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Prodesse et delectare – An Introduction

I Scope – Concepts – Terminology

It is a persistent commonplace in scholarship that medieval literature was, at its core, didactic. While this observation is sometimes linked to limited aesthetic autonomy, we should not overlook the many ways medieval authors clad their didactic endeavours in pleasant forms.[1] The Horatian formula *prodesse et delectare*[2] was extremely influential in the production of texts across various languages and genres.[3] While indeed didactic elements can be attested to in almost any medieval text, and while medieval literature displays a range of possibilities to teach and instruct, the scope of the present volume is more closely focused on *explicitly* didactic literature. We describe as 'didactic' any text that takes education as a systematic and dominant principle of composition.[4] Education is taken in the broad sense of "the aggregate of all the processes by means of which a person develops abilities, attitudes, and other forms of behaviours of positive value in the society in which [s/]he lives".[5] Our emphasis on 'literature' excludes mere sequences of instructions with no attempt to wrap the conveyed contents in a pleasant linguistic form. The way that medieval writers combine the pleasant with the useful is this book's focus.

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1 Huber states that didacticism was the basic requirement for literary production as well as reception throughout the Middle Ages and that the functional use of literature always supersedes its aesthetic form. Christoph Huber, Lehrdichtung, in: Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik, Tübingen 2001, cols. 107–112.

2 Horaz, De arte poetica, vv. 333–334.: *aut prodesse volunt aut delectare poetae* / *aut simul et iucunda et idonea dicere vitae* (quoted from the edition Q. Horatii Flacci Opera, ed. by Friedrich Klingner, Leipzig 1959).

3 For a survey on the medieval reception of Horace cf. Franz Brunhölzl/ Walter Rüegg, Horaz im Mittelalter, in: Lexikon des Mittelalters Bd. 5 (1991), cols. 124–125. Cf. also the works by Karsten Friis-Jensen, The Ars Poetica in twelth-century France. The Horace of Matthew of Vendôme, Geoffrey of Vinsauf, and John of Garland, in: Cahiers de l'institut du moyen-âge grec et latin, Université de Copenhague 60 (1990), pp. 319–388. Idem, Medieval commentaries on Horace, in: Nicholas Mann/ Birger Munk Olsen (eds.), Medieval and Renaissance Scholarship. Proceedings of the Second European Science Foundation Workshop on the Classical Tradition in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (London, The Warburg Institute, 27–28 November 1992), (Mittellateinische Studien und Texte 21), Leiden et al. pp. 51–73; Idem, Humanist Use of Medieval Commentaries on Horace's 'Art of poetry', in: Studi umanistici Piceni 28 (2008), pp. 239–248.

4 See the definition by Bernhard F. Scholz, Belehrung, in: Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft, vol. 1, Berlin, New York 1997, pp. 211–215, here p. 211.

5 Dictionary of Education. Prepared under the Auspices of Phi Delta Kappa. ed. Carter V. Good, New York et al. 1959, p. 202.

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Education did not remain a secondary aspect in literature. A vast spectrum of medieval literary texts is explicitly educational in both its claims and its textual intentions. Literature transmitted not only Christian values and classical *sententiae* but also numerous forms of practical knowledge.[6] Many of the earliest texts of the (newly) rising vernacular literary languages in the eleventh and twelfth centuries are didactic literature, including translations or adaptations of Latin texts and original works. In parallel with the rising vernaculars, Latin remained the language of education and homiletic teaching. This volume combines contributions that analyse didactic literature in high medieval Europe from different vantage points. They open new perspectives on education as a working principle or legitimizing strategy in the heterogeneous forms of writing intended to convey knowledge. This broad thematic, linguistic and geographical scope enables us to view didactic literature as the universal phenomenon it was and prompts us to understand its influence on many aspects of society in high medieval Europe and beyond.

Contributions will focus on the high medieval period. This is not because earlier texts were any less didactic, but because the cultural changes that set in during the twelfth century precipitated the production of an even wider range of didactic works. The religious developments from the monastic reforms to the resolutions of the Fourth Lateran Council encouraged the opening of categories of knowledge to lay people. This, together with changes in the social stratification of the secular elites, triggered the production of vernacular writing and made specific didactic discourses more readily available in the languages of these elites. The so-called 'Renaissance of the Twelfth Century' brought new esteem for classical Greek and Latin learning that built upon the knowledge of classical authorities already familiar in the medieval period.[7] Developments in trade and monetary transactions fostered a greater need for basic education in letters, mathematics, geography and languages.[8] The increase of Greek language skills and contacts with the Arabic world lend crucial impulses to Western European philosophy,[9] but also to Western astronomy. The latter science became popular even at the princely courts and its practice was discussed by kings and bishops.[10] Teacher-student pairs such as Aristotle and his disciple, Alexander the Great,

6 On the Horatian principle in the patristic exegesis cf. Basil Studer, Delectare et prodesse. Zu einem Schlüsselwort der patristischen Exegese, in: Mémorial J. Gribomont, Roma 1988, pp. 555–581. Idem., 'Delectare et prodesse'. Ein exegetisch-homiletisches Prinzip bei Augustinus, in: Signum Pietatis. Festgabe für Cornelius Petrus Mayer OSA zum 60. Geburtstag. Edited on commission of the Augustinus-Instituts der deutschen Augustiner by Adolar Zumkeller OSA, Würzburg 1989, pp. 497–513.

7 Charles Homer Haskins, The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century, Cambridge, Mass. 1927.

8 Sabatino Roberto López, The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages 950–1350, Cambridge 1971.

9 This is explored in several contributions in Peter Dronke, A History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy, Cambridge 1988, e.g. Winthrop Wetherby, Philosophy, cosmology, and the twelfth-century Renaissance, pp. 21–53 and Jean Jolivet, The Arabic Inheritance, pp. 113–148.

10 Such as in the work of Nicole Oresme who addressed the misuse of astrology by courtiers at the court of Charles V of France; cf. Stefano Caroti, Nicole Oresme's polemic against astrology in his

promoted the knowledge of moral philosophy as well as the sciences in the literary texts that were popular at the courts.[11]

Figure 1: London, British Library, Add MS 47680, fol. 20v.

'Quodlibeta', in: Patrick CURRY (ed.), Astrology, science and society: Historical essays, Woodbridge 1987, pp. 75–93.

11 Cf. the comprehensive work by Catherine GAULLIER-BOUGASSAS (ed.), La fascination pour Alexandre le Grand dans les littératures européennes (Xe-XVIe siècle), 4 vols. (Alexander redivivus 5), Turnhout 2014, which covers the popularity of Alexander-narratives in a range of literatures from Russian and Serbian to Armenian, Hebrew, Arabic, Latin Greek and the European vernaculars.

An illustration in a fourteenth-century manuscript of the 'Secretum secretorum' shows the great philosopher and successful emperor in a discussion concerning the movements of the stars.[12] While we will explore case studies predominantly from this period of transition and the expansion of the categories of knowledge, we will also trace some of these developments into the later Middle Ages to spotlight the lasting influence of High Medieval teaching and learning in literature.

Didactic writing has only recently attracted scholarly interest, though much work remains to be done.[13] This is partly due to what scholars of literature perceived as a lack of poetic quality in many educational texts, in particular those intended for lay audiences composed in the vernacular languages. Didactic poetry had a longstanding poetic tradition in classical Latin and remained popular in the medieval period.[14] The question of a didactic genre, didactic poetry, has troubled classical theorists: modern authors (famously Goethe) as much as literary scholars.[15] The focus on genre was often connected to the literary phenomenon 'didactic poetry' or *Lehrgedicht*, a term which suggests a degree of coherence in the broad variety of texts to which it is applied. However, if the focus shifts from 'poetry' to 'literature' more broadly, education occurs as an external function, rather than a structurally independent type of literature.[16] Recent studies have therefore promoted education as an auctorial position with a normative claim[17] or a didactic mode of speaking[18] as more useful categories with which to encompass the vast variety of writing meant to instruct, and the many forms this could adopt. Other recent publications on medieval didacticism have taken a broader approach and analysed didactic elements in a variety of literary texts, lyrical

12 London, British Library, Add MS 47680, fol. 20v. Cf. figure 1.

13 E.g. Juanita Feros Ruys (ed.), What Nature Does Not Teach. Didactic Literature in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods (Disputatio 15), Turnhout 2008; Henrike Lähnemann/Sandra Linden (eds.), Dichtung und Didaxe: Lehrhaftes Sprechen in der deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters, Berlin, New York 2008.

14 Thomas Haye, Das lateinische Lehrgedicht im Mittelalter. Analyse einer Gattung, Leiden, New York, Berlin 1997.

15 Albertsen refers to didactic poetry as a genre, though he discusses differing attitudes to the question of genre throughout history, Leif Ludwig Albertsen, Lehrdichtung, in: Fischer Lexikon Literatur, vol 2, Frankfurt 1996, pp. 937–960, pp. 937–941. See also Haye (note 14), pp. 1–19.

16 Cf. Scholz (note 4), wo offers the following definition on p. 211: "In den Gattungen der didaktischen Literatur dominante, in anderen Gattungen bisweilen subdominante Textfunktion (dominant textual function in didactic literature, in other genres occasionally subdominant)".

17 Regula Forster/ Romy Günthart/ Christoph Schanze, Einleitung, in: Idem (eds.), Didaktisches Erzählen. Formen literarischer Belehrung in Orient und Okzident, Frankfurt a.M. et al. 2010, pp. 1–20, p. 10.

18 Henrike Lähnemann/ Sandra Linden, Was ist lehrhaftes Sprechen? Einleitung, in: Idem (note 13), pp. 1–10, here p. 2. See also Elke Brüggen, Fiktionalität und Didaxe. Annäherungen an die Dignität lehrhafter Rede im Mittelalter, in: Ursula Peters (ed.), Text und Kultur. Mittelalterliche Literatur 1150–1450 (Germanistische Symposien. Berichtsbände XXIII), Stuttgart, Weimar 2001, pp. 546–574, here pp. 565–574.

as well as narrative, or the way literary texts reflect on education and on their own didactic potential.[19]

The present volume has a different objective: in narrowing the focus to didactic literature in a stricter sense, the contributions explore the strategies authors employed to convey their teachings. Didactics in medieval texts become effective on the level of content and form, but also include rhetorical, performative and visual methods. Successful didactic authors need to be experts not just on what they teach but also know how to teach it.

II Authority of didactic authors

In High Medieval Europe, writing any kind of text was a major commitment. Authors had to muster time and writing material for the composition of their works. They needed to have some kind of education, and access to sources, which meant a social or institutional network in which source texts circulated. Authors writing both in Latin and the various vernaculars often felt compelled to justify the efforts. They frequently referred to classical and patristic authorities and the educational value of their works for legitimation.

Horace's 'Ars poetica' was copied throughout the medieval period and quoted by Latin writers.[20] The vernacular languages did not develop an independent poetical theory but thrived on classical inheritance. Secular texts in particular often adapted methods of both Classical literary theory and scriptural exegesis to new contexts. The example of German medieval literature shows that the Horatian formula of *prodesse et delectare* was not glossed in Old High German. It was very rarely quoted until well into the early modern period.[21] Nonetheless, the notion that in-

19 A recent collection of papers on teaching and learning in medieval German literature discusses in several of its contributions the reflexions on teaching, learning and education that can be found in the (German) texts themselves. Cf. Henrike Lähnemann/ Nicola McLelland/ Niene Miedema (eds.), Lehren, Lernen und Bilden in der deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters. XXIII. Anglo-German Colloquium, Nottingham 2013, Tübingen 2017.

20 Munk Olsen lists 134 manuscripts that copy the 'Ars Poetica', where the formula originates, from the eleventh and twelfth centuries alone. Birger Munk Olsen, L'étude des auteurs classiques latins aux XIe et XIIe siècles, vol 1:1. Catalogue des manuscrits classiques latins copiés du IXe au XIIe siècle: Apicius-Juvénal, Paris 1982, pp. 147–148.

21 Cf. Klaus Siewert, Die althochdeutsche Horazglossierung (Studien zum Althochdeutschen 8), Göttingen 1986; see also Rolf Bergmann, Umfang und Verteilung volkssprachiger Textglossierung und Textglossare: Nichtbiblische Texte, in: Rolf Bergmann/ Stefanie Stricker (eds.), Die althochdeutsche und altsächsische Glossographie. Ein Handbuch, Bd. 1, Berlin/New York 2009, pp. 83–122, pp. 85–87; Hend Asaad, 'Prodesse et delectare' in den deutschen Fastnachtspielen von Hans Sachs und in den arabischen Schattenspielen von Ibn Daniyal. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung anhand exemplarischer Texte, in: Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik 76 (2016), pp. 123–144; Peter Philipp Riedl, Nützliches Erschrecken. Die ältesten Versionen der Faust-Historia und das Verhältnis von prodesse und delectare

struction was more effective if it was pleasant was present in vernacular didacticism, too.[22]

Vice versa, educational values could be ascribed to a book to legitimize its entertaining subject matter. Historiographic works such as the 'Pantheon' by Godfrey of Viterbo or the anonymous Middle High German 'Kaiserchronik' claim a didactic function beyond a mere retelling of events in the past, but rather aim to offer guidance for the present and future of their audiences. Romances, among the most popular new texts produced and read in high medieval Europe, suggest that their readers used the trifles of the (literary) heroes as models for their own lives, a practice explicitly encouraged by authors of the courtesy books which emerged all over Europe in the same period.[23] Even romances of dubious morality, such as the 'Tristan' in the version by Gottfried von Strassburg, raise a claim to being useful to their readers' emotional education.[24]

But even texts that were unequivocally instructive often came with more or less elaborate justification about why they were produced and why the author saw himself in the position not only to instruct others, but also to make his teachings available to people beyond his immediate personal circle by writing them down. Monastic writers in particular, those who were most likely to have time and occasion to produce and copy didactic texts, had to justify their endeavour in order to circumvent accusations of pride and presumption. The typical *topoi* include the requests of their superiors or brothers, their own unwillingness to put themselves forward and, increasingly, a concern for their contemporaries' moral well-being.[25]

Outside the monasteries, at the schools, courts, and universities, the need for humility was felt less strongly and authors of didactic texts often show considerable self-confidence as to their ability to instruct others. However, authors who lived and wrote for those 'in the world' also needed to convince their audiences that they were indeed

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in der Literatur der Frühen Neuzeit, in: Daphnis. Zeitschrift für mittlere deutsche Literatur und Kultur der frühen Neuzeit (1400–1750) 32 (2003), pp. 523–558.

22 Cf. Tony Hunt on *prodesse et delectare* in Old French literature: 'Prodesse et Delectare': Metaphors of Pleasure and Instruction in Old French, in: Neuphilologische Mitteilungen 80 (1979), pp. 17–35. For more context concerning the medieval success story of this quotation cf. Brüggen, (note 18).

23 Cf. eg. 'Der Welscher Gast', ll. 1029–1078 (Der Welsche Gast des Thomasin von Zirclaria, ed. Heinrich Rückert, introduction and register by Friedrich Neumann, Deutsche Neudrucke: Texte des Mittelalters (Berlin, 1965) and 'Urbain le Courtois', 'later' version, ll. 67–84. The lines are interpolated in the manuscript Bodleian Library, Selden supra 74 from the second half of the thirteenth century (Anglo-Norman Books of Courtesy and Nurture, ed. Rosamond Parsons, in: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America 44 (1929), p. 29.

24 Cf. the prologue to Gottfried's text, in particular vv. 218–244: Gottfried von Straßburg, Tristan, ed. by Karl Marold. Unveränderter vierter Abdruck nach dem dritten mit einem auf Grund von F. Rankes Kollationen verbesserten Apparat besorgt von Werner Schröder, Berlin, New York 1977.

25 Sita Steckel, Kulturen des Lehrens im Früh- und Hochmittelalter. Autorität, Wissenskonzepte und Netzwerke von Gelehrten (Norm und Struktur 39), Cologne 2010, pp. 667–668.

qualified to teach. Sources of auctorial authority broadened in the course of the high medieval period, as more and more literature was produced by an increasingly diverse group of people. In the eleventh and early twelfth centuries, divine inspiration and the foundation of the teachings in ecclesiastical doctrine dominated as sources of authority for the predominantly clerical writers.[26] When medieval authors commented on didactic processes (*instruere*, *erudire*) they meant either learning to read and write Latin or moral education – or both at the same time. The word didactic from Greek δίδαξις (dídaxis) was rarely used in the High Medieval period. Hugh of Saint Victor calls his major didactic work 'Didascalicon de studio legendi'. In it, he treats the seven liberal arts and the ability to read and interpret Holy Scripture with regards to its moral dimension.[27] One of the characteristic intellectual markers of the medieval 'renaissance' mentioned above was a renewed interest in classical Latin writing. Among the texts rediscovered, read, copied and translated were treatises about ethics and morality.[28] Cicero, Statius, pseudo-Cato and others became staples at the schools,[29] where they were used to teach Latin alongside morality – *litterae et mores*, a typical combination in the high medieval classrooms that accommodated the offspring of aristocratic families destined for careers at the ecclesiastical and secular courts of Europe.[30] Accordingly, classical *auctoritates* held sway in the didactic literatures of the period, from matters of love and friendship to governmental practice, from agriculture to household management, and indeed the composition of literature itself. Their works, supplemented by biblical and patristic texts, provided the major sources upon which authors could base their teachings, and they were careful to note their knowledge of these texts. Despite the uncontested dominance of Christian doctrine in most didactic writing, the heathen origin of the classics did not prevent their use. On the contrary: if these heathen authors knew so much about morality and lived blameless lives, how much more obliged were the Christians to educate themselves in these matters? So

26 Steckel (note 25), pp. 124–130.

27 Hugonis de Sancto Victore Didascalicon De Studio legendi: a critical text, ed. Charles Henry Buttimer (Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Latin Language and Literature 10), Washington 1939.

28 Birger Munk Olsen, La popularité des textes classiques entre le IXe et le XIIe siècle, in: Revue d'Histoires des Textes 14–15 (1986), pp. 169–181, published again in Idem, La réception de la littérature classique au moyen age (IXe-XIIe siècle). Choix des articles publiés par les collegues à l'occasion de son soixantième anniversaire, ed. by Karsten Friis-Jensen, Copenhagen 1995, pp. 21–34.

29 Charles Homer Haskins, A List of Text-Books from the close of the Twelfth Century, in: Idem (ed.), Studies in the History of Medieval Science, Cambridge, Mass. 1924, pp. 356–76. See also C. Stephen Jaeger, The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950–1200 (The Middle Ages series), Philadelphia 1994, pp. 76–117; Günter Glauche, Schullektüre im Mittelalter. Entstehung und Wandlungen des Lektürekanons bis 1200 nach den Quellen dargestellt (Münchener Beiträge zur Mediävistik und Renaissance-Forschung 5), Munich 1970.

30 C. Stephen Jaeger, Cathedral Schools and Humanist Learning, 950–1150, in: Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte 61 (1987), pp. 569–616; later in more detail Jaeger (note 29), esp. chapter 3: The New Education Institutionalized: Schools of Manners, pp. 53–75.

Wernher von Elmendorf argues in his ‘Tugendspiegel’, defending the use of classical moral teaching.[31] The oft-cited image of the dwarves on the shoulders of giants springs to mind.[32] Biblical and patristic texts were used not only for religious instruction, as in the newly emerging form of the thematic sermon,[33] but also as exemplars for secular matters, such as good government or even diet.

However, inspiration was drawn not only from the Latin pre-Christian authors, but also from texts outside the frame of what we tend to think of as the Western world. Intensive intellectual and economic contacts with the East, namely the Levant and the broader Arabic world, made knowledge from Palestine and Persia available. There had always been close contacts with North Africa in the Mediterranean and the Umayyad government in Spain allowed for the import of Islamic philosophy, art, and administration. For writers of texts that transmitted categories of knowledge hitherto unknown in Latin Christianity, authority could be drawn from different sources. Experience became a new legitimate source of auctorial authority: Walter Map could write about the ‘Courtier’s Trifles’ partly based on his education but mostly because of his time at the court of Henry II.

III The contributions to the volume

We have grouped the contributions into four sections, which we will characterize below. These sections demonstrate the range of thematic and systematic focal points that emerge in the contributions; the intersections between the contributions would in some cases have justified their inclusion in a different section. Within each section, the contributions follow a chronological order.

Knowledge and Power

Expertise and authority were never entirely undisputed and the period of the High Middle Ages is also one in which experts can become suspects and their role in a

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31 ‘Tugendspiegel’, ll. 21–36: Wernher von Elmendorf, ed. Joachim Bumke (Altdeutsche Textbibliothek 77), Tübingen, 1974, p. 1–2.

32 John of Salisbury attributes this analogy to Bernhard of Chartres in his ‘Metalogicon’, (book III, ch. 4), ed. and transl. by John B. Hall/ J.P. Haseldine (Corpus Christianorum in translation 12) Turnhout 2013, p. 257.

33 One of the first to compose a medieval *ars praedicandi* was Alain de Lille, though many more would follow in the course of the high and late Middle Ages. Cf. Marianne G. Briscoe/ Barbara H. Jaye, Artes praedicandi / Artes orandi (Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental 61), Turnhout 1992, pp. 27–36.

culture may be questioned.[34] After all, the possession of or access to knowledge is often synonymous with political, religious, or social capital – in High Medieval Europe, and beyond, knowledge begins to equal power.[35] Martin AURELL, in his contribution, observes a paradigm shift in the importance and social relevance of education, especially literary education, not just for kings and magnates but also for the chivalric circles of the Anglo-Norman elite. The ideal of the *miles litteratus* and the development of an aristocratic literature, he argues, were pivotal for the political success of the nobility and the establishment of their social identity.

A number of texts were, in fact, composed or translated specifically to enable a ruler to govern well, consolidate power and increase social capital. The knowledge and virtues that a ruler was expected to assemble in his person were drawn from different traditions: Medieval Mirrors of Princes combined cardinal virtues known from classical authorities alongside Christian ethics, knowledge on administration and ethics of warfare. But the sources for the education of a ruler could be even more diverse. The contributions of Michele CAMPOPIANO and Helen FULTON engage with a particularly fascinating text, its transmission and its adaptation to new political contexts: the 'Secretum secretorum'. CAMPOPIANO traces the history of the text and tracks some of its most influential motifs from its origins in the sixth-century Sassanian Empire to thirteenth-century England, demonstrating their political appropriation. Helen FULTON analyses the impact of the Latin 'Secretum secretorum' in Welsh literature, where the text was again adapted to new contexts and was received by new audiences, showing how its function came to change yet again.

Performativity and Imagery

Instruction, however, took largely place in face-to-face situations and the texts allow us insights into only a small part of medieval didactics. Medieval literature is a creature "betwixt and between" orality and literacy: this much has been established.[36] This is true even more for texts composed to resemble oral forms of discourse, such as the homily. Sarah BOWDEN analyses the performativity of early Middle High German

34 Frank REXROTH, Expertenweisheit. Die Kritik an den Studierten und die Utopie einer geheilten Gesellschaft im späten Mittelalter (Freiburger mediävistische Vorträge 1), Basel 2008.

35 A phrase coined by Martin KINTZINGER, Wissen wird Macht. Bildung im Mittelalter, Stuttgart 2003. The connection between knowledge and power across Europe is discussed in the contributions to Joseph CANNING/ Edmund KING/ Martial STAUB, Knowledge, Discipline and Power in the Middle Ages. Essays in Honour of David Luscombe (Studien und Texte zur Geistesgeschichte im Mittelalter 106), Leiden 2011.

36 Almut SUERBAUM/ Manuele GRAGNOLATI, Medieval Culture 'betwixt and between'. An introduction, in: IDEM (eds.) Aspect of the Performative in Medieval Culture (Trends in Medieval Philology 18), Berlin, New York 2010, pp. 1–14. Cf. Dennis H. GREEN, Medieval Listening and Reading. The Primary Reception of German Literature 800–1300, Cambridge 2009.

didactic writing by the example of the 'Rede von deme heiligen gelouben' and demonstrates how the text suggests interaction with its audience despite its literary form. Interaction with the audience can also be achieved with images. The didactic function of images, for example in the case of stained-glass windows, has long been observed, since they allow the non-literate *educandus* a degree of access to knowledge (as Gregory the Great states in his famous letter)[37] and, at the same time, offer delight, just as Horace argues of literature. Indeed, even in didactic writing, images play a crucial role. Illustrations and images are transmitted in manuscripts not (or not only) to appeal to the illiterate, but also to enhance the didactic effect of the text. Ernst HELLGARDT demonstrates in his chapter that the images in 'Der Welsche Gast' are unintelligible to the illiterate but do aid the reception and memorization of the didactic content by a reader.

Religious texts in particular rely on visual strategies to convey meaning. Among the first illuminated medieval manuscripts are biblical texts – such as the famous Lindisfarne Gospel (London, British Library, Cotton MS Nero D IV) of the eighth century – whose images served to emphasise the importance of the scripture, guide the reading and aid devotional practice.[38] Illustration as a didactic strategy was similarly important to other religions of the book, as Katrin KOGMAN-APPEL shows for the case of medieval illustrated *Haggadot*-manuscripts, in which images work on several levels to illustrate both the textual layer and the ritual that is the subject of the text. However, the didactic potential of visual aids was also harnessed for the teaching of more mundane topics. The use of programmes of illustrations and the element of textual performativity demonstrate how much thought medieval authors put in their respective didactic enterprises. The variety of didactic strategies is equally evident with regards to the literary forms employed.

Forms and Functions

Since we established earlier that 'didactic' implied a textual function rather than a structural feature of instructive literature, we must take account of the almost unlimited diversity of textual forms authors made use of to combine instruction with pleasure. They often employed forms that, from a modern perspective, would be somewhat

37 Cf. for example Michael CURSCHMANN, Pictura laicorum litteratura? Überlegungen zum Verhältnis von Bild und volkssprachlicher Schriftlichkeit im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter bis zum Codex Manesse, in: Hagen KELLER/ Klaus GRUBMÜLLER/ Nikolaus STAUBACH (eds.), Pragmatische Schriftlichkeit im Mittelalter. Erscheinungsformen und Entwicklungsstufen (Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften 65), Munich 1992, pp. 111–129 and illustrations pp. 2–11.
38 Michelle P. BROWN, The Lindisfarne Gospels. Society, Spirituality and the Scribe. Toronto/ Buffalo 2003, chapter 5: The art of the Lindisfarne Gospel, pp. 272–370, here pp. 272–299.

unusual containers for knowledge. However, as the contributions in this section demonstrate, form and function in didactic literature are related in complex ways. Medieval writers displayed great creativity in exploring the different potential genres on offer for intellectual engagement, mnemotechnic or explication, while also making the contents pleasing and, in some cases, outright entertaining. In the present volume, the range of different degrees of didactic function, employing various poetical forms, ranges from hard-to-place fragments at one end of the scale to didactic poems with readily identifiable authors at the other. The particularly problematic former case is discussed by Claudia WITTIG, drawing on the example of the fragmentary (Early) Middle High German texts 'Rittersitte' and 'Der heimliche Bote'. In both cases, an allocation of a didactic function is disputed in scholarship. WITTIG approaches these texts via discourse analysis (which produces a new edition of the 'Rittersitte') which supports a new assessment of the two works.

Corrado BOLOGNA, looking at lyrical poetry, emphasises in his chapter the relevance of vernacular literature in Northern Italy in the thirteenth century. He establishes the first phenomenology of such texts and situates them synchronically, within contemporary literary production in Northern Italy, and diachronically, with regards to previous conceptually connected models.

Even the traditional didactic poem afforded opportunities for creative instruction, as Thomas HAYE demonstrates using the example of a hitherto-unknown text by Simon of Couvin (1320–1367), which is edited here for the first time. The text discusses from a juridical perspective whether, under certain circumstances, a healthy tooth may be drawn. HAYE reveals in his analysis and interpretation the didactic strategies, literary references and rhetorical means that Simon employs in the presentation of a legal case that was bound to cause amusement in its readers, too.

David MURRAY's contribution touches on the question of a didactic genre that we have discussed above. He deliberately chooses heterogeneous texts from the thirteenth century (Matfre Ermengauds 'Breviari d'Amor', Hugos of Trimberg 'Der Renner' and Dante Alighieris 'Vita Nuova') in order to discuss how the tension between authoritative quotations and textual coherence may be resolved.

Models and Reception

The contributions combined in the fourth and last section show how instruction or educational elements can be attached to texts on different levels. Helena DE CARLOS establishes, describes and differentiates several didactic levels in the oldest manuscript of the pseudo-Clementine 'Recognitions' (Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare 158, late seventh century). The different medieval hands in which annotations and glosses were added to the codex do not only allow us to trace the journey of the manuscript from Spain to Italy, but also illustrate a hermeneutic process of appropriation in the context of monastic education.

Didactic agglomeration even in seemingly erotic literature is the subject of Carmen Cardelle de Hartmann's chapter. Her focus is on the simultaneous opposition and close relation between *poeta doctus* and *poeta doctor* that informs the Carmen Buranum 88, which she reads as a parody of two songs ascribed to Peter Abelard.

Among the texts that provide models for medieval didactic literature is Prudentius' 'Psychomachia'. Texts taking this work as their point of reference form a broad tradition in the depiction of vices and virtues. Lorenzo Fabiani singles out one example from the late fourteenth century in his contribution. His analysis of Giovanni Genesio Quaglias 'De conflictu vitiorum et virtutum' offers, for the first time, a precise classification of its place in literary history, and, at the same time, presents its Latin sources and rhetorical strategies in great detail.

Michael Stolz's contribution makes a strong case for the connection between didacticism and a specific narrative model in Giovanni Boccaccio's 'Decameron'. *Novellare*, in Boccaccio's work, is not just one of the many forms of medieval re-narration but connects closely to a metaphorical mode of speaking about clothing and nakedness, as Stolz demonstrates with reference to the Nastagio-novel ('Decameron', V, 8) and the Griselda-novel ('Decameron', X, 10), and their reception by Petrarch and others.

Even heroic epics, which in early modern times look back on more than 1,000 years of (partly oral) tradition, can be inscribed with didactic elements in the process of their reception, as the final contribution by Verio Santoro shows with the example of the 'Lied vom Hürnen Seyfried'. This versified text, little appreciated in scholarship but highly valued in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and widely transmitted in print, displays several references to contemporary history and could thus be read as advisory.

As this last contribution extends the history of medieval didacticism well into the early modern period, it indicates that the history of didactic writing and of the reception of the Horatian principle is far from over. Famous authors of the seventeenth century (Martin Opitz) and the eighteenth (Alexander Pope) composed comprehensive and much-treasured didactic literary works, often referring to the same classical models that were so prominent already in the medieval texts.[39] The role didacticism played in literature was, however, unrivalled in the Middle Ages. It is the aim of this volume to emphasize the variety and creativity of medieval didactic writing and encourage further study in this rich and promising field. We hope our readers may find it both pleasant and useful.

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39 Albertsen (note 15), pp. 948–954.