ink. This is followed by a section that outlines the use and preparation of color. The author then describes the plates with brief notes on the source and history of each and its benefit for the modern illuminator.

The plates that follow--one through ninety-nine--are full page illustrations and are in full color. While they do not include instructions or examples of images for miniatures, they do include decorative borders, initials, alphabets, and vignettes from the sixth through the sixteenth centuries, which would surely appeal to the buying public.

Once again, in Wyatt's text, we see that the art of illumination is encouraged for young people and for women. Acknowledging that the art was originally practiced by celibate monks, Wyatt explains how it can serve a secular purpose:

\begin{quote}
I am quite ready to admit that the exceptional manufacture of these pretty picture-books may be not only agreeable, but even useful: it is
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{123} Wyatt, \textit{Art of} 64.
the abuse, and not the occasional resort to the practice, I would venture to denounce. For instance, a mother could scarcely do a thing more likely to benefit her children, and to fix the lessons of love or piety she would desire to implant in their memories, than to illuminate for them little volumes, which from their beauty or value, they might be inclined to treasure through life. Interesting her children in her work as it grew under her hand, how many precious associations in after-life might hang about these very books. Again: for young people, the mere act of transcription, independent of the amount of thought bestowed upon good words and pure thoughts, and the selection of ornament to appropriately illustrate them, would tend to an identification of the individual with the best and highest class of sentiments.\textsuperscript{124}

Both Wyatt and Owen Jones were prominent architects and their training in this field influenced their respect and enthusiasm for the Middle Ages. Indeed, the proliferation of medievalism in the arts began with the adoption of Gothic architecture in England. The decorative arts, architecture, and their influence on literature are linked to medievalism. Revivalism of the arts and crafts in the nineteenth century had roots in a respect for medievalism that began in the eighteenth century.

During this early period, travelling to exotic lands to view the art and architectural ruins of lost civilizations became popular among the upper classes. Yet, the Romantic revery this practice inspired could also be achieved by expeditions to local, medieval ruins.

\textsuperscript{124} Wyatt, Art of 51.
the melancholy revery over the passage of time and human greatness [was] induced by ruins. The classic ruins of ancient Rome were of course ideal for this purpose, but so were the ruined abbeys of England, and as the vogue for picturesque travel and for native sites began to achieve parity with the traditional Grand Tour, the popularity of medieval ruins increased.125

The sentiment associated with these sites furthered the development of an ideology of medievalism. It is no surprise that the Pre-Raphaelite painters took the Morte d'Arthur—a tale of the development of England—as their preferred text and that the bard Ossian of MacPherson's creation should be the poet-elect.126

During the same period, another approach to medievalism was developing, one that focused not only on the appreciation of medieval texts and images but also on the "aesthetics and the techniques of medieval art."127 Imported medievalism, responsible in part for the proliferation of the Forger's works in North America, featured a particular brand of Romanticism.


127 Kaufman xxvi.
Medievalism here was practically all romance and the imagination. It had little of the moral force that attended the Gothic Revival in Britain. For that reason, Romanticism is a better word to describe the motivations of artists in this continent.\textsuperscript{128}

This fact would ensure that the Forger's works were particularly popular with collectors from the United States. The fervor created by handbooks led to a desire to collect manuscript miniatures—either leaves or fully bound texts—and vice versa, so that many individuals of the period became collectors.

Conclusion

The appreciation of medieval art and craft was capitalized upon during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by the publication and sale of handbooks that served as guides to illumination. The commercialization of a medieval ideal ensured that these works would be financially successful for the producers and publishers and those who provided the artistic supplies needed to create pseudo-medieval illuminations. In turn, a Romantic ideal of the Middle Ages fostered during this period, has left a legacy in the assessment of medieval art in the Western Hemisphere.

\textsuperscript{128} Kaufman xxxii.
Appendix A

Medieval / Nineteenth Century Images
Manuscript M.786a is comprised of one hundred, fourteen folios and includes eleven large miniature, sixteen historiated and three illuminated initials created by the Spanish Forger. This manuscript, owned by the Pierpont Morgan Library, is an antiphonal or antiphonary from the fifteenth century with images added by the Forger. An antiphonary "contains the sung portions of the Divine Office," and this work provides adequate examples of the Forger's style to allow conclusions to be drawn about the ideal of medievalism that created a market for it.

In the Pierpont Morgan antiphonary the eleven full-page illuminations that depict religious themes and do not feature the tell-tale secular scenes so common to the Forger's work. Yet, this antiphonary, which has the "earliest documented provenance of any manuscript by the Spanish Forger" displays many of the stylistic components that will become common to the Forger's work. Thus, these images can serve as a model of the Forger's style and technique.

---

129 This manuscript has been disbound and each of the full page miniatures has been mounted for display and does not remain with the text.


131 Voelkle, *Spanish* 37.
Distinct features noted in these miniatures are the sweet expressions, the kinetic energy expressed by the hand gestures and stance of many of the individuals depicted and the stock scenery which includes rippled, flowing water. Furthermore, these forged miniatures, like other examples of the Forger’s works have been painted onto vellum that has been scraped of existing text, thus leaving omissions in the liturgical work. Moreover, the painted miniatures appear to be in much better condition, from a preservation perspective, than the surrounding text.

**Fig. 1**

The first miniature\(^{132}\) added by the Forger appears on folio one and consists of a “Donor Portrait” which was added to the text to make the manuscript appear complete as some of the preliminary text was missing.\(^{133}\) It was no doubt also added to give the manuscript an aura of grandeur. The increased secular patronage of the fifteenth century made donors’ portraits more common and the image

---

\(^{132}\) "A miniature is an independent illustration, as opposed to a scene incorporated into another element of the decorative scene such as a border or initial. It takes its name from the Latin miniare, meaning "to color with red" (the adornment of books originally was executed in red, or minium)." Brown 86.

\(^{133}\) "The text, which begins with the music for Holy Saturday, is obviously incomplete. The earlier portion of the manuscript was either already missing or removed by the Forger." Voelkle, Spanish 37.
added luster to the provenance of the work. Donor portraits were added to the text to honor the patron for whom the work was composed. As Brown states, the donor was:

a person who donated a book—and often commissions it as well—to an ecclesiastical establishment. It is sometimes possible to identify the donor or owner of a book through the presence of an inscription, armorial bearings in images or margins, or a motto. Portraits of the donor (often stylized, although some true portrait likenesses do occur) are found from the thirteenth century on.\(^\text{134}\)

Here, the donor portrait features a donor and his spouse kneeling before an altar, each flanked by a nimbed saint. All stand, or kneel, upon a patterned floor. The male saint holds a staff depicting an armorial bearing of a checker board opposite a field studded with three crosses. He raises a protective hand to the kneeling patron. The female saint, who appears just behind the woman in the scene, stands with three children kneeling beside her. To them she has raised a protective hand and they seem to take refuge at her side.

The Spanish Forger’s placement of this portrait at the head of this manuscript is indeed appropriate considering the interest in art patronage during the nineteenth century.

\(^{134}\) Brown 51.
The second miniature to appear in the manuscript is found on folio eight, verso and depicts a scene of the "Resurrection." Here Christ rises from a tomb flanked by two sleeping soldiers. Angels adorn the air at either side of Christ, seeming to rest on clouds composed of waveling water. Each angel sports the colorful, variegated wings that appear in several other miniatures in this manuscript.

The third miniature, on folio eighteen, is a scene of the "Pentecost." This celebration, which takes place the seventh Sunday after Easter, commemorates the descent of the Holy Ghost to the apostles. This scene clearly depicts the Virgin, placed upon a patterned floor, surrounded by the expressive, attentive apostles. The dove, which lays flat against the recessed wall of windows--appearing like a patterning rather than actual windows--descends from above, amidst flames, and appears directly above the Virgin's head. Both the Virgin and the saint to her right hold books. The rather chaotic hand gestures of the figures are a distinct characteristic of the Forger's work.
Fig. 4
The "Gnadenstuhl Trinity" which appears on the verso of folio twenty-one, depicts a throne floating on wavering, watery clouds like those found in the Resurrection scene. Here, too, are angels with the colorful, variegated wings. This scene, which depicts God the Father supporting the arms of the Cross on which Christ is crucified, was a popular one in the Middle Ages. Each angel in this scene holds a musical instrument—a harp and a lyre—and gazes upon the Christ figure.

Fig. 5
The miniature on folio twenty two depicts the "Harrowing of Hell" with Christ leading the saved from the mouth of Hell. In the miniature, Christ grasps Adam by the arm to lead him from the fires. Eve stands by Adam's side, hand raised in prayer. Christ presses a staff against the belly of the demon who appears in the foreground. The stream emanating from the mouth of hell is characteristic of the flowing water featured in many works by the Forger.

Fig. 6
Folio thirty-one features a miniature of the "Last Supper" which includes the patterned floor and the excessive hand gestures.
Fig. 7
The "Coronation of the Virgin" which appears on folio sixty-three, verso, displays the elaborate folds in the clothing, the sugary faces and the angels with the colorful, variegated wings--each swinging a censer.

Fig. 8
The "Hunt of the Unicorn Annunciation," at folio sixty-four emerges as one of the most distinctive works composed by the Forger. Here, the angel Gabriel, who restrains two leashed dogs, blows a trumpet; his red, white, and blue variegated wings stand out prominently. He faces the Virgin who holds a unicorn on her lap. Drawn from Lacroix's text on art in the Middle Ages, the image is an unusual one for this context. As Voelkle indicates, this image is not connected to the text and "the explicit symbols of the Virgin in the source have all been omitted except for the Well of Life and a vague (if not accidental) reference to the Tower. . . . The Council of Trent, doubtless, would have encouraged the Forger to omit the unicorn as well, for in 1563 it strictly forbade the depiction of the Hunt of the Unicorn Annunciation."

---

135 Voelkle, Spanish 39.
Fig. 9
In "Saint Martin Dividing his Cloak" a mounted soldier in full armor represents the nimbed saint. The figure divides his cloak for a beggar, who appears with bent knee and hands raised in prayer, blocking the road forward. Behind the mounted figure are grouped four armored soldiers. A rippling stream flows beside the figures and an architectural scene serves as the background. The treatment of the stream and the frantic quality of the hand gestures are again distinctive to the Spanish Forger. The nineteenth century audience to which he catered would surely have appreciated this chivalric scene with its gesture of generosity and courtesy.

Fig. 10
The "Consecration of St. Martin of Tours" which appears on folio eighty-six is identified by its association with the preceding folio's miniature, and the Forger's hand can once again be seen in the characteristic facial expressions and gestures.

Fig. 11
The last of the full page miniatures in this manuscript, which appears at folio 106, verso, depicts the "Flagellation of St. Stephen." In this scene St. Stephen appears as a tonsured monk who is being flagellated by a group of citizens and soldiers. The martyr Stephen prayed hardest
for his persecutors and—appropriately, here—he is depicted on his knees, with hands raised in supplication.

Manuscript illuminations added to M.786a by the Spanish Forger present ideal examples of art produced for a public trained to appreciate a Romantic image of the Middle Ages. These images reflect thematic components such as patronage, chivalry, and feudalism which were respected in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Forger of these images capitalized on the desire for medieval art and craft by creating a singular style characterized by a sentimentalized treatment of these themes. The Spanish Forger contributed to the commercialization of medievalism as well as benefitting from other works that promoted a similar representation of the era.
Figure 1. Donor’s Portrait.
Figure 2. Resurrection.
Figure 3. Pentecost.
Figure 4. Gnadenstuhl Trinity.
Figure 5. Harrowing of Hell.
Figure 6. Last Supper.
Figure 7. Coronation of the Virgin.
Figure 8. Hunt of the Unicorn Annunciation.
Figure 9. St. Martin Dividing His Cloak.
Figure 10. Consecration of St. Martin of Tours.
Figure 11. Flagellation of St. Stephen.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Spanish Forger

Spanish Forger, Manuscript


Spanish Forger, Sources and Literature


Nineteenth Century Handbooks


Cennini, Cennino. A treatise on painting written by Cennino Cennini in the year 1437: and first published in Italian in 1821, with an introduction and notes, by Signor Tambroni: containing practical directions for painting in fresco, secco, oil, and distemper, with the art of gilding and illuminating manuscripts, adopted by the old Italian masters. London: Lumley, 1900.


---. Illuminated Illustrations of Froissart Selected from the Mss. in the British Museum. London: William Smith, 1844.


---. The Arts in the Middle Ages, and at the Period of the Renaissance. London: Chapman and Hall, 1870.
---. *France in the Middle Ages: Customs, Classes and Conditions.* New York: Ungar, [1963].

---. *Manners, Customs, and Dress During the Middle Ages, and During the Renaissance Period.* London: Chapman and Hall, 1874.


De Lara, David Laurent. *Elementary Instruction in the Art of Illumination and Missal Painting on Vellum: With Illustrations for Copying, for the Student.* London: Ackerman, 1850.


Merrifield, Mary Philadelphia. *The Art of Fresco Painting, as Practiced by the old Italian and Spanish masters,: with a Preliminary Inquiry into the Nature of the Colours Used in Fresco Painting, with Observations and Notes.* London: Charles Gilpin and Arthur Wallis, 1846.

---. *Original Treatises Dating from the XIIth to XVIIIth Centuries on the Arts of Painting, in Oil, Miniature, Mosaic, and on Glass; of Gilding, Dyeing, and the Preparation of Colours and Artificial Gems; Preceded*


**Forgery and Medievalism**


Dearden, James S. "John Ruskin, the Collector" *The Library* (June 1966), p.125.


Levine, Joseph M. Humanism and History: Origins of Modern English Historiography. Ithaca: Cornell UP.


