
Most medieval texts have come down to us either in several MSS featuring more or less significant differences, or in single MSS containing errors and lacunae. The rôle of the editor is to present from these sources a text that conforms as nearly as possible to the original intention of the author. Any editorial mistake renders the reader liable to errors in interpretation; therefore, the editor must be possessed of a keen critical sense as well as a considerable grasp of linguistic, literary, social, and intellectual history. Medieval Manuscripts and Textual Criticism affirms this vital function of the editor. Kleinhenz's book is an expression of the reemerging trend towards recognition of the editor as a creative scholar, as well as a renewed interest in manuscripts themselves. It is, as such, a welcome addition to the teaching tools available to students of medieval Romance languages and literatures, including epic specialists.
Kleinhenz's book is a collection of essays of mixed value. Some originally appeared elsewhere and have been reprinted here in English, while others are now published for the first time. The first three essays deal with what Kleinhenz calls the external features of medieval MSS. "The Book of the Middle Ages," by David Diringer, is an abridgement of relevant passages from his Hand-Produced Book (1953) and describes the physical characteristics of medieval MSS and the various stages of their production.

"Medieval Romance Paleography: A Brief Introduction," by C. W. Carroll, offers a close study of eight facsimiles containing lyric poems. One (which provides an encounter, delightful because unexpected, with Brother Sun, as it contains St. Francis's "Cantico delle Creature") is in Italian, another is in French, and the rest are in Provençal. Of these, four contain the same poem, thus offering opportunity for comparison. Carroll introduces his readers to medieval handwriting by pointing out the similarities and differences in the graphic forms and general presentation in these four MSS. He then offers three more samples of Gothic script and uses all the facsimiles as a basis for his letter-by-letter discussion of the minuscule alphabet. He offers a careful description of the forms occurring in his facsimiles. The span of his selection is limited; thus he offers no instances of such common forms as looped l, of the curved r resembling a v, which is often found before a (as in Cleopatra, MS Bodley 265, f. 184v, col. 1, l. 40, Des Cas des Nobles Hommes et Femmes). Nor does he mention that round s frequently assumes a figure-eight shape in final position, as in vois, MS Bodley 264, f. 98v, l. 7, Le Roman d'Alexandre. He dismisses rather easily the problem of distinguishing between long ſ and f and between c and t. These difficulties can be acute, particularly in French MSS written towards the end of the Middle Ages. At this time, for example, the s before the breathed consonant in mesfait was no longer pronounced, but this spelling was etymologically correct, while, at the same time, the doubling of f led to the appearance also of meffait. Similar difficulty arises in reading c and t at this time, since forms such as dicte and ditte, droitte and droict occur in the same MSS. Magnification sometimes distorts rather than clarifying as Carroll suggests. More helpful would be detailed indication of the kind of distinctions that can be discerned. For example, in a given MS it may happen that the stem of t does not rise above the crossbar, so that t and c resemble each other in this respect. If, however, the crossbar is
distributed slightly to the left as well as to the right of the stem in $t$, but does not continue as far to the left in $e$, the two letters can be distinguished. Carroll's closeness to Provençal texts has led to erroneous general statements. He has corrected his remarks on $w$ in an appendix, but his assertions that $x$ and $z$ occur rarely and primarily in Provençal must be called into question. Paleography deals with graphies, not phonemes. The graphy $z$ does occur. Random choice of a Spanish text produces: "vergúenza en fá" v. 4 of stanza 870, *Libra de Buen Amor* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1960); while a French text offers "ainz as esté sanz mot soner" v. 2356, *Le Roman de la Rose* (CFMA, Paris: Champion, 1968). Let us recall that -ez early became the ending of the second person plural of French verbs. The pronunciation changed but the orthography $z$ persisted. $X$ occurs as a variant of final $s$ in Old French, but also occurs so extensively as a graphy for final -us that Léon Clédat once suggested that paleographers make it a regular editorial rule to transcribe $x$ as us whenever it represented that value in the MS, so that he would no longer have to hear students at exams intone dieks instead of Dieus, and mieks instead of mieus. (See *Romania*, 52 [1926], 246.) Also misleading to beginning students may be such indications that $\bar{p}$ usually represents pro, since a more common abbreviation for pro is $p$ with the descender crossed by a curved stroke such as that which crosses straight $f$ indicating ser, as shown by Rossini in his article on p. 191. We must conclude that Carroll's essay should be approached with caution for use as a general introduction to Romance paleography.

In "Secular Manuscript Illumination in France," M. Alison Stones comments briefly on the fact that literary themes that were popular inspired medieval artwork, including miniatures; that patrons did order and receive certain MSS; that liturgical illumination influenced secular MSS; and that in turn French secular illumination influenced the work of miniaturists working in the rest of Europe.

There is another essay, prepared for this collection: "Introduction to the Edition of Medieval Vernacular Documents (XIII and XIV Centuries)," by Egidio Rossini, which Kleinhenz places later in the book, but which could be read profitably at this point, as it is closely concerned with the mechanics of transcription. Rossini considers non-literary material only, but his essay has a place in this book. A knowledge of how to handle archival documents is
desirable for literature students, since background research may well lead
them to such sources. Rossini includes a good discussion of abbreviations
which complements that given by Carroll. Rossini also offers a useful study of
three documents which he reproduces photographically. He gives a description
of each document; an accurate diplomatic transcription accompanied by
excellent paleographic notes on graphies, abbreviations and their resolution;
the text edited according to present-day criteria of punctuation and
capitalization; and finally a translation.

Unfortunately, the quality of his first three photographs is such as to
render them difficult to read, particularly for the novice. In this context, we
must also regret that Carroll chose to reproduce microfilms of MSS rather
than obtain glossy black and white photographs which would probably have
provided greater clarity than, for example, that of Carroll’s figure 4. Library
photographers usually produce better pictures when shooting such film than
when running off a complete MS on microfilm. This is because the
photographer often does not ensure that the leaf is flat when shooting a large
number of consecutive pages from a book. If the leaf is not flat, the curve of
the page alters perspective and so compresses the letters. (It can also distort
the focus and produce blurred pictures.) A comparison of Carroll’s figures 1
and 3 (where the left-hand portions of the texts have the cramped appearance
due to the photography as Carroll himself points out) with the photographs in
Stones’s article illustrates this difference in quality.

The next three articles discuss the process of *recensio*. They are "The
Introduction to the *Lai de l’Ombre*: Half a Century Later," by Frederick
Whitehead and Cedric E. Pickford; "The Problem of Contamination in Prose
Texts," by Cesare Segre; and "The Art of Editing Lyric Texts," by István
Frank. While Frank does offer some concrete examples, the overall treatment
of the subject of MS tradition and choice of a base MS remains rather
abstract in this book. The choice of a base MS is at the same time perhaps the
most important and the most difficult area of the editorial process, and it is
unfortunate that these essays were not complemented by a detailed discussion
of a specific selection of a MS, where the reader could see the theory applied
in practice. (A classic example is provided by Albert Henry in *Les Œuvres
d’Adenet le Roi*, vol I [Brugge: De Tempel, 1951].) A discussion of the reasons
why Kleinhenz chose MS Q for the edition of the poem he presents in the last essay in the collection would have met this need.

Then follow articles dealing with problems of emendation and interpretation: "Principles of Textual Emendation," by E. Vinaver; "Transcription Errors," by Arrigo Castellani; "Conjectural Emendation," by George Kane; "The Value of Interpretation in Textual Criticism," by Aurelio Roncaglia; and "On the Text of the Tristran of Béroul," by T. B. W. Reid. This useful selection ranges from Kane's general consideration of principle to Vinaver's practical guide to mechanical emendation. The other essays offer invaluable examples of the solution of specific editorial problems.

Kleinhenz's own essay, "The Nature of an Edition," closes the collection. As part of the framework of the book it balances his introduction. However, his listing of the different types of editions is too elementary to be of more than passing interest. He lists certain publishers who produce outstanding examples of critical editions to which we may refer for models. We must therefore wonder why he feels it necessary to conclude with his own edition of a thirteenth-century Italian sonnet. We have commented earlier on the lack of information concerning Kleinhenz's choice of one manuscript over another for the edition of this poem. To this we must add regret that he did not discuss the basis for preferring the forms printed as compared with the rejected variants. This is, after all, the very matter of textual criticism.

Joan B. Williamson

New York City