Multum in parvo: the miniature hours of Edith G. Rosenwald as woman’s devotional book and amulet

Abstract
The Hours of Edith G. Rosenwald (c.1340–80) is a small book of hours in the Rosenwald Collection at the Library of Congress. Despite unique iconography and luxurious illuminations, this manuscript has so far received little scholarly attention. This thesis analyzes the size and iconography of the Rosenwald Hours to suggest that it was designed for a specific owner and function. No surviving documentation gives evidence of ownership, yet the standard program of miniatures was changed to suit a specific audience. The manuscript’s iconographic program and stylistic treatment are here considered in the context of contemporary books made for women, particularly women of the royal court in Paris, to suggest a likely audience. One of only a few extant miniature books of hours, the Rosenwald Hours is a valuable tool for looking at the place of small manuscripts in medieval society. This thesis examines the physical size, the iconography, and the inclusion of saint portraits as indicators of a function beyond the standard devotional use. A case is made for the manuscript’s connection to pilgrimage and to protective amulets. Combined with the assessment of its iconography, this study suggests an owner and intended use for miniature books of hours that provides a new way to look at these manuscripts, from obscure Flemish examples to the famous Hours of Jeanne d’Evreux.