



The New Philology

Stephen Miller

AAC / ÖAW

Texts & Files SS 2006

Universität Wien



Speculum 1990

- Special issue of *Speculum* 65.1 (1990)
- 5 papers from a symposium with an introduction by Stephen Nichols
- (with Kevin Brownlee and Marina Brownlee.) *The New Medievalism*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1991.



Manuscript Culture

- “Introduction: Philology in a Manuscript Culture,” *Speculum* (January 1990), 65(1):1-10.



Main premise

- Need to remove the isolation of philology from other disciplines
- “Postmodern return to the origins of medieval studies”

- “Orientation” rather than a Methodology



Auerbach / Philology

- Philology saves texts “not only from oblivion, but from the changes, mutilations, and additions that necessarily result from popular consumption or the negligence of copyists.” (Auerbach)
- The manuscript seen only as an issue of text/language



Cerquigliani / Writing

- “Medieval writing does not produce variants; it is a variance” (Cerquigliani)
 - *Éloge de la variante* (Seuil, 1989)
- Return to the manuscript culture itself



Manuscript Culture is a Composite Work

- Medieval folio was the result of the *composite* of any number of individuals
 - Poet
 - Scribe
 - Illuminator
 - Rubricator
 - Commentator



Neglected Features of the Manuscript

- Neglected
 - Visual Images
 - Annotation
 - Rubrics
 - “Captions”
 - Glosses
 - Interpolations



Supplant / Multiply / Split

- Manuscript copying
 - Scribe supplants the original poet
- Manuscript
 - Multiple forms of representation
- Lacanian split
 - Doubling of perceptual field in illuminated mss



Manuscript & Language

- Suzanne Fleischman
 - Idiosyncrasies
 - Incoherences
 - Gaps in the text
 - Anomalies of grammar
 - Variance in script usage
 - Variety of text structures



What is the Text?

- “The Text” for the New Philology
 - Destabalised into the plurality of its variants
- As opposed to classical philological approach of the reduction of interpretation to
 - Univocity
 - Monosemantism
 - *A singular meaning*