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BESPRECHUNGEN

Ralph Hanna, *Editing Medieval Texts. An Introduction, Using Exemplary Materials Derived from Richard Rolle, ›Super Canticum‹ 4* (Exeter Medieval Texts and Studies), Liverpool 2015 (Liverpool University Press), 183 S.

As the author's premise states, this volume aims to fill a significant gap in scholarship concerning the practicalities of editing medieval texts: since a basic introduction to textual criticism is lacking, this book provides such a tool for those who are beginners in the field. The need for this is real in the English-speaking world which, incidentally, is the only audience considered by the author, as is made clear by the bibliography and examples. The volume includes two sections: the first offers fundamental information about the methods and, especially, the practice of an editor's work; the second contains a *specimen* of philological work, namely a sample edition of one chapter from the commentary on the Song of Songs by Richard Rolle. This plan is undoubtedly excellent, and the goal of the volume deserves full approval. Unfortunately, however, the actual realization of such a promising project proves to be less convincing from many points of view, above all regarding the specific philological technique to which the reader is directed. The method proposed is chiefly a pre-Lachmannian approach with ambiguous aims, that is, producing a representative text instead of a fully reconstructive critical edition. We will discuss this more closely by examining the main points of the volume.

Within the first fifteen, preliminary pages, Ralph Hanna proposes a survey of the various typologies of editions that scholars have exploited over time in order to publish a text. The result is not properly a history of methods and theories, but rather an overview of examples, and the author takes no evaluative position about them. The publication of a single witness is the first method taken into account in its different shapes: the printing of »any available copy« (3), which was customary in the first centuries of the age of print; the choice of the manuscript that bears the most complete text; the selection of a codex which proves particularly significant because of its antiquity, or the historical circumstances in which it was realized; and the »bédierian« method of the *bon manuscrit*. Even the first instance mentioned, according to Hanna,

is »a procedure perfectly justifiable theoretically« (4), since, after all, it recreates the experience medieval readers and scribes had of the text, because they could only access the few copies available in their environments, and their grasp of the text necessarily relied on the specific shape of those manuscripts. In his view, such an editorial practice can also be acceptable today in the case of publications aimed at students, where even a representative text would be appropriate. It should be highlighted that, while discussing each hypothesis, the focus is on the medieval experience of the text as the yardstick for judging the pros and cons of the particular option. As well, when the chosen manuscript most likely mirrors the original faithfully (because of being older, or more complete), he argues that it probably did not reflect the text available to the majority of the readers at the time. Nonetheless, it can embody a »qualified medieval access« (7), which was within reach of a select public. While this is a useful approach for beginners, in that it accounts for the conditions in which people could access texts in the Middle Ages, it does not, however, seem justified to apply the imitation of historical conditions of usage to the goals of modern philologists.

As for the selection of the »best text«, Hanna alerts the readers to the fundamental issue underlying every process aimed at the identification of the best witness: namely, the necessity of being acquainted with the tradition as a whole, in order to recognize a text suitable for use as the normative text. Clearly, the chosen manuscript will be trustworthy for many variant readings, but not for all, and thus the method is simultaneously both selective and non-selective. Once the reader is made aware that manuscript testimonies of the same text are different from each other, and are liable to disagree even on very significant readings, he is introduced to the other main kind of edition: the edition that can properly be regarded as critical, achieved through the collation of several witnesses. The author correctly points out that a possible objection to the historical value of the critical edition (i. e., that its text has never existed concretely) is not really well grounded, because every single copy also represents only a particular stage in the history of the text under consideration. But the ambiguity is not fully solved: the impression is left that, for him, the critical edition has no greater chance of matching the original text than the single manuscript method, and is equally defective, though for different reasons.

In respect to describing the phases of the critical editor's work, the extremely practice-oriented approach by Hanna emerges again. Here, the procedures which are organic to the ecdotic process – as the history of the method has codified them – have been combined with the procedures aimed at presenting the text to the reader. The survey considers the inventory of the witnesses, the selection and transcription of the reference-text, the collation, and the examination of the variant readings (all standard steps of the process), followed

by the »annotation« (a philological introduction), and the preparation of the material for printing. In some points, this brief summary is deceptive. First, and less critical, the transcription of a reference manuscript is recommended as absolutely mandatory, whereas this model could in fact also be a printed edition, rather than a codex. Much more misleading is the fact that the *examinatio* is described as if it were the choice of the readings to be included in the critical text. There is no mention of the possibility that an archetype exists, and of the consequence of it: namely, that in certain instances the presence of an archetype would require the editor to look beyond the extant testimonies and to propose emendations. This concept will appear only vaguely further on.

Subsequently, the phases of the editorial work are described more thoroughly in dedicated chapters based on the chosen case-study: the commentary on the first lines of the Song of Songs composed by the English hermit Richard Rolle around 1330–1335, which also enjoyed a considerable success in popular piety via some English translations. The *editio princeps*, published in 1535, and its reprints comprise just one excerpt of the work available, and the edition by Y. Madan (1950) – which relies on a single manuscript only – is partial as well (Le commentaire de Richard Rolle sur les premiers versets du Cantique des Cantiques, *Mélanges de Science Religieuse* 7, 1950, 311–25). Hanna also draws an extract out of the broad exposition: the fourth section, commenting on the line 1, 2 *Oleum effusum nomen tuum*. Here we can not fail to remark that, for teaching purposes, it would have been more advisable to choose a briefer exemplar-text and to propose the edition of it in its entirety, rather than giving prospective critical editors the idea that the manuscript tradition of a text can be assessed on the basis of a fragment only.

Chapter 1, about the *recensio* of the witnesses, presents the main tool for research, like repertories and collections of *incipit*. Most attention is paid to the field of Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman literature, while only ›A Handlist‹ by Richard Sharpe is recorded for Latin works. With specific regard to Richard Rolle, Hope E. Allen had already arranged a quite thorough inventory of manuscripts in 1927: she accounted for 14 full (or almost complete) copies, 21 partial copies, plus the vernacular redactions; Hanna is able to add 3 further complete copies. It must be stressed that the list of manuscripts (25–26) provides only their shelf-mark, with only five codices, those overlooked by previous scholarship, being given a description in an appendix (141–160). The entire discussion of the genealogical relationships between manuscripts (chapter 4) completely omits consideration of even the age and provenance of the codices. The apprentice reader will thereby surmise that genealogical relationships can be established without attention to the concrete history of the manuscripts.

Chapter 2 treats the selection of the reference-manuscript for collation (copy-text), but a misunderstanding, with possible unfortunate consequences, af-

fects it from the start. The selection of the reference model, in fact, is not primarily intended to provide a provisional text, i. e. a means to carry out the collation of the other witnesses, but rather to address a text directly to the reader of the edition (»This represents that primary contact with an audience ... one wants to provide one's readers with a single continuous textual source«, 29). The confusion between the collation-text and the text to be offered to the reader is just one aspect of a broader fallacy, as we can see more clearly in subsequent phases: the idea that the reconstructive method consists in *correcting the reference-text*, a statement the author puts forward repeatedly. He goes so far as to claim that it would be better not to correct the text too much, »not to shock the reader by a reading text weighted down with diacritical notations« (32), as well as avoiding the risk of the editor committing errors (and getting bored). As a result, the reader is not supplied with a true critical text, but rather with the transcript of a single witness incorporating some readings drawn from other manuscripts. This, indeed, is precisely how the draft edition of Rolle's commentary appears. It is explicitly declared that this is the target at the end of chapter 4, where the edition to be published is deemed to »facilitate an audience's access to the author's words« (95), not to serve as a true critical text. Of course, within a proper reconstructive edition, once the critical text has been established, it will not contain any »diacritical notation« (except from those denoting the *emendatio*, if applied), regardless of the reference copy; and the critical apparatus will always include the same number of variant readings. Unfortunately, the beginner can not become aware of this by reading this handbook.

Since Rolle wrote in Latin, in this case-study the choice of the reference copy can depend only on the completeness of the manuscript, but the reader is informed that for vernacular pieces the orthographic shape of the text is a key issue. The codex to be employed will preferably be close to the graphic habits of the medieval author, as far as we are able to know them; but (and this must be emphasized) we must not believe that it is also the most reliable for textual readings. For Rolle, the copy-text will be ms. D (Dublin, TCL, 153). In a rather elementary way, some information is provided about the practice of transcribing and the adjustment of punctuation and capital letters. The budding editor is also warned of the abbreviation system that makes Latin manuscripts difficult to read; surprisingly, however, the existence of past writing systems far different from modern ones (that is to say, the long history of scripts used throughout the Middle Ages), and even that of palaeography as a scientific discipline on its own, have been completely passed over – an omission probably due to the Anglo-saxon tendency not to distinguish rigorously each of the specific disciplines relevant to the field of Medieval Studies. Nonetheless, this omission is still surprising, particularly in view of the primarily didactic purposes of the book.

Chapter 3, on collation, is opened by the assumption that it is adequate to check through the copy-text and correct it if needed. Subsequently, the chapter supplies a sample of the variants' annotation and of their presentation in a critical apparatus. Then, the most challenging chapter, the fourth, is devoted to the examination of variant readings. What the author proposes here is a very sketchy outline of the *Leitfehler*-based method, which is entirely ascribed to Lachmann and presented as if it had been fully shaped at the very beginning, without the considerable number of improvements accrued through about two centuries of practice. The substantial update by Sebastiano Timpanaro (*La genesi del metodo del Lachmann*, Firenze 1963, in the English translation published by Glenn W. Most in 2005) is referred to only in a footnote. Similarly, contributions yielded by other scholars to the development of the method only appear in footnotes, but without a discussion of the many refinements it has undergone since it first came to light in the nineteenth century. The possibility that polygenetic innovations and contamination phenomena occur within a textual tradition is pointed to as a weakness of the method itself, but the reader is not informed that the means to deal with these issues was long ago incorporated into the method. As in the presentation of the method, the description of the stemma (51) proves both too sketchy and rigid. The stemma is drawn as the sequence of the original, the archetype (called the »scribal copy from it [i. e. the original] for distribution«), the hyparchetypes, and the extant copies derived from them; two of the three branches consist of the chain between a lost hyparchetype and a single codex which depends on it. The reader will thus come to the following misleading conclusions: 1. every tradition stems from an archetype; 2. the archetype has always been a copy directly drawn from the original, and taken purposely for the sake of initiating the transmission of the text (whereas, in truth, the archetype is often a manuscript produced centuries later, that has become the ancestor of all surviving witnesses, but was by no means written with this specific goal); 3. the hyparchetypes are never extant manuscripts, and 4. when a stemmatic branch is represented by one manuscript only, it always derives from a lost ancestor (which has not necessarily existed).

It must be appreciated that Hanna stresses the validity of the objectives of Lachmann: to overcome the customary practice of previous scholars to select textual variants either upon arbitrary and aesthetic evaluation, or roughly by majority. As for the former, however, Lachmann himself is charged with incoherence, because the arrangement of the stemma requires the editor to identify the errors, and as such implies an arbitrary judgement by him. This is basically the *vexata quaestio* referred to by Lachmann in a renowned passage of the prolegomena to the *Novum Testamentum* published in 1842, when he wrote about *recensere sine interpretatione*. Such a pivotal topic, since central to the scholarly debate, deserved a much more thorough exposition (although

perhaps not in line with the goals of this volume). Frankly, the few lines devoted to the problem are unjust to the clarity of Lachmann's thoughts. Lachmann, in fact, was well conscious of the risk for the method to become circular (see at least the analysis by Giovanni Orlandi, *Perché non possiamo non dirci lachmanniani*, in: *Filologia mediolatina* 2 (1995), 1–42). Furthermore, it is asserted that an objective and logical method to deal with the transmission of texts does not exist (52); but, again, this statement is too much severe and categorical, because it dismisses the genealogic method while ignoring the two centuries of usage and theoretic thinking that have strengthened it. This also holds true for the fact that Hanna gives absolute value to the objection raised by Bédier, according to which an instrument that eliminates the editor's judgment would be »the last thing editors actually wanted« (52: here, a footnote claims that Bédier, in his overview of Lachmannian stemmas, discovered – as if it were an established fact – that the genealogic method has always produced only bifid stemmas; not even the French philologist himself would have endorsed such a misinterpretation). At this point, according to Hanna, the only possible approach is to rely on the experience and ability of the editor to judge: we are returning to Richard Bentley's (1662–1742) trust in the *ratio* and forcefulness of the reading that proves better in the given context. Without the »logical divagations« (53) of the Lachmannian method, this approach could still provide the necessary data to arrange a stemma; but the problem is that, in this case, the stemma will be a consequence of the readings selected for the text, and not the tool that allows the editor to make these choices advisedly. It is not easy to determine whether Hanna's assertion goes beyond the practical application of the method he proposes (which, at least in theory, seems to admit the use of the stemma for ecdotic purposes, not only to describe historical contexts), or instead expresses a resolved rejection of neo-Lachmannian procedures in favour of an essentially eclectic method. The subsequent description of the practice, however, makes it clear that the second interpretation applies: the reconstruction of the edited text is never ruled by the stemma. The employed criteria are instead the editor's evaluation of any single case and even the same selection by majority, whose dismissal had been previously praised. As a further proof, one of the key-principles of the stemmatic method is completely missing: that the value of every witness is determined by the position it has in the stemma, against the value of any single variant readings from any of them.

The remaining part of the chapter, concerned with the case-study of Rolle, begins with another argument likely to deceive a beginner: the mss. H (London, BL, Harley 5235) and J (Cambridge, Jesus College, Q. D. 4) are said to be the antigraph and the *descriptus* respectively, because they share the same variant readings compared to the collation-text. Obviously, either it is demonstrated that in all these passages the collation-text bears the right text while HJ

bear significant errors, or the reader is led into the most basic methodological mistake. Moreover, this is not the fault of a single, specific passage, but rather the procedure that will be followed through the entire process. As reported below (88), D will be used »as a norm to arrange the variant evidence«, including all those variants that have equivalent value, and that in the first stage should instead be set aside because they are of no use for any »arrangement« of the data. In this way, the reference-text stands dangerously as the rule, except for those readings which are completely unacceptable (as is explained at the end of the chapter).

Afterwards, the variant readings that have been found with respect to the copy-text are recorded, but they are grouped by typologies, not by clusters of witnesses that convey them. Certainly, such an approach successfully achieves a didactic goal, providing a brief promptuary of copying phenomena together with accurate explanations of how the innovations can be engendered by the scribes when copying. In conformity with the non-Lachmannian approach of the author, the exposition does not begin with the foundations of the philological procedure – that is, the necessity to distinguish conjunctive and separative errors from those that are trivial and reversible (in Hanna's table, instead, these two categories are mixed up with no differentiation), and to group them by the clusters of manuscripts which present them, so that they can be used to establish the genealogical relationships. The first concept is partially addressed later, when attention is called to the fact that *lacunae* due to eye-skips, transpositions, and in some contexts dittographies, are easily polygenetic; but the problem of reversible errors is mentioned only in a footnote (95, 173) that, moreover, blames Lachmann for not having even taken into account this possibility (another rash trivialization, like others we have remarked on above). When it comes to reflecting on the variants' agreements between Rolle's manuscripts, however, innovations likely to be polygenetic are among the clusters considered, in spite of the notices previously given. This, perhaps, will not affect the results of the examination in Rolle's case, but it definitely harms the primary objective of teaching a method of working. In addition, while this first survey of innovations has the goal of showing the degree of unreliability of the individual scribes, it erroneously states more than once that a reading attested in one manuscript only is almost certainly wrong. That is a quite hazardous statement, before having assigned to each witness its position in a stemma.

Finally, the author again makes remarks about the agreements between different codices on innovations, illustrating them with the example of transpositions, so that eventually – although not a very linear approach – he gets to draw a stemma (75). To be honest, and as expected, the clusters arising from an examination based on transpositions prove to be inconsistent; since most of the considered readings are not significant errors – either because of the same

value, or because not properly conjunctive – it is not clear how they provide foundations for the stemma. The stemma is divided into two families, α and β ; to α belong the manuscripts D (the copy-text), V (London, BL, Cotton Vespasianus E. I), S (Oxford, St. John's College, 127), and the pair BC (Oxford, BodL, Bodley 861 and Corpus Christi College, 193), both deriving from the same antigraph γ . The existence of γ is assumed from some shared errors and – it is said – the lack of individual faults of B and C, although the possibility that one derives from the other is not taken into account. However, the most critical point is the existence of α itself, that is argued not by means of shared errors, but only because all the other witnesses are related under the hyparchetype β ! Paradoxically, browsing the critical apparatus it becomes clear that D, V, S, and BC should really be related within a family. However, the evidence is provided by readings that the editor thought to be correct (we will return to this in the last section of this review), whereas the data Hanna showcases does not allow us to reach this conclusion. As with other scholars before him, in this case Hanna fell into a typical methodological mistake: to split the tradition into two families, one of which – let us say X – is truly demonstrable, while the other collects all the witnesses which are simply non-X (as early as 1981, Timpanaro warned of this risk in a supplement to the improved edition [Padova 1981] of his aforementioned volume ›La genesi . . . : ›Stemmi bipartiti e perturbazioni della tradizione manoscritta‹). It goes without saying that such an assumption would result in heavy effects on the *selectio*, but the author completely overlooks the use of this philological technique: at the same time in which the variant readings are grouped by typologies, they are also weighted with no reference to their position in the stemma, thus deviating from the standard genealogic procedure. As for β family, in broad terms it is divided into two groups, δ and ϵ (there is no account for the specific relationships between the manuscripts within each group), plus a single witness, P (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 872). Although P is likely to result from the contamination between δ and ϵ , the stemmatic graph represents P as a self-standing branch equal to δ and ϵ , without noting the contamination in any way. The argumentation about one of the transpositions also appears quite bewildering, where D alone stands against all the other witnesses (l. 174): the conclusion is that D »probably errs« (while the stemma itself is sufficient to make sure of this) and that it therefore should be corrected, but only if the editor chooses to register the transpositions in his edition as well (the editors, in fact, may regard these variants as not significant, and so exclude them from the apparatus). If he does not (we have to assume), the wrong reading of D can be kept in the text, because in the end it is not that different from the correct one.

After this cursory presentation of the stemma, the exposition continues to focus on the typologies of innovations. Thus, the volume again proves to be

much closer to a handbook of hand-writing phenomenology – aimed at providing the reader with a specimen of eclectic-based choices by the editor – than to a real introduction to the genealogic methodology. This is fully proven by the end of the chapter, where the treatment of D's text is concerned. While there is no doubt that its apparent *lapsus calami* should be corrected, in many other instances D offers an acceptable reading, either isolated against all the other manuscripts, or in agreement with some witnesses against the remaining: all these passages are debated individually, regardless of the *stemma codicum* outlined above. Basically, the reading by D will be amended only when it will prove worse than the alternative, but when is of the same value it will be preserved. Moreover, the decision is often taken simply on majority basis, ignoring the mutual genealogical positions of the manuscripts involved.

Finally, we turn to a theme not yet touched upon, namely the presence of corrupted passages in all the extant witnesses, and the necessity to amend them. Nevertheless, it is neither specified what these passages actually are, nor are guidelines suggested to yield reasonable conjectures. The final part of the chapter advises concerning the graphic presentation of the text, in particular how to mark the variations with respect to the copy-text: letters or words missing in D and inserted must be put between square brackets, while the deletion of letters is marked by the symbol + before the word involved (e. g., the corrected *solitudine* instead of the transmitted *solitudinem*). Both solutions are questionable. In the first instance, the chosen diacritical notation usually marks a conjectural addition, whereas here the ›right‹ readings are drawn from other witnesses. Even worse, in the second instance the concept of »omission« (96) is brought into play to describe an intervention that, in fact, restores the correct text through that deletion. What is more, note 113 explains that the + symbol has been chosen because it is reminiscent of the *crux* or *obelos*, as they indicate the *lacunae* of the texts! In addition, the only transposition of D that has been corrected in the text is marked by putting the first letter of the pericope into square brackets, so that the reader is induced to look at the apparatus – but this is confusing, since in this edition the brackets are usually employed to mark the additions.

Chapter 5, still using the case-study of Rolle, addresses the editor's task of providing the text with prolegomena and commentary. At this point, the comparison with the sources is eventually taken into consideration. It would perhaps have merited being invoked earlier, during the examination of the variant readings, if for no other reason than because in theory the testimony of the source can prove crucial for the choice between two alternative readings (taken for granted that this is not also the case for Rolle).

There then follows the edition accompanied by the apparatus – called *collation*, an inappropriate equivocation – and by the English translation. With

regard to orthography, Hanna decides to preserve in full the script of ms. D: such an extremely conservative choice would be suitable for a vernacular text, but is not the best possible choice for a Latin work. Hanna even reproduces some particular spellings, typical of the gothic script, that merely depend on the context where the letters occur within the word: for example, *ij* for a double *i*, or *v* instead of *u* in the first position (but not always, which makes it clear that Hanna simply sticks to the behaviour of the copy-text). We also suppose that another strange spelling was taken from D (*persepissem* for *percepissem*, l. 278). We now turn to the text, in order to highlight some passages where we believe that the accepted reading and certain punctuation choices could be improved, along with some inconsistencies of the apparatus.

- l. 13, apparatus – an entry notifies that *est* occurs after *solus* in five witnesses; but from the previous entry it is possible to argue that the same happens in two further mss.
- ll. 18–19 *Hunc igitur ecclesia, intuens et tante benignitatis misericordiam admirans, cum immenso gaudio dicit: ...* – *Hunc* is clearly the object of *intuens*, but has no connection with the main clause: there should not be the comma after *ecclesia*.
- l. 96, apparatus – the variant *scribetur*, present in some codices instead of *scribit*, is not recorded; but the author has previously mentioned it while discussing another point of the sentence (90).
- ll. 100–102 *Igitur O Ihesu pie, est oleum effusum nomen tuum ut in nobis effundatur. Et sic nomen ymaginis et similitudinis tue in cordibus nostris imprimat[ur], quatinus ...* – For *effundatur* (l. 100) the apparatus records the variant reading *infundatur*, attested by some manuscripts from different branches of the stemma (but not discussed earlier); we would at least take into account the hypothesis that *infundatur* is the correct reading. On the one hand, the preceding preposition *in* (*in nobis*) could have induced the scribe unconsciously to change the prefix of the verb; on the other hand, the lemma *effusum* could also have done so, if the author of the commentary had decided to modify the prefix. For this reason, *infundatur* is likely to be the reading that could more easily become corrupted into the other. Regardless of the reading finally chosen, this case deserved some discussion. The decision to change *imprimat* into the passive form (see 90) is more notable, and, in our opinion, not fully justified. The tradition displays *imprimat* (D plus five other manuscripts from different branches), *imprimas* (four codices), and *imprimetur* (C alone); *imprimetur* is judged to be a good conjecture, that corrects the loss of the abbreviation sign for *-ur* occurring in the archetype (or, in any case, widespread in the tradition). However, the need for a passive verb may be only apparent, due to the inappropriate punctuation by the editor: the full stop isolates the second sentence from the first one, so that *nomen ymaginis et similitudinis* becomes a new subject, in need of a passive (or at least reflexive) verb. If the dot was removed, the verb would be connected to *effundatur*, the subject is still *nomen tuum* from the lemma, and *nomen ymaginis et similitudinis* is the object. Such a possibility should at least be taken into account, since it allows the preservation of the text transmitted in the manuscripts.
- ll. 116–118 *Imples in opere quod uocaris in nomine. Vere saluas hominem tu quem vocamus saluatorem* – As is explained above (90–91), the editor accepts the reading *implet*, transmitted only by three codices (DBL, being L = Oxford, BodL, Laud.

misc. 528), against *implens* of the majority of the witnesses, because he notes a couple of parallel clauses. However, once again the possibility should be considered that the full stop does not mirror the actual syntax of the sentence: the participle *implens* would be perfectly suitable if the first clause was a subordinate of the second (»Fulfilling through facts the meaning of your name, you, whom we call the Saviour, really save the man«). Such a structure appears to be preferable from a stylistic point of view, since it avoids an awkward interruption. We can not fail to notice, moreover, that for the discussion of variant readings the handbook makes no reference to the *usus scribendi*: this criterion would be useful on this occasion, because it could support either of the two readings.

- l. 160 *Hostis cadet, tu stabis; hostis debilitatur, tu fortificaberis* – The verb *debilitatur*, present tense, is the reading of D and B, against *debilitabitur* of the others: the passage is included in the list of »echoic additions« (69–70), i. e. the mistakes caused by the scribe having in mind something he has already copied or something he has read before doing the copying, as would be the case for the addition of the letters that modify the verb into the future (in this case, because of the presence of three verbs at future tense). However, here this context is precisely the more compelling evidence in favour of *debilitabitur*: there is no reason for which, together with three futures, *debilitatur* alone should be supposed to have been written in the present (not to mention that, as usual, the stemmatic position of *debilitatur* is weak, allowing that the stemma matters).
- l. 169, apparatus – The manuscripts convey a broad variety of innovations for the word order and inflection. For some of the witnesses, the apparatus records the entire sequence of words where the variants occur, while for others only single variant words are reported, even if some of these readings have already been registered. As a consequence, it is quite difficult to understand the situation of the tradition in this passage.
- ll. 174–175 ... *qui nomen Ihesu incessanter cupit adamare? Amat autem et amare desiderat ...* – The manuscripts of β family have *amare* instead of *adamare* conveyed in α . This situation deserved a discussion, as the accepted reading can perhaps be regarded as *difficilior*, in a context where the simple form *amare* is employed six times; on the other hand, such a context raises strong doubts about the opportunity to reject *amare*. It is also worth mentioning that following shortly afterwards, at l. 181, there is a similar expression (*iugiter amare cupit*). This case is very relevant to the assessment of the stemma, because if *adamare* was judged to be incorrect, it will be a conjunctive evidence in favour of the actual existence of an α family (which, as we have said above, is not demonstrated by Hanna). Two further signs in this sense are as follows.
- ll. 233–235 *Omnnes angeli ... replebuntur, quando ille totus cetus vester reprobis ... dampnatur* – As in the previous case, the tradition is split into *dampnatur* (present, manuscripts belonging to α group) and *dampnabitur* (future, β family). This passage has been quoted (82–83) as a place where »a number of scribes have corrected the verbal tense by conjecture. We should remark that, if all the involved manuscripts belong to the same β family, there would be no need to invoke an intervention independently made by different copyists. But, most importantly, there is no explanation here of why the present tense can be considered to be correct, as it appears that *a priori* a greater value is attributed to the reading of D (or of the family, α , to which it belongs). Since the context does not suggest the change of a future into a present, *dammatur* could rather be employed as a conjunctive error supporting the existence of α family.

- ll. 236–238 ... *quoniam ecce vobis merces redd[e]tur. Infernale tormentum ab origine mundi vobis preparatur* – The final verb is the reading of α family's manuscripts, while the codices of β present either *paratum* or *preparatum*. Once again we beg to differ, suggesting the possibility that the editor has rejected the better reading: the participle. Obviously, the current punctuation makes it impossible to accept a participle, because the full stop divides the sentence into two phrases; but, if the full stop is removed, the resulting sentence would be perfectly meaningful (»Indeed, you will be rewarded by the hellish torments, prepared for you from the beginning of the world«). As happened in another case considered above, the new syntactic structure will permit the avoidance of the mere paratactical juxtaposition of two sentences. If this proposal is right and the correct reading is that of β , for the third time there would be a possible conjunctive error linking to each other the witnesses of the supposed family α . Like the other two, this error does not have a very strong separative power, and is not beyond question; but to draw attention to these hints would have strengthened a key issue of the stemmatic reconstruction, which, instead, has been put forward without any substantiation.

To conclude, we cannot but acknowledge again that the intentions of this volume and its planned approach – to link closely the teaching of theories and practice – are fully praiseworthy. We are inclined to think, however, that the need for a reliable handbook in order to introduce English-speaking students to Ecdotics is still far from being fulfilled. Rossana Guglielmetti

Sandra Linden, *Exkurse im höfischen Roman (Münchener Texte und Untersuchungen zur deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters 147)*, Wiesbaden 2017 (Reichert Verlag), XIII + 614 S.

Die Habilitationsschrift von Sandra Linden nimmt eine zentrale Kategorie mittelalterlicher Erzählliteratur in den Blick: Die Untersuchung zielt in systematischer Perspektive auf eine gattungsspezifische Analyse des »exkursorischen Sprechens« (113) von den Anfängen des deutschsprachigen höfischen Romans um 1200 bis zu dessen produktivem Höhe- und zugleich Endpunkt mit dem Minne- und Aventiureroman um 1300.

Exkurse gehören neben weiteren Elementen (z. B. Mono- und Dialogen, *descriptions*) zum breiten Spektrum der auf der *dilatatio* bzw. *amplificatio materiae* basierenden narrativen Technik, die in den mittellateinischen Poetiken komplementär zur *abbreviatio* als grundsätzliche Verfahrensweise der Textbearbeitung beschrieben wird. Diese im Schulkontext praktizierten und in den »Materialsammlungen und Kompendien« kodifizierten Modi der Arbeit an der *materia pertractata* repräsentieren eine »lebendige Dichtungspraxis [...], die auch ohne sie Bestand hatte« (5). Insofern gehören diese poetologischen Prinzipien auch zum literarischen Erfahrungsraum der in der Volkssprache schrei-