Early modern manuscripts copied from print deserve more attention. They form a vital, under-explored category of evidence for sixteenth-century text production and consumption patterns. Manuscripts used as printers’ copies have been explored in detail, but scribes also commonly used printed texts as sources for manuscript copies. Yet, such scribal copies of print have rarely been investigated systematically.

My postdoctoral project focuses on English texts copied from print to manuscript and the transmission of linguistic, textual, visual, and material features between the two media. This investigation of scribal treatment of printed sources will shed light on textual practices in the transitional period between the medieval and the early modern by revealing what kinds of texts were copied from print to manuscript and what kinds of linguistic and visual strategies the scribes adopted. This paper provides an overview of the research design with a selection of examples from primary data.

Mari-Liisa Varila

Transmission of English text from print to manuscript
1473-1600

Mari-Liisa Varila (PhD) is a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of English, University of Turku. Her doctoral dissertation (2016) is a case study on the transmission of scientific and utilitarian texts in sixteenth-century England. She is interested in late medieval and early modern English text-production in manuscript and print. Methodologically, her work draws from historical discourse linguistics, textual scholarship, manuscript studies, and book history. Varila is currently teaching Early Modern English at the Department of English Language and Literature, Åbo Akademi University.