

Codex im Diskurs. Thomas Haye and Johannes Helmrath, eds.
 With Ulrike Michalczik. Wolfenbütteler Mittelalter-Studien 25. Wiesbaden:
 Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014. 272 pp. €62.

These nine essays in German constitute the middle volume of three that present the results of three conferences on the theory and history of the codex. Sponsored by the Mediävistische Arbeitskreis der Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel (Wolfenbüttel Research Group for Medieval Studies), meetings took place in 2006 on *Codex und Raum* (published in 2009), in 2008 on *Codex im Diskurs*, and in 2010 on *Codex und Geltung* (in preparation). Drawing together scholars from fields as diverse as philology, history, art history, cultural history, theology, and literary history, each essay provides a different access point for the study of the manuscript codex. In the introduction, the volume's editors lay the foundation for the study of the *Kodikalität* (codicality), or codex nature of the manuscripts, which they find in four basic areas: material aspects of the book (visual, haptic-tactile, olfactory, and gustatory), auratic aspects, as a container for text and images, and, finally, as a value-based object. A second line of inquiry concerns codification in three aspects: book production (material parameters), the unification and bundling of knowledge and texts, and the canonization of knowledge through the codex.

In his opening contribution, Bernd Michael outlines theoretical concerns for the following discussion. He turns to an early codicological study by Friedrich Adolf Ebert (1825) and explores implicit discourses in glosses, colophons, ownership marks, variant readings, and miniatures. He offers socioeconomic considerations with reference to the courts of Anjou and Burgundy, to the universities, and to individual scholars. Christian Kiening then turns to mystical books, which express the inexpressible. From early examples in the book of Revelation (Rev. 10:8) and Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:10), he moves to the works of Mechthild von Magdeburg and Gertrud von Helfta. Kiening concludes that there are two tensions that define the nature of mystical books — one of substance and one of time.

Continuing with the theme of mysticism, Christel Meier looks at the gap between the mystical writing (i.e., the recording of the vision) and the actual materialization and distribution as a book in works by Hildegard von Bingen and Elisabeth von Schönau. The depictions of Hildegard form part of a larger iconographical discourse surrounding the codex: showing the vision's reception, its conversion into text and recording as such, and, finally, the preservation of the text through codification and distribution. Hartmut Bleumer introduces a secular, vernacular, and ultimately paradoxical discourse on *Minnesang* (courtly love poetry) through its most famous manifestation in the Manesse Codex. Opening with a passage from Gottfried Keller's short story *Hadlaub*, he analyzes songs from a corpus attributed to Emperor Henry VI, as well as songs by Johannes Hadlaub and Konrad von Würzburg.

Turning to the conceptualization of text in medieval Romance literature, Barbara Frank-Job points to the ongoing process of transformation between written and oral transmission from the ninth to the thirteenth century, when manuscript books became regular bearers of vernacular texts. With a historian's perspective, Ingo H. Kropáč introduces the municipal registers of Regensburg as the genesis (in book form) of the codex as representation, embodiment, and authoritative assurance of municipal legal and administrative records. Dieter Mertens studies the 1460 inaugural address given at the university in Freiburg im Breisgau by the rector, Matthäus Hummel, who borrowed nearly 40 percent of his text from the *Philobiblon* of Richard of Bury. Replacing the word *university* with *book*, Hummel transferred the book's role as the bearer of truth and knowledge to the university. Finally, Ulrich Eigler and Zsuzsanna Kiséry pursue other aspects of the humanists' relationship to the codex. Eigler points to the book as a partner for life through examples like Petrarch and Beatus Rhenanus, while Kiséry describes the creation of a fictional community of readers as a strategy for self-presentation.

This is an invigorating, if challenging, collection of interdisciplinary perspectives on the study of the codex. These essays are best read within the context of the overarching theme of the meetings they represent. Indeed, since this collection presupposes arguments laid out in the first volume, it might be best to start there, and continue with the final volume, which is soon to appear. Having only read the present volume, this reviewer looks forward to reading all three together.

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