

ADDENDA

Paleografia

## Introduction

### *Interdisciplinary Studies of Structure-Signalling Devices in Palaeography*

The four papers comprising the Philology section in this volume of *Boletín Millares Carlo* are the result of a seminar, “Organization in Medieval English Texts: Structure and Signalling Devices”, convened at the ESSE-7 conference in Zaragoza. It seems highly fitting to present the results of a seminar which took place in Spain in a journal published in Spain, and we are grateful to the editors for hosting the publication of these papers.

Our motivation was to encourage dialogue and collaboration between the relatively new fields of historical pragmatics (and historical discourse analysis) and the more traditional fields of philology and manuscript studies. We sought papers on the ways in which medieval texts were structured and the ways in which this structuring is signalled. We were also interested in the extent to which palaeographic features could serve as contextualising factors in the interpretation of encoded meaning. Traditionally this has been overlooked by many editors of medieval texts, who have paid little attention to information conveyed by non-linguistic means. However, this is now changing, and researchers like our contributors are elaborating a more holistic approach to the interpretation of medieval texts.

The papers in this Philology section can be read as a dialogue. Carroll’s study of medieval English recipe structure ends with a call for better palaeographic descriptions of manuscripts. Alonso Almeida’s paper answers that call with an analytical account of the palaeography of a medieval English gynaecological text. Peikola’s survey of almost a hundred manuscript attestations of *tabulae lectionum* is another model of fine-grained palaeographic description. Thaisen’s paper reinforces the need for such description by demonstrating its value, using the electronic transcripts of the Canterbury Tales Project.

Alonso Almeida combines traditional text linguistic concerns, such as the intended ‘audience’ as distinct from the actual ‘readers’, with traditional palaeographic concerns such as hierarchy of decoration, and incorporates into his analysis elements, such as boxes and marginalia, which early palaeogra-

phers frequently dismissed as merely decorative or amusing. He shows that these palaeographic elements integrate with more strictly linguistic phenomena, not only signalling textual structure, but also actually creating that structure: organising the contents into meaningful chunks of information. Using systemic functional linguistics, he uncovers the generic structure of these scientific treatises, which then enables him to define the interrelationship of contents, structure, and signalling strategies.

Carroll demonstrates that text linguist Michael Hoey's concept of the 'discourse colony' is applicable to medieval texts (readers will notice that indeed all four articles address texts which are discourse colonies). She identifies minor anachronisms and one important gap in Hoey's characterisation, highlighting the benefits of cross-disciplinary collaboration between manuscript studies and modern linguistics. We encourage readers to follow her links to digitized manuscript images on the internet, not only to better understand her paper but also to explore some of the resources that are becoming increasingly available. These provide at least a partial remedy to the inadequacy of some editions' descriptions of manuscript features such as rubrication and mise-en-page.

Peikola's extremely thorough account of these very features for Wycliffite tables of lections is a salutary illustration of the level of detail which can be achieved. His section 3.1 may also remind us of the ways in which modern linguistics and manuscript studies have independently arrived at similar conclusions. Where pragmatics, for instance, emphasizes the importance of 'utterances'—different contextualisations of the same sentence—this is not unlike the shift in palaeographic practice from editions which conflate different extant versions to diplomatic editions of single attestations.

Thaisen, in contrast to the others, analyzes a literary text (or literary discourse colony), one for which many of the resources that Alonso Almeida, Carroll, and Peikola are currently developing already exist. His paper offers insights into the scribal transmission of the *Canterbury Tales* (and even new speculation about their composition), but it also provides an illustration of the benefits that meticulous manuscript description can bring to the scholarly community, even for very familiar texts. Again, one sees the congruence of recent insights in palaeography and linguistics. Thaisen's insight is reminiscent of that in sociolinguistics, that seemingly random, irrelevant variation is in fact motivated.

As the seminar convenors, we would like to close this foreword by thanking Peikola and Thaisen, the ESSE conference organizers, the editors of this journal, and you, our readers.

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