TRANSFORMING THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

USES OF PRAGMATIC LITERACY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

A CD-ROM AND BOOK

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BREPOLS

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Foreword

It was during the final phase of Special Research Project (SFB) 231, 'Träger, Felder, Formen pragmatischer Schriftlichkeit im Mittelalter' that the idea evolved of utilizing a new presentational method for disseminating the results of our research activities. Our aim was to create a product for the academic world, which would function as a new, multimedia-based point of access to the activities carried out in SFB 231, while also serving as a thorough introduction to the field of literacy and literature in the Middle Ages for the interested general public. The editors benefited from the support of a number of people in the production of this CD-ROM, and we are pleased to be able to take this opportunity to express our thanks for their assistance.

We would first of all like to thank Prof. Dr Peter Johanek, whose original idea it was to create a multimedia presentation on the basis of a CD-ROM, for disseminating the results of the research conducted by SFB 231. He provided us with much support and encouragement, particularly in the early phases of the project. Prof. Dr Volker Honemann was among the first advocates of our CD-ROM. He provided invaluable assistance throughout the project, played an essential role in ensuring its funding, and — as did other project heads within SFB 231 — nurtured the activities of the participating staff by supplying strong support wherever needed.

Prof. Dr Christel Meier-Staubach assumed overall responsibility for the CD-ROM project as chief spokesperson of the Special Research Project. We would also like to thank her for her faith in the work of the editors and her constant support and enthusiasm for our work.

It is due to the generous financial support of the 'Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft' (DFG) that the creation of this CD-ROM has been at all possi-

book did give the individual an instrument for participating in the grace afforded by the liturgy, the fruits of the mass, and indulgence, while in his private room.

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Schoolbooks

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INTRODUCTION

According to UNESCO estimates, there are approximately one billion people in the world who can neither read nor write. One sixth of the world population has never seen a schoolbook. In contrast, reading and writing in the industrialized nations are such commonplace objects of everyday life that they are completely taken for granted. We are taught to read and write at school, where we gain access to the cultural tool of writing, and it is this that forms the basis for all our further learning activities. The teaching aids used in schools to impart us the skills of literacy are themselves based on the medium of writing. We can all remember what it was like to write things down on paper and in exercise books, to organize our notes in files, and to read up new information in text books.

By teaching literacy to the individual, the schools as an institution are laying the foundation stone of literacy skills for entire societies. Many important developmental stages of this process in Europe took place in the Middle Ages, and the schools functioned as a dual participating force in this process. First of all, they were the institution in which competence in literacy was acquired, and they were themselves involved in learning how best to communicate this task with the aid of the instruments of literacy. These tools, as employed in the schools, have undergone transformation over the centuries. Schoolbooks themselves have also had to adapt, to cope with the demands of literacy.

Even by the Middle Ages, schools had developed a variety of forms. Monastic schools existed, whose teachers saw it as their task to guide their novices towards the teachings of the bible. Cathedral schools taught clergymen what they needed to know about administration and how to provide

emotional and spiritual guidance. Universities provided highly specialized training for jurists, theologians and physicians. And from the Late Middle Ages onwards, numerous Latin schools opened up the world of reading and writing to whole new groups of learners.

Education and the passing on of knowledge did not, however, necessarily require the skill of literacy. For instance, the nobility based its superior view of itself on qualifications other than those which would have been considered strictly scholastic. Skills such as horse riding, hunting or the art of fighting were considered of far greater importance, and special methods existed for imparting this knowledge to future generations. Manual craftsmen also passed on their knowledge to apprentices largely without the use of literacy. Apprentices learned their craft by watching and copying their masters. Whatever method a society chooses for passing knowledge on to the next generation, the basic venue of all preliminary, central and ancillary forms of what we call school is and remains the classroom. The transformation of the medieval schoolbook can be regarded as the penetration of literacy into this situation.

After the fall of ancient writing culture, literacy remained for centuries the sole preserve of the monasteries. But even here, reading and writing were first and foremost seen as serving Christianity, a religion of the book. In other words, literacy was necessary in order to understand the bible. However, since the word of God, as deposited in this work, was in Latin, the path towards competence in literacy involved learning that language. And so it remained right up until the early modern age. Reading and writing was not learned with reference to the 'mother' tongue but the language of the 'father' — Latin.

The first steps into the world of Latin-based literacy were taken in primary education. The teachers used their own written teaching materials in these preliminary classes until they were worn out, and the pupils wrote, if at all, on ephemeral media, such as wax tablets or scraps of parchment or paper. Nowadays, no traces remain of any written materials from such teaching.

Written materials originating from teaching situations only stood a chance of preservation if they were protected between book covers. This is why we have only been able to ascertain definite knowledge of more advanced educational materials from original sources. Manuscripts with grammatical texts and moral teaching passages from advanced Latin classes have been preserved in their thousands. Fables were often employed as working texts with which to illustrate the uses of the Latin language, and these could be used at the same time for teaching behavioural norms. The number of manuscripts from the fable collection of Avianus (fourth–fifth centuries) that have been preserved is evidence of the increasing use of written media in Latin classes.

PRODUCTION

Multiple Copies of a Single Teaching Work: The Problem of Text Distribution

Even though we may consider it commonplace nowadays, it can not always be taken for granted that every pupil had his own text or even that all pupils had access to a written text. In the manuscript culture of the Middle Ages, the provision of identical copies of a text for a large group of learners constituted a considerable problem.

Gradually, new methods of text production and dissemination were developed, although without necessarily giving up the old methods in the process. This gave rise to a variety of production and distribution techniques that were employed right up to the early modern period. A very simple method of distribution, for instance, was to declare the sole available written text to be reserved for the teacher's use. The pupils would then be restricted to the role of listeners and, as such, forced to rely on their memories or at most, on ephemeral writing materials, such as wax tablets. On the other hand, the teacher may have attempted to provide the text to as many of the participants as possible before the lesson began. Both of these methods were, however — like all methods of text duplication — determined by the general level of availability of manuscripts required for the lessons. This, in turn, determined the changes in the mode of distribution of written learning materials.

The Text Manuscript as a Private Copy: The Function of the Teacher as Text Distributor (Ninth–Twelfth Centuries)

The simplest method of text duplication consisted in the teacher reading the study text aloud. One single copy of the text contained sufficient material for numerous lessons. This method was, however, less suitable for complex studies, because the material could not exceed the listener's capacity for understanding.

The distribution of texts by reading aloud was regarded as the norm in those situations in which literacy was not yet widespread and manuscripts were costly and precious. The latter were only available from a library, perhaps located in a monastery, and then only for use by groups rather than individuals. Of the people participating in teaching activities, it was the teacher who first had access to such text repositories. He could then make his

own working copy of the manuscript, without this needing to conform to any particular quality requirements, and he could then use this copy for as long as possible. This simple method of text production for use in teaching situations meant that the text was used until it was literally worn out.

From a historical perspective, the availability of written teaching materials subject to such strict conditions first occurred during the early, 'monastic' centuries of medieval teaching of the Trivium. This simple method of producing teaching texts determined the form of the manuscripts until well into the twelfth century.

The Text Manuscript as a Good (1): The Paid Scribe as a Distributor of Texts (Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries)

In the High Middle Ages, a second method of distribution came into use, one which had however been known since ancient times. Paid scribes, 'stationarii', were engaged in the duplication of texts, the aim being to free the teacher from performing this mundane task. Although teachers were previously able to delegate such activities on an individual basis, the innovation was that the activity was now organized on a wider basis. This method of duplication was especially effective in situations where not just one but several teachers operated, and the need for student's texts was sufficiently great to afford the copy specialists a reasonable living. This system became established at the new universities of Italy and France, and it is here that the first paid 'stationarii' scribes could be found.

The teacher, although freed from having himself to furnish duplicates of texts was, however, still required to check the uniformity of the quality of the text. Occasionally, quality control was performed by the university institution that developed the respective criteria by which to judge the suitability of the texts and assure the quality of the teaching materials. In this respect, a classroom lesson can be seen to have achieved superindividual stability. Further factors in the trend towards standardization were, on the one hand, the increasingly detailed and ordered formulation of commentaries on the teaching text, this being less frequently left up to the teacher's ad hoc ability in class, and, on the other hand, the uniformity of their presentation in the manuscripts. A further factor of not inconsiderable significance is that the pupil also had access to written class materials — they were now available for him to purchase.

The Text Manuscript as a Dictation Template: The Venue as a Distributor of Texts (Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries)

The delegation of the job of duplicating teaching texts to the commercial scribes or 'stationarii' appears to have anticipated the onset of the printing press. There was another method of text dissemination that has come to be regarded as altogether more foreign to us today. Students engaged in a more advanced level of education were themselves called upon to participate in the production of texts. The universities growing up in the east (starting with Prague 1347, followed by Krakow 1364/97, and Vienna 1365) adopted a great deal from the West, but not the institution of the paid scribe. The great demand for university texts — not only here, but also in the better Latin schools, such as in Göttingen and Ulm — was met by the students themselves taking part in special classes known as 'pronuntiationes', held for the purpose of copying texts. These took the form of dictations given by teaching assistants, who were employed to read out the study material to several students at a time.

Texts and their explanatory notes, such as were disseminated by dictation, first had to be prepared by the teacher in a way that lent itself to being read aloud. There was always the risk that the teacher would read out the text in class too slowly, the effect of which was to reduce the activity to a simple dictation.

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The Text Manuscript as a Good (2): The Book Printer as a Distributor of Texts (from the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries Onwards)

In comparison to the institution of the paid scribe in the thirteenth century, the delegation of text production to the printer/publisher represented not so much an innovation but, in many ways, an intensification. The printer was able to produce texts which resembled each other far more closely than was formerly possible, in larger numbers, and at relatively low cost, compared with the paid scribe. However, it was not just in the case of the latter that the teacher was still left with the task of coordinating production and the respective education institute still had to inspect the quality of the products.

The onset of the printing press served not only to relieve the teacher, but also meant that pupils no longer needed to attend the dictation classes in order to produce their teaching materials. This freed the tool of writing for use exclusively in the lessons themselves, which led to an increase in the use of literacy in class on an independent level. In other words, the teacher could

now decide to apply the tool of writing more systematically, to enable him to realize his teaching aims. For this reason, many school texts were printed in a form which required the pupil to complete them during the lesson.

RECEPTION

Listening — Reading — Writing: Modes of Access to the Text for the Pupils

Pupils either accessed the texts, commentaries and interpretations solely on an oral basis, as recited by the teacher, or they followed what the teacher said by reading an accompanying manuscript. If the pupil possessed the latter, he had most likely purchased it from a fellow pupil or text seller, or perhaps copied both text and commentary prior to the lesson. If he did have a printed version of the material, it was highly likely that it was only in a special, reduced form, which did not include any commentaries, or suchlike. The purpose of this kind of text was to impel the student to complete the missing sections in class.

The question as to what kind of media should be employed to assist pupils with the interpretation of texts would, in our modern view, depend on the pupil himself and on a number of didactic aspects: Is the pupil's power of comprehension adequate (and does the material lend itself) for learning on a purely auditive basis? Can he read? Does he have the money for a text book? Can he write? Is listening and supplementary reading sufficient or are subsequent consolidation exercises required? Is parrot-fashion repetition to be used as a means of learning by heart or should the material be worked through, at least in part, by writing? Each of these options implies a variation in the availability of the tools of literacy among the students. Even more so, in the manuscript culture of the Middle Ages, the didactic requirement of the material did not so much dictate the choice of media but the availability of the media themselves.

The Pupil as a Listener (Ninth–Twelfth Centuries)

If the teacher possessed the only available manuscript, the pupil had no choice but to rely on listening. Even if he had an ephemeral means of writing at his disposal, such as a wax tablet, it was only able to store short texts for a

short amount of time. The texts therefore had to be constantly written anew — in a similar manner to the teacher's manuscript, they were worn out through their very use, only in this case, the intervals were far shorter. This was of relevance to the pupil's memory, for it was the only medium he had at his disposal in which he could store information permanently.

The form of reception outlined above, as well as the corresponding form of production, dominated Latin classes until well into the twelfth century (even longer at lower scholastic levels). In other words, they influenced the form of teaching at a time in which the expansion of literacy in the High and Late Middle Ages had yet to be met, and contemporary literacy remained the domain of the monastic world. Here, teachers and pupils were in constant and comprehensive contact with each other, not only in the Latin classes themselves. This served to redress any imbalance which may have arisen from didactic deficiencies due to the occasional and ephemeral nature of oral transmission.

The Pupil as a Purchaser, Reader and Listener (Thirteenth–Fourteenth Centuries)

The texts disseminated by the paid scribes at the new universities were aimed at the students in their capacity as purchasers. By acquiring a text, students were now able to follow the lessons by reading and were not restricted to the information transmitted orally by the teacher. As a result, the teacher's utterances were more comprehensible; in fact we might surmise that the former's relevance suffered as a consequence, since a second (written) authority was now available, with which comparisons could be drawn. This did not even necessitate the teacher's presence. Either way, the High Middle Ages saw the onset of a continuing separation between the learning process and the locale for participatory communication.

When one views the many contemporary illustrations available in which a medieval classroom is pictured, it is remarkable that they regularly depict pupils reading and listening, but not actually writing anything down. The idea of writing with quill and ink in the 'lectio' or lecture, was still viewed as far too complicated in the High Middle Ages. The preserved texts and manuscripts therefore all appeared in a conventional layout, and only rarely do we see class notes that were written by an individual student.

The Pupil as a Writer, Reader and Listener (Fourteenth–Fifteenth Centuries)

The act of duplicating class texts in special dictation lessons at medieval universities as well as at relatively advanced Latin schools began in the fourteenth century. Now, for the first time, students were actively involved in the production of texts. Class notes, a rarity among manuscripts from the preceding centuries, were now the norm in this production and reception stage — if one considers the dictations prior to the lectures as 'classes'. Since the pupils were copying obligatory material, however, this form of writing in class must still be regarded as highly medieval. There was still a long way to go before handwritten entries were made in school books on an individual basis.

Nevertheless, with regard to the older forms of text production and reception (whereby pupils functioned either only as listeners or as purchasers, or simultaneous readers and listeners), it is important to note that with the systematic integration of the pupil in his function as a writer-by-dictation into the conceptual design of class texts, the tools of literacy had now come a decisive step closer to the pupil.

The Pupil as a Purchaser, Reader, Listener and Writer (from the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries Onwards)

The pupil was able to purchase the printed book prior to the lesson; no longer was there any need to copy the text. Unlike with earlier forms of production and reception, he was now freed from any involvement in text production — this was now solely in the hands of the teacher, who supplied the manuscript, and the printer, who manufactured the copies. This had no direct consequences on the class itself (this can be seen from the fact that the new printed texts were nothing more than copies of older texts, complete with their traditional layouts and forms of presentation). The teaching was still participatory, performed in lectures ('lectio') in which the pupils, as usual, were primarily passively involved, as listeners and readers. However, it was the standardization of the form of the text which was the innovation — all the students now had largely identical texts (although as long as the purchasing of the book was left up to the students, we must assume that in practice some students shared books, some worked with printed materials and others with handwritten copies, while some had no book at all).

Taking a longer perspective, the regularity with which the task of producing texts was shifted to an outside source made the user increasingly aware of the fact that writing could now be implemented for purposes other than simple reproduction. From the sixteenth century onwards, pupils regularly wrote in class and were now using literacy as a genuinely independent learning instrument.

FORM

Forms of Presentation of Learning Texts

Medieval teaching was based on prescribed works. The teaching activity took the form of a lecture, in which a written base text was examined by the teacher in the presence of the students. The core instrument for the study of this text was the commentary, which was supplied together with the basic text. The layout of the text and commentary on the manuscript page followed established conventions, and even though its handwritten nature may suggest the opposite, it did not follow a planned, transcribed lesson structure.

Text-commentary combinations evolved from the interconnection of texts performed at the desk and not in class. In his painting 'Holy Hieronymus with the Lion', Colantonio depicts a production scene in which a prototypical scholar can be seen. The basic, double-column text and accompanying marginal notes were placed together on the manuscript page by the writer at his desk.

The forms of presentation of the texts and commentaries varied according to the schoolbook's intended use in the lessons. Each text layout possessed its own implied structure of implementation, in which a series of assumptions were made — whether the text was to be interpreted primarily in class and from memory, whether it had to be comprehended by way of supplementary reading, whether it had to be copied in its entirety, or whether certain points were to be added to an incomplete printed text.

Texts for Speakers

Until well into the eleventh century, basic texts used in class were only subjected to rudimentary interpretation, written commentaries were only added in a sporadic and unsystematic manner, and classes were only roughly

prepared, according to thematic headings, without any great system. This can be seen here from a French manuscript, dating from the tenth century.

The basic text constitutes a widespread passage to be read by pupils of Latin — the 'Fables' of Avianus. The main text is highlighted as such through its larger letters. The commentaries were written in smaller script, positioned between the lines in the form of so-called interlinear glosses. In our manuscript, these glosses refer to less than half of the verses. And even if a commentary was provided, it often only referred to one or two words. Such sparse commentaries can hardly have served the interests of the pupils to any great extent.

This form of presentation was aimed at users who did not require any greatly detailed explanations. They could trust in their own extensive reading experience, which they were able to contribute to the lesson as and when required. Layouts of this type were therefore aimed at informed teachers rather than pupils.

Sample text:

Avianus No. 8 'De camelo'

Contents: The camel asks Jupiter to give him horns like the cows. As a punishment for this dissatisfaction with his natural features, Jupiter even takes away the camel's large ears.

Gloss: in V.11 'postquam sperata negauit' ([. . .] after he had dashed that which he had hoped for [. . .]) regarding 'sperata: id est quia camelus sperabat ut sibi miseretur' ('sperata', because the camel had hoped that he would be pitied)

Avianus No. 8 'De camelo'

Contents: See above.

Gloss: in V.13 'cui sors non sufficit inquit' ([. . .] whom his fate, said Jupiter, does not suffice, [. . .]) about 'sors: id est natura'

Avianus No. 9 'De duobus sociis et ursa'

Contents: Of two companions who, when wandering, were attacked by a bear, the quicker one climbs a tree to save himself while the one left can only stay behind, pretending to be dead. The bear sniffs at him but

then goes away. In response to the question of the returning companion, as to what the bear had evidently whispered to him, the one having escaped replied that he had been given the advice not to rely on his trust in a friend.

Gloss: in V.4 regarding 'robore collato' (with combined strength) regarding 'collato: associato'

Avianus No. 9 'De duobus sociis et ursa'

Contents: See above.

Gloss: in V.19 regarding 'dic sodes' (Tell me, my friend, [. . .]) about 'sodes: amice'

Texts for the Eye

From the tenth century onwards, the need for complete commentaries began to increase. These were often transmitted in separate manuscripts. This had the advantage that the scribe did not have to take any complex layout requirements into account (for instance, how to arrange the text and the commentaries *together* on the same page). It was simpler to give cross-references, integrated within the commentaries, to indicate to which elements in the text they referred. In the example here, the writer indicates a new section of commentary for a new fable by beginning a new paragraph and using a considerably larger initial letter. Wherever commentaries were provided for individual words in the basic text, these words were stated in the commentary and underlined, to render them distinct from the explanations themselves.

This space-saving form of presentation was, however, somewhat confusing for the reader. Moreover, it was always necessary to have two manuscripts to hand — the basic text and the commentary, and to indicate the cross references once more orally. It was more economical to position the text and its interpretation in closer proximity to each other and to leave it to the reader to find the references. In the thirteenth century, therefore, a new form of layout gained favour, in which the continuous commentary was split into smaller parts, and distributed throughout the page, to accommodate the need for cross-referencing with the main text. In the second example, the commentary is divided into small blocks of text of this type.

Of course, the new form of presentation placed new demands on the production and distribution of teaching books. It was now no longer possible simply to copy them, but the layout structure also had to be transcribed. For this purpose, reproduction experts who performed precisely this task, the 'stationarii', were available at the universities of Italy, France and England.

Sample text:

Separate Commentary

See above 'Texts for the eye'.

Integrated Commentary

See above 'Texts for the eye'.

From Separated towards Integrated Commentaries

Clumsy attempts at combining the main text and the commentary into a *single* manuscript page involved positioning the text and the commentary in columns, side by side, without any further subdivision of the closed commentary text. In the example here (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin — Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS germ. qu. 536, fol. 2ᵛ) the commentary in the left-hand column surrounds the main text in an L-formation. The underlined reference lemmata from the old form of presentation of the closed separate commentary can still clearly be seen. However, this form still appears somewhat uneconomical, for although the main text already accompanied the commentary on the right-hand page, all the reference lemmata still had to be added in order to ensure that the explanations in the commentary referred to the correct points in the text. The basic text was therefore, at least in parts, repeated unnecessarily.

Texts for the Ear

The combined text-commentary structures which were widespread at the universities of the West, produced by professional scribes, were not adopted by the new universities of Central Europe. In Prague, Vienna and other cen-

tres of learning, the pupils themselves were required to produce their own duplicate texts. In order to do this, it was necessary to 're-oralize' the visual aspect of the presentation, in other words, to render the text in such a manner that it suited the ear rather than, as was originally intended, the eye. This involved re-assembling the separate commentary sections into a continuous text, so as to facilitate its dictation as a single block. Since it was necessary to preserve the reference points between the main text and the commentaries, the dictation commentaries were no longer positioned in the columns alongside the main text, but, as in this example, they were placed in postposition after each section. The first verse fable on folio 26 of the manuscript is followed on the next page, folio 27 recto, by the commentary on this fable, and only then, on the following page, does the next fable follow, which is in turn followed by the respective commentary.

So as to render a certain clarity of structure to this type of block of commentary, it is split into subsections, indicated by key words, which are in turn rendered in larger script. In this example, individual stages of interpretation are indicated by the key words 'utilitas', 'allegoria', and 'exposicio'.

Sample text:

Verse text No. 1

The gullible wolf heard how the farmer's wife threatened her crying child, saying that she would throw it to the wolf if it were not quiet. He is hoping for an easy prey but is disappointed and, on returning home hungry, complains to his she-wolf, about the falseness of women. That is the content of Avianus' first fable.

Following the verse text of Fable No. 1 (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Lat. 10465, fol. 26ᵛ: '<R>ustica deflente parvo iuraverat olim [. . .]' [. . .]

Commentary No. 1

[. . .] the commentary is rendered in small type, instead of being placed on the side. It begins with a prose paraphrase (fol. 27ʳ, line 1: 'Rustica quedam habens puerum flentem iuravit quod [. . .]' — A farmer's wife scolded her crying child, saying [. . .]).

A further section formulates the moral (lines 13–15: 'UTILITAS FABULE est, quod mulieribus non est multum confidendum [. . .]' — The moral of the fable is as follows: You can not believe what a woman says [. . .]). A third section provides the spiritual interpretation (lines 15–20: 'ALLEGORIA: Per rusticam ecclesia intelligitur, per puerum peccator [. . .]' — Spiritually: The farmer's wife stands for the church, the child for the sinner [. . .]). A fourth section finally offers explanations for individual points in the text, which the verse text causes to be quoted in the commentary by lemma (lines 20ff: 'EXPOSICIO: Rustica — id est <s>olana; iuraverat — id est promiserat; olim — id est quondam; [. . .]').

Verse text No. 2

On the commentary for No.1 — at the top edge of the page, two concluding lines can be seen — again followed by the verse text from Fable No. 2 (fol. 27^v: 'Penatis avibus quondam testudo locuta [. . .]') [. . .]

Commentary No. 2

[. . .] and the commentary on this fable (fol. 28^r).

Word-for-word 'expositio'

The alternating presentation of text and commentary was especially suitable when the main text could be divided into relatively independent semantic units, each of which could be served by a single commentary, as for example here, in the case of verse texts. However, a dictation-like commentary of smaller text units below the level of a verse required a further specialized solution. This was to be found in the separate commentaries common from the twelfth century onwards: the individual word was simply quoted within the ongoing commentary in the form of a reference, and followed by the explanation. In this way, it was also possible to give single word explanations by dictation. The example here shows these extremely short explanations within the commentary, gathered together under the 'exposicio' heading in a separate section (fol. 27^r, lines 20ff.: 'EXPOSICIO: Rustica — id est <s>olana; iuraverat — id est promiserat; olim — id est quondam;

[. . .]'). By turning the pages backwards and forwards, it can be seen that these could also appear in the form of interlinear glosses. The verse text from No. 1 (fol. 26^v) contains no interlinear glosses, since its commentary (fol. 27^{r-v}) comprises a word-for-word 'expositio'. The verse text from No. 2 (fol. 27^v) provides interlinear glosses, which means that there is no word-for-word 'expositio' in the commentary (fol. 28^r). It is evident that these were transferred between the lines in the course of the copying process.

Texts for Writers

The presentational form of printed school books was initially the same as for handwritten ones. The first printed Avianus text from 1494 contained both text and commentary in the established, regularly alternating style.

It was not until a later edition appeared, originating from Leipzig in 1509, that the freedom from having to duplicate school works became evident for the first time. In this edition, the verse text was presented to the user with a wide interlinear spacing and a generous margin; however, unlike the older Cologne print, it did not have a commentary. It was intended that the user should gradually add the commentary himself in class. This meant that a teacher who recommended that his pupils use a 'Leipzig style' print now had the opportunity to deliberately apply the tool of writing as a new teaching instrument. In this example, the handwritten additions are sometimes in the form of interlinear glosses, placed in the usual position between the lines. But they can also be in the form of extended commentaries, this time positioned in the broad margin alongside the main text.

This marks the start of a process of systematic differentiation between school books intended for the pupil and teaching materials for the teacher. Pupils only had access to materials containing the main text, whereas the teacher had more detailed editions, complete with commentaries. Taking the definition of a school book as one conceived specifically for pupils, then the invention of this medium can be dated to the start of the sixteenth century.

Sample text:

1. Avianus, 'Fables' (Cologne: Heinrich Quentell, 1494)

The commentary on the verse text follows the pattern formerly common in the manuscripts. The verse text, with its broad line distance,

contains interlinear glosses; this is followed by a commentary divided into several parts and containing an introductory summary of the teaching of the fable ('Autor in hoc apologo docet, quod melius est [. . .]' — In this fable, the author teaches us that it is better [. . .]), prose paraphrase ('Et hoc ostendit autor per Boream et Phebum, quorum vnus, scilicet Phebus, [. . .]' — And the author shows regarding Boreas and Phoebus, of whom one, namely Phoebus [. . .]), statement of a moral ('Utilitas: Nemo debet se opponere potentiori [. . .]' — Moral: One should not oppose one who is stronger [. . .]) and spiritual interpretation of ('Allegoria: Per Phebum Christus intelligitur, per Boream diabolus [. . .]' — Spiritual: Phoebus is the reference to Christ, Boreas to the devil [. . .]).

2. Avianus, 'Fables' (Leipzig: Melchior Lotter, 1509)

The later Leipzig edition merely contains the main text. Interlinear glosses and further commentaries could — as is the case in this example containing selected fables — be added by hand. It can already be seen from the beginnings of the texts that the commentaries were added in compliance with the traditional pattern. For instance, the sections all bear the traditional heading 'Allegoria', indicating a spiritual interpretation.

TECHNOLOGY

Transformations in the Techniques of Interpretation?

Production, reception and presentational forms of the school book underwent considerable transformation in the Middle Ages. But is this transformation of the school book's historical pragmatism concerned with more than just its external aspects? Does the ongoing release of pupils from the need to produce and distribute the written media for their own school use not impact on their content, in other words, the ways in which they were led to comprehend the texts, as well as their results? Are they nothing but old wine in new bottles?

If the commonly held opinion — that the outstanding feature of medieval teaching of the Trivium is its tradition — is true, then the dynamics of pragmatic transformation would indeed be of no more than secondary impor-

tance. What is needed is a more precise description. It is not so much the methodical techniques of text-based teaching that underwent transformation, but rather the manner in which interpretation of a text and the achievement of meaning were applied. All in all, the development constituted a move from a pointillistic style to one displaying increased systematization, and this in turn led to the accumulative attainment of semantic enhancement.

Traditional Sequence of Interpretation Steps in the Study of Texts

The technique for studying — in particular — literary texts, as practised into and beyond the fifteenth century, was formulated in its entirety by several authors (Konrad von Hirsau, Bernard of Utrecht, Hugh of St Victor) in the High Middle Ages. In the twelfth century, a widespread need arose of discussing the method of treating a text in class, to give this methodology an objective and systematic face, and to formulate it in writing. A three-stage process was applied, the aim being to arrive at a satisfactory means for interpretating a text.

The first step was the 'expositio ad litteram'. This denoted the study of the text word-by-word, with the associated commentary provided as a series of glosses. At this level, the examination of the text concentrated above all on lexical phenomena but also included grammatical and rhetorical aspects wherever required.

The next stage of interpretation was the 'expositio ad sensum', the aim of which was to provide a formulation of that which was said in the text (Konrad von Hirsau: 'quod dicitur'): that which was described without underlying meaning (Hugh of St Victor: 'facilis et aperta significatio'). The result of this was a (prose) paraphrase, the length of which varied according to requirements, and which referred to the text as a whole.

The third step, the 'expositio ad sententiam', aimed to formulate those elements of the text which were not immediately obvious, but which could only be gained through interpretation. This could be described as the allegorical meaning of the text, whereby a distinction was made between the 'sententia moralis' and the 'sententia allegorica'. The former is an interpretation based on moral precepts, which could be taken as practical instructions governing one's behaviour and the latter (strictly speaking, allegorical 'sententia') aimed at a spiritual interpretation with only an indirect reference to behaviour.

Sample text:

Continuation of the verse text from Fable No. 1, containing an interlinear 'expositio ad litteram' with subsequent prose commentaries as contained in the Cologne print of the 'Fable of Avianus' from 1494.

1. 'Ad litteram'

The fable tells of a farmer's wife who threatens her crying child, saying that she would cast it to the wolf if it were not quiet. The latter hears this but, in the end, is forced to give up his waiting, disappointed and hungry, and return to his she-wolf, before whom he justifies himself by saying he had been deceived by its wicked cunning.

The 'expositio ad litteram', or word-by-word interpretation can be found in our example, which begins with V. 10, between the lines immediately above the respective reference points, in the form of interlinear glosses. The glosses are primarily lexical. In the first verse of the example, ('Languida consumptis sed trahis ora genis' — 'Instead you show slack cheeks around your empty snout'), to the word 'languida' is added the gloss 'debilia' in superposition, likewise for 'limp, drooping (cheeks)', 'weakened (cheeks)'. Above the word 'trahis' (you bear) there is the word 'ducis' (you show, display), above 'genis' (cheeks) we see 'maxilis' (jaws). Moreover, references are clarified. In the following example verse ('Ne mireris ait deceptum fraude maligna [. . .]' — 'Do not be surprised, says the betrayed one, for being deceived by wicked cunning [. . .]'), the 'deceptum' (betrayed one) is identified as the 'scilicet lupus' (namely, the wolf). Entire syntagms can also be provided with glosses, for instance, for 'fraude maligna' we have 'malo dolo mulieris' ('through the wicked cunning of the woman').

2. 'Ad sensum'

With the 'expositio ad sensum' we can identify the paraphrase which appears in the present example within the prose commentary which follows on from the verse text. In this example it is relatively detailed: [line 4] 'Et dicit quod quedam rustica iurauerat olim deflenti puero nisi [line 5] taceret quod foret esca rabido lupo (And he [referring to the

author Avianus] tells of a farmer's wife, who once threatened her child that it would be the food of the wicked wolf) lupus hoc audiens retro permansit vig[line 6]lans ante fores (the wolf heard this and remained on guard at the door) credebat enim esse verum propter quod expectauit an sibi da[line7]ri possit (for he believed that it was true and therefore he really expected the child to be given over to him) puer lassata membra dedit quieti (the child surrenders its tired limbs to slumber) sed lupus foris famem patieba[line 8]tur. et spes de puero eum diu sustentauit. sed tandem ieiunus recessit (but the wolf by the door is pained by hunger. And his hoping for the child allows him to bear this for a long while. But in the end he returns home with an empty stomach). Con[line 9]iunx vero scilicet lupa sentit lupum repetentem lustra suarum siluarum adhuc [line 10] esse ieiunum (but his partner, the she-wolf, sees how the wolf returns to his cave in the forest, still hungry) et dixit [. . .] (and says)'.

3. 'Ad sententiam moralem'

The 'expositio ad sententiam moralem' allows us to identify the 'utilitas' of the fable, which follows the prose paraphrase: [line 15] 'Ostendit vtilitatem huius [line 16] fabule quod quicumque vult mulieribus nimium confidere. ita tandem decipitur si[line 17]cut lupus deceptus fuit (He [the author] shows that the moral of this fable is that anyone who places too much trust in women will in the end be deceived as the wolf was deceived).'

4. 'Ad sententiam allegoricam'

The 'expositio ad sententiam allegoricam' is indicated by the word 'Allegoria': [line 17] 'Allegoria siue misterium fabule predicte est quod [line 18] per rusticam ecclesia intelligitur. per puerum peccatorem. per lupum diabolus. [line 19] sicut enim rustica iurabat puero quod vellet ipsum dare lupo nisi taceret. Ita ec[line 20]clesia minatur peccatori quod velit ipsum dare lupo id est diabolo nisi recedat a [line 21] peccatis (The spiritual or hidden meaning of the preceding fable is this: The farmer's wife stands for the church, the child for the sinner and the wolf the devil. For just as the farmer's wife threatens to hand the child over to the wolf if it is not quiet, so the church warns the

sinner that it will give him to the wolf, in other words, the devil, if he does not stop sinning).'

Secondary Literacy: The 'Open' Commentary (Ninth–Eleventh/ Twelfth Centuries)

Up until the eleventh century, the technique of text interpretation relied on the expert knowledge of the teacher. Since it was usually he who possessed the only manuscript, it was not necessary to produce a further written duplicate of the 'expositio'. The commentaries in the manuscript were therefore correspondingly pointillistic.

The early Avianus commentaries displayed neither prose paraphrase ('expositio ad sensum') nor spiritual interpretation ('expositio ad sententiam allegoricam'). Where they formed a component of the teaching, they had to be added orally on an 'ad hoc' basis.

The moral interpretation ('expositio ad sententiam moralem') was based entirely on what was formulated by the verse text. Since ancient times, additional verses (epimyths) had been appended to the individual fables, which show the moral to be learnt from the story. Since these epimyths took on precisely the same verse form as the author's text, it required expert knowledge to identify them, sometimes to reformulate them in prose, and in some cases — for not all fables were appended with epimyths — to supply further teachings.

The dominant element of the commentary is the gloss, which referred to an individual passage in the verse text, and was either interlinear (positioned between the lines) or marginal (positioned in the margin of the page). However, the content of the glosses did not bear any relation to the actual need for explanation, either in their density, their distribution, or in their varying content. Their primary function was that of a memory aid for the teacher (e.g. to remind him to explain a particular point for certain reasons).

Sample text:

Avianus, 'Fables', No. 2 (ending), No. 3 and No. 4 (beginning) in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS Lat. 5570, 54^v (Northern France, 10–11 cent.). No. 3 (ll. 4–15 in the left-hand column) tells of the crab, which itself can only run backwards but who implores its child to run forwards.

1. Epimyths

No. 3 ends with an epimyth which extends over two verses: 'Nam stultum nimis est, cum tu pravissima temptes / Alterius censor ut vitiosa notes (For it is foolish if you — yourself being on the wrong path — attempt to turn yourself into the judge concerning the mistakes of others).'

2. Glosses

In No. 3, the following glosses are provided: in v. 2 'hispida' (terga) (the rough [back]) > 'silesa'; in v. 2 'resilit' (injured itself [its back]) > corrected to 'relisit' > 'id est confregit' (smashed); in v. 4 'datur' (as it is said) > 'dicitur'.

The Systematic Commentary (Twelfth–Fourteenth Centuries)

From the twelfth century onwards, teaching was accompanied by a systematically formulated 'expositio'. What it had in common with the older commentary was that it still included the regularly occurring glosses although these now appeared more frequently. Furthermore, the basic teaching texts were now appended on a more regular basis by:

- a brief summary of the teaching contained in the fable, usually recorded in the margin alongside the first verse;
- this was immediately followed by a brief summary of the fable's plot (this could be reduced to a statement of the characters' names);
- a discursive statement of the teaching contained in the fable, usually in the margins of the page, alongside the end of the fable (on the same level as the epimyths);
- this can furthermore be accompanied by a spiritual interpretation of the fable.

Not all of the above elements were included in all cases; firstly, all the basic elements were rendered systematically. All of the verses were appended with interlinear glosses ('expositio ad litteram') and more detailed commentaries were given in the page margins:

- Alongside the beginning of each fable, a prose commentary was often added, regularly beginning with 'In hoc appologo docet

[ostendit] [nos] auctor, quod' which contained a discursive statement of the moral ('expositio ad sententiam moralem'). The latter was therefore no longer derived solely from the fable epimyths (which were still often included with several verse fables).

- Subsequently, the formulation 'et hoc ostendit per (and this he shows by [. . .])' led into a brief recapitulation of the fable plot, the 'expositio ad sensum'.

Sample text:

'Fables', No. 5 (ending), No. 6 and No. 7 (beginning) from Avianus in an English manuscript dating from the second half of the thirteenth century.

1. 'Expositio ad litteram'

Interlinear glosses provide commentaries on individual words or short phrases in the main text. For instance, in the first verse of the sixth fable ('Edita gurgitibus olimque immersa profundo') the temporal adverb 'olim(que)' (once) is explained by the prepositional phrase 'in tempore preterito' (in past time).

2. 'Expositio ad sententiam moralem'

The frog pretends to the other animals that he is a doctor, but the fox exposes this presumptuousness. The 'expositio ad sententiam moralem' for 'Fable' No. 6 begins 'Jn hoc appologo ostendit nos auctor quod nihil promittere debeamus nisi quod iure esse [. . .] (In this fable, the author warns us that we should not make promises that we are unable to keep [. . .]).'

3. 'Expositio ad sensum'

The brief 'expositio ad sensum' (prose paraphrase) for No. 6 begins 'Et hoc facit introducendo ranam dicentem se posse morbum a ceteris depellere [. . .] (And this the author does by causing a frog to appear, who promises that he is able to cure illnesses [. . .]).'

The Accumulative Commentary (Fourteenth–Fifteenth Centuries)

Commentaries from the Late Middle Ages give the immediate impression of being more detailed and better structured than their predecessors. The example here shows how the blocks of commentary were placed in the context of continuous text and positioned in a unit underneath the fables. Certain paragraphs and/or key words were rendered in larger bolder lettering, making them easier to read. In its internal structure, however, the commentary remained true to its tradition:

It began with a paraphrase of the fable plot, which was identified by the 'expositio ad sensum' and was, however, now more detailed and not restricted to a brief plot summary.

The 'expositio ad sententiam' was divided into the two sections 'utilitas' and 'allegoria', the former indicating the moral significance of the text, in the form of a practical behavioural instruction, and the latter, which follows, providing a spiritual interpretation of the text.

Despite the altogether broader formulation of the teaching, the verse epimyths, which conveyed the original teaching derived from the fable text, were not superfluous. This example tale tells of the farmer, who finds a treasure while ploughing his field, whereupon, rather than thanking the goddess Fortuna, as would have been fitting, instead thanks the goddess Tellus. The verse text is still, as usual, followed by the epimyths. The 'utilitas' and 'allegoria'-paragraphs contain several different interpretations, presented consecutively. The example here shows how the legend 'vel aliter' introduces such a variant interpretation.

Although later medieval commentaries made greater use of writing than ever before, the increased number of interpretations were neither compared nor contrasted nor presented in any juxtapositional frame. The purpose of literacy here was above all to store those interpretations which existed and render them available for future use.

Sample Text:

Avianus, Fables, No. 12 (ending) and 13 with commentary as contained in a manuscript from 1464 in South West Germany (Ottobeuren, Stiftsbibliothek, MS O 82, fol. 210ᵛ)

1. Epimyths

This example tale tells of the farmer, who finds a treasure while ploughing his field, whereupon, rather than thanking the goddess Fortuna, as would have been fitting, instead thanks the goddess Tellus. This is followed by a series of epimyths, the last of which is as follows: 'Unius accepto peccat graue quisquis talento / Si (MS Sed) quid ab hoc sumpsit imputat hoc alijs (If someone receives a gift, it is a grave sin if he attributes that which he has received to another).'

2. Structuring the commentary by key word

The commentary, which is positioned in a block at the end of each section of the main text, is divided into subtexts, either by paragraphing, or, as here, by the addition of headings in larger script ('VTILITAS', 'ALLEGORIA').

3. Paraphrasing the plot of the fable

'RUSTICUS quondam terram suam arabat reperitque ibi theusarum in sulcis et statim indignatus est amplius arare reliquit et aratra uolens ducere que [MS qui] magis essent commoda et repulit peccudes ad gramina et statim in honore ipsius terre altare construxit et non in honore fortune quia se hoc a terra habuisse putabat ex quo theusarum in terra reperit. fortuna uero de hoc multum doluit dicens Cum tu pauper factus fueris tunc me item inuocabis Ego autem te nunc exaudiam eo quod tu de meritis que habuisti a me grates alteri retulisti et non mihi.'

(Once there was a farmer who ploughed his field and found a treasure hidden in the furrows. He decided it would be undignified for him to continue ploughing, and went away with the intention of from now on having more pleasant ploughs, and he drove his cattle back onto the pasture and went to find a plough which was easier to use. He then erected an altar in honour of Terra, not in honour of Fortuna, for he believed that he had been blessed by Terra, having found the treasure in the ground. Fortuna, however, felt great pain and said: 'When you are poor then you will call on me again. I, however, will not hear you, because you will have given thanks to another and not to me for the gifts that you received from me.')

4. 'Utilitas'

'VTILITAS: Grates illis reddere debemus qui nos promouerunt et non alijs qui non promouerunt ut si quis beneficium ab altero receperit isti grates referre debet qui sibi et non alijs benefecit.'

(Moral: We must be thankful to the one who has helped us and not to the one who has not helped us — as when someone receives a favour from another person, he is to give thanks to this person who performed the favour for him and not for others.)

5. 'Allegoria'

'ALLEGORIA: Per rusticum homo diues intelligitur qui se de labore et propria sua industria diuicias habere putat et non a fortuna id est a deo quia fortuna in proposito nihil est nisi deus sine quo nihil fit et qui cuncta bona tribuit. Vel aliter: Per rusticum peccatores intelligitur qui receperunt aurum id est corpus et animam que preciosiora omnibus existant illi tamen tamquam accepti beneficij deo grates non reddunt.'

(Spiritual: The farmer stands for the rich person, who believes that his riches are solely attributable to his work and diligence and not at all to the support of Fortuna [i.e. God]. For Fortuna stands for none other than God in the above mentioned, without whom nothing can be produced and who apportions all good gifts. Or another way: The farmers stand for the sinners, who have received gold, namely body and soul, which surpass the value of anything else precious. And yet they still do not thank God for this gift they received.)

6. 'Vel aliter'

The legend 'vel aliter' indicates other possible interpretations.

Literacy and the Technique of Interpretation

As far as the teaching function of the 'expositio' is concerned, literacy can only to a limited extent be regarded as an agent of change. From the twelfth century onwards, teacher's text interpretations were supported regularly by written commentaries, which systematically apply the individual procedural

stages required to comprehend and interpret a text and present these in an increasingly ordered manner. However, it increasingly became the task of these commentaries to accumulate, as comprehensively as possible, all the interpretations available, and not to lend subjective weight to, nor discuss, any of these. It can be presumed that the desire for system and order in this respect was not so much due to the desire to cater for educational demands as to the (simpler) endeavour towards 'completeness'.

Above all, literacy served the purpose of recording knowledge — a function which became ever more apparent in the course of the Late Middle Ages from the increasingly sweeping commentaries, which threatened to asphyxiate the main text of the written manuscript, virtually blotting it out. The oral process of learning a text, performed in the communal 'lectio', was supported and, at times, guided by the written 'expositio' (like a teacher who bases his recitation very closely on his written notes). The oral 'lectio' was never replaced by writing or its relevance questioned by performing any written attempts at interpretation. It is possible that there were individual cases of oral discussion when it came to discussing the validity of multiple interpretations regarding the written commentary within the 'lectio'. The written commentaries opened up this possibility to both teachers and pupils, but it was not their primary purpose.

ABSTRACT

Even schools had to learn how to cope with writing. The progress of this learning process can be traced by examining school books — initially a medium used by few, it developed into a medium for many. Its production, distribution and reception shifted towards encompassing the participation of all pupils in the available literature and the release of the classroom from the need to produce and disseminate its own texts. From the sixteenth century, writing became freed as a technology for use in classes themselves and was then used both as a teaching and learning instrument.

Important stages in this process date back to well before the invention of the printing press. An initial developmental phase took place in the High Middle Ages ('pupils as readers'), followed by a further one in the Late Middle Ages ('re-oralization of text-commentary combinations for the purpose of effective text distribution'). The significance of printing was primarily its ability to make available the knowledge which had already been attained.

Wherever the reading of texts made increasing use of literacy, it became simultaneously systematized. Above all, the new medium was used as an effective repository of information, and less extensively for the purpose of discussing the accumulated knowledge, the variety of which was increasing. Teaching, mainly oral in nature, only assigned subsidiary tasks to the instrument of literacy. Just as the new book printing technology only opened up the possibility of employing writing broadly in teaching, so did literacy only open up the possibility of discussing accumulated knowledge in the oral-based 'lectio' in a more determined way. Where and how this possibility was exploited in individual cases depended on the values which served to organize the teaching, and not on the media used.

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