Editing and Interpretation of Middle English Texts

Essays in Honour of William Marx

edited by Margaret Connolly and Raluca Radulescu

DESCRIPTION:
These fifteen essays, all published here for the first time, explore issues related to the editing and interpretation of Middle English literature. These include the treatment of all types of evidence (variant readings; punctuation; capitalization; rubrication; physical layout), in relation to both manuscript transmission and the transition from manuscript to print. The editorial representation of these and other aspects constitutes an act of textual interpretation at the most fundamental level, which subsequently influences scholarly understanding. Two major fields of writing, religious texts and chronicles, provide the focus of this enquiry. Major works that receive attention include Trevisa’s translation of the Polychronicon, the Middle English Brut, Piers Plowman, Love’s Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ, and Mirk’s Festial; a wide range of shorter devotional and historical texts, in both verse and prose, is also considered, as are aspects related to the translation of texts into Middle English. Almost all of the contributors are experienced editors of medieval texts. Some contribute further insights about texts they have edited, whilst others offer new editions of previously unpublished works. Collectively these essays foreground the many and varied matters of interpretation that confront the editor of Middle English texts.