Pursuing Middle English Manuscripts and their Texts

Essays in Honour of Ralph Hanna

edited by Simon Horobin and Aditi Nafde

DESCRIPTION:
This volume brings together essays by leading authorities on the production, reception, and editing of medieval English manuscripts in honour of Ralph Hanna, on the occasion of his retirement as Professor of Palaeography at the University of Oxford. Ralph Hanna has made an enormous contribution to the study of Middle English manuscripts; his numerous essays and books have discussed the development of London literature, alliterative poetry (especially Piers Plowman), regionalism, and the production and circulation of manuscripts. The essays included in this volume are arranged into four major sections corresponding to Ralph Hanna’s core areas of interest: Manuscript production; Dialect; Regionalism; Reading and Editing manuscripts. These essays, written by leading scholars in their fields, offer new insights into the manuscripts of major Middle English writers and on scribal practice, as well as studies of individual codices. Essays cover a wide regional and chronological range, stretching from the beginnings of London literature traced in the works of Peter of Cornwall to the circulation of John Lydgate’s Troy Book, and encompassing manuscripts and texts composed and circulated outside the capital. Dialectal studies offer reconsiderations of the evidence for a Wycliffite orthography, the dialect of William Langland, and the vocabulary of the alliterative Morte Arthure. A final section on reading and editing investigates the structure and divisions in the manuscripts of the A Version of Piers Plowman, and examines specific readings in the Prick of Consience and the Canterbury Tales. The volume also includes a tribute to Ralph Hanna and a list of his extensive publications.