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Chaucerian Works in the English Renaissance: Editions and Imitations

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Chaucerian Works in the English Renaissance: Editions and Imitations articulates the connection between editorial presentation and authorial imitation in order to solve a very specific problem: why were the comedic aspects of the works of Geoffrey Chaucer—aspects that appear to be central to his poetic sensibilities—so often ignored by Renaissance poets who drew on Chaucerian materials? While shifts in language, religion, politics, and poetic sensibilities help account for a predilection for prizing Chaucerian works of *sentence* (moral gravity), it does not adequately explain why a poet like Edmund Spenser—one of the age's most unabashedly Chaucerian poets—would imitate comedic, works of *solaas* (literary pleasure) in a completely sententious manner. This dissertation combines bibliographic approaches with formal analysis of literary history, leading to a fuller understanding of the "uncomedying" of Chaucer by Renaissance editors and poets.

This dissertation examines the rhetorical and aesthetic effects of editions of the works of Chaucer published between 1477 and 1602 (Caxton through Speght) as a means of understanding patterns of Chaucerian imitation by poets of the period. Although the most obvious shift in textual presentation is the change from printing single works to

printing “Complete Works” beginning with the 1532 Thynne, I argue that choices made by the printing-house (in terms of layout, font, and, most specifically, editorial directions) had a gradual, cumulative effect of highlighting Chaucerian *sentence* at the expense of *solaas*. The ways in which Chaucerian texts were presented to be read throughout the Renaissance determined, to a great degree, how these texts were imitated. The evidence of this cumulative effect on poetic reception is seen in a thorough examination of the early editions of the poetry of John Skelton and Edmund Spenser, revealing that not only did the editorial rhetoric of Chaucerian editions in the English Renaissance mold the ways in which poets responded to Chaucer, but that in the case of Edmund Spenser, Spenser’s poetic imitations of Chaucer led to major shifts in editorial presentation of Chaucer’s works in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

This dissertation by Sean Gordon Lewis fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in English Literature approved by Michael Mack, Ph.D., as Director, and by Tobias Gregory, Ph.D. and Daniel Gibbons, Ph.D. as Readers.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated in the first place to my teachers: to my parents, Gordon and Maureen Lewis, and to my teachers at the University of Dallas, Oxford University, and the Catholic University of America, particularly Greg Roper, Scott Crider, John R. Sommerfeldt, Helen Cooper, Helen Barr, Pamela Ward, Joseph Sendry, Virgil Nemoianu, and the director of this dissertation, Michael Mack. Particular thanks also goes out to my dissertation's readers, Tobias Gregory and Daniel Gibbons.

I also want to thank my colleagues at Wyoming Catholic College for their collegial support and advice.

Fundamentally, however, I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Becca, and our three lovely daughters, Olivia, Vivian, and Emma. Without their constant loving support, this work would not have been accomplished, and I am forever grateful for them in my life.

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List of Abbreviations

fol.—folio
r—recto
v—verso

Hence, fol. aiiiv should be read as “folio A-three, verso.”

Chapter 1

"Renaissance Chaucer" and Renaissance Editions

During the English Renaissance there was a consistent effort on the parts of English writers to solidify and extend English literature as a national literature, often by means of seeking to "ornament" or otherwise improve the English language. Tuke alludes to the project in his preface at the beginning of Thynne's 1532 edition of Chaucer's *Works*:

> Amonges other / the Grekes in all kyndes of scie[n]ces / semed so to preuayle and so to ornate their tonge / as yet by other of right noble languages can nat be perfitely ymitated or folowed. . . . so hath there nat lacked amo[n]ges vs Englissh men / whiche haue right well and notably endeuoyred and employed them selues / to the beautifying and bettryng of thenglysh tonge.[1]

The technical rhetorics and poetic manuals that flourished in the period—those of Wilson, Gascoigne, and Puttenham[2]—speak of this ennobling project in English letters. Writers seeking both to ennoble English and solidify its status as a national literary language faced a problem, however, a problem that several of the examples above suggest: insofar as English literature was to be *national*, it had to be grounded in works of English antiquity, works of Medieval literature.

[1] William Thynne, "The Preface" to his 1532 edition of the *Workes*; in STC 5068, fol. A2r, A2v.
[2] See Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric*, ed. Peter E. Medine (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994; original edition, London, 1560); George Gascoigne, *Certayn Notes of Instruction*, in *The Complete Works of George Gascoigne*, ed. John W. Cunliffe, 2 volumes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910); George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne. A Reborn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007; original edition, London, 1591).

In an age when historical pedigree was proof of worth,[3] medieval literature had to be recognized in some way. At the same time, insofar as English letters and language were to be "beautified and bettered," the rude rhythms and rhymes of medieval English—an English that was growing less and less familiar to English readers and writers[4]—had to be softened along continental and classical models; in this respect, the medieval past had to be jettisoned. The religious controversies of the sixteenth century complicated the matter further, since by the century's end the national literature was to exemplify the Protestant character of the country, a Protestant character to which an author from medieval Catholic England was not well suited. In the face of such difficult aims—founding a national literature on a Catholic medieval past that is at once hallowed and rude—it is no surprise that we find levels of disagreement as to the means: were English writers to repudiate medieval letters to the damage of ancient pedigree,[5] or should they put it to use in new ways?

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[3] Consider the continued prevalence of foundation myths throughout the Renaissance: Brutus founding Britain, King Alfred founding Oxford, et al.

[4] An example of the increasing foreignness of medieval English is given by Bishop Godfrey Goodman in his 1616 work *The Fall of man, or the corruption of Nature* (STC12022.7), in which he notes the difficulty of Chaucerian language for Englishmen of his day. For more on Chaucer's English and English in the Renaissance, see E.J. Dobson, *English Pronunciation, 1500-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), as well as Simon Horobin, *The Language of the Chaucer Tradition* (Cambridge and Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 2003).

[5] Sidney and Jonson are particularly critical on this point. Sidney: "Chaucer, undoubtedly, did excellently in his *Troilus and Cressida*; of whom, truly, I know not whether to marvel more, either that he in that misty time could see so clearly, or that we in this clear age walk so stumblingly after him. Yet had he great wants, fit to be forgiven in so reverent antiquity . . . That same framing of his style to an old rustic language I dare not allow, since neither Theocritus in Greek, Virgil in Latin, nor Sannazzaro in Italian did affect it." *An Apology for Poetry*, in *Criticism: The Major Texts*, ed. Walter Jackson Bate (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1970; original 1952), 102. Jonson: "Beware of letting them [writers] taste *Gower*, or *Chaucer* at first, lest falling too much in love with Antiquity, and not apprehending the weight, they grow rough and barren in language onely. . . . *Spencer*, in affecting the Ancients writ no Language; Yet I would have him read for his matter; but as *Virgil* read *Ennius*." *Timber: Or, Discoveries*, in *Criticism: The*

In attempting to come to grips with this English Renaissance project of responding to the past to create a new present literary tradition, Geoffrey Chaucer is a figure who plays a central role. Consistently popular and imitated throughout fifteenth-century England,[6] Chaucer was printed by Caxton and others at the very beginning of the Renaissance in England and seemed to enjoy popularity in Henry VIII's court.[7] Thynne's edition of 1532 the Works of Chaucer, as we saw above, was purportedly completed for the purpose of beautifying English letters.[8] As the sixteenth century progressed and the Chaucerian canon grew with subsequent Renaissance editions,[9] we find Spenser pointing to Chaucer as a model and father of English letters[10]—a position seconded by the increasing convention of naming Chaucer among other famous poets (usually to increase the fame of a living poet).[11] Chaucer's language is used to justify the project of borrowing and coining new words for the English language, a project most usually

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Major Texts, ed. Walter Jackson Bate (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1970; original, 1952), 113, 114.

[6] See H.S. Bennett, *Chaucer and the Fifteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947); see also Seth Lehrer, *Chaucer and His Readers: Imagining the Author in Late-Medieval England* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993); Ralph Hanna III, *Pursuing History: Middle English Manuscripts and their Texts* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

[7] See John Watkins, "Wrastling for this World: Wyatt and the Tudor Canonization of Chaucer," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 21-39.

[8] Alice Miskimin goes so far as to say that Thynne invented the "Renaissance Chaucer"; see *The Renaissance Chaucer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 245.

[9] While generally recognized as a fact for treatments of this process, see Miskimin, *The Renaissance Chaucer* and Paul G. Ruggiers, ed., *Editing Chaucer: The Great Tradition* (Norman, OK: Pilgrim Books, 1984).

[10] Ann Thompson, *Shakespeare's Chaucer: A Study in Literary Origins* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1978), 7.

[11] Consider these lines from "Churchyardes dreame" (1575): "Howe shuld I hit in **Chausers** vayn / Or toutche the typ, of **Surries** brayn / Or dip my pen, in **Petrarkes** stiell / Sens conning lak I all the whiell." (fol. 82r). Thomas Churchyard. *The firste parte of Churchyardes chippes, containing twelue seuerall labours*. STC 5232.

associated with the work of Shakespeare.[12] In the newly renewed medium of drama,[13] Chaucerian plots, characters, and themes were presented to the audience. Yet for the strangeness of his language and the dubious nature of England's Catholic past, Chaucer's influence was not as deep as one might think. While his name flourished among lists of famous poets,[14] the number of Chaucerian works produced in the Renaissance—works that are conscious imitations of aspects of the works attributed to Chaucer—were not as many Chaucer's fame might suggest there would be.[15]

That Chaucer was widely read and referenced throughout the English Renaissance is indisputable; the sheer length of Boswell and Holton's *Chaucer's Fame in England: STC Chauceriana 1475-1640*[16]—390 pages, double columned—is enough to demonstrate this fact. Furthermore, what materials are referenced from Chaucer, and how they are referenced change over the course of the period: the number of references appears to increase throughout the Elizabethan and early Jacobean eras, but very few of them are literary imitations. This development certainly could be described in terms of cultural

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[12] Thompson, 5.

[13] Although Emrys Jones makes a good case for the continuation of medieval dramatic traditions after the Protestant Reformation in England in his *The Origins of Shakespeare*, I think that the founding of the Theatre in London in 1576, and the other theaters and companies founded thereafter, created a sufficiently new dramatic experience so as to be called a new medium. See Emrys Jones, *The Origins of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977).

[14] This fame led to clusters like the somewhat incongruous joining of Chaucer and Sidney in Sir Robert Dallington's 1604 *The View of Fraunce*: "But if you demand the best Authors, for the language it selfe, I think, as *Tuscaine* hath a *Duunte* [sic; "Dante"] and a *Petrarch*, *Greece* an *Isocrates* and a *Demosthenes*, *Rome* a *Cicero* and a *Cesar*, we a *Sydney* and a *Chaucer*." (sig. V 4r). STC 6202.

[15] We do, of course, have to account for lost texts, such as the two lost Elizabethan versions of *The Knight's Tale* mentioned by Cooper in "Jacobean Chaucer: *Two Noble Kinsmen* and Other Chaucerian Plays," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 189-210.

[16] Jackson Campbell Boswell and Sylvia Wallace Holton, *Chaucer's Fame in England: STC Chauceriana 1475-1640* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2004).

patterns—particularly Protestantism and Tudor myth-making—but the question I wish to address is whether these changes are related to editions in the period. Between 1477 and 1602, at least twenty-six editions or printings of Chaucerian works were printed and distributed to the reading public of England.[17] Though conventions become more solid after Thynne's 1532 edition, readers are still presented with different contents, arrangements, layouts, and critical apparatus depending on the edition read. Can we speak in a meaningful way about the effects of editions on Chaucerian imitation in the English Renaissance? No comprehensive study has addressed this question. How we are to understand Chaucer in the English Renaissance is a complex problem, and aspects of it have been treated well by previous scholarly methods.

The scholarly method perhaps most traditionally used to examine Chaucer in the English Renaissance is the method of formal analysis: comparing the plots, characters, and themes of Renaissance works with their Chaucerian sources. Not surprisingly, formal comparisons between Spenser and Chaucer are fairly common; by his own admission Spenser cast himself as a Chaucerian poet (how Chaucerian he actually is is another question). Perhaps more surprising, though understandable, Shakespeare is another author whose formal Chaucerian influence has been treated fairly thoroughly. The number of Chaucer-Shakespeare comparisons is surprising because in the entire Shakespearean canon only two plays are directly derived from Chaucer's works: *Troilus and Cressida* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (and Shakespeare's authorship of the latter is

[17] These editions are noted in Boswell and Holton.

a debated question). Shakespeare also refrains from associating himself with Chaucer in the manner of Spenser. Shakespeare-Chaucer comparisons are understandable, though, because of a conservative or traditional mode of thinking of literary history in terms of great, canonical authors: both Chaucer and Shakespeare are indisputably canonized in the English literary tradition, and it is far too tempting to read them against each other. The entry for Shakespeare's first folio in *Chaucer's Fame in England: STC Chauceriana 1475-1640* is revealing: twenty-eight of his plays have been said by some scholar or another to contain Chaucerian elements.[18] As we shall see, the formal mode of analysis has produced some of the seminal works on the Renaissance Chaucer.

Perhaps the most fundamental work of Chaucerian reception and use in the English Renaissance is the plainly titled *The Renaissance Chaucer* by Alice Miskimin.[19] Miskimin's analysis treats broad trends in Chaucerian readership—"How the 200 year growth of the Renaissance Chaucer retrospectively casts light on both the medieval Chaucer and his Elizabethan heirs"[20]—focusing on ideas of the nature of poets and poetry. Her focus on poetic technique and pretensions becomes clear in her treatment of methodology:

> It is a famous paradox in all the arts that the splendor of the Renaissance casts a long backward shadow which obscures medieval elements in the process of mutation. In poetry, one way to see this more clearly is to test the premisses [sic] of Renaissance poets against their own evidence, just as one tests the claims of Chaucer: one regards what he says he is doing against what he in fact achieves. There being few precedents for such inquiries, the methods of analysis I have used are necessarily, perhaps,

[18] Boswell and Holton, 272-275.
[19] Alice Miskimin, *The Renaissance Chaucer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).
[20] Miskimin, 2.

> both eclectic and subjective; in the main I have relied on juxtapositions, both direct and oblique.[21]

From this study of Chaucer as understood by such poets as Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare, one of the conclusions Miskimin reaches is that, "Renaissance Plato and the Renaissance Chaucer were venerated as myths that confirmed the sixteenth-century image."[22] Miskimin argues that Chaucer viewed poetry as a mode of inquiry, and as such appreciated ambiguity to a level that more platonically-oriented poets of the Renaissance did not appreciate.[23] In approaching Chaucer, then, Renaissance poets—Spenser being the most prominent of them—resorted to pervasive "Chaucerian" echoes with little direct lifting in order to preserve the idea of a poet as a creator.[24] Miskimin's treatment of Spenser is particularly valuable, noting the gap between how important Spenser *says* Chaucer is to his own poetry and how Spenser actually imitates Chaucerian materials.[25] In the end, Miskimin argues that Renaissance ideas of poetry and the poet are so far incompatible with what is found in Chaucer that Renaissance poets tend use him merely as a name to be dropped. Individual poets may take away from Chaucer a lesson or two, but in terms of real influence, the poets merely pay lip service.

One of the many virtues of Miskimin's study is her attention to Chaucerian editions in treating formal similarities (or lack thereof) between Chaucer and Renaissance poets. She notes well general trends in editorial practice, such as the "inflation and

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[21] Miskimin, 3-4.
[22] Miskimin, 18.
[23] Miskimin, 30-31.
[24] Miskimin, 298.
[25] Miskimin, 44; 262-299.

debasement" of the Chaucerian canon,[26] and the process of Renaissance editors: use a predecessor's edition, then inflate with Chaucerian apocrypha.[27] Her general treatment of the editions is sufficient for her to make the claim that "To the sixteenth-century reader, Chaucer was presented as a precursor of their own Renaissance, valuable for moral wisdom, excusably obscene in wit, and preeminently a love poet of the vanished Courts of Love and chivalry which Tudor and Elizabethan court pageantry revived in masquerades."[28] Although her treatment is helpful for her purpose, her lack of detail limits the persuasiveness of her generalizations. For example, in treating the Stow 1561 Chaucer, she notes the Chaucerian works Stow adds to the Thynne edition:

> The other poems are, as their titles suggest, chiefly trivial: *How Mercurie with Pallas, Venus and Minerva appeared to Paris of Troie, he slepyng by a fountain; The Ten Commandments of Love; The Nine Ladies Worthy; the Craft of Lovers; the Court of Love*. However insignificant these poems are individually, it is obvious enough that they alter the profile of Chaucer as a love poet; he is becoming more and more the poet of the Squire's and the Franklin's romantic sentiments, and their genteel loquacity.[29]

Her conclusions may be correct, but without a more detailed analysis, we must take the triviality and insignificance of these poems and their alteration of Chaucer's profile on faith. Ultimately, Miskimin's analysis relies more on close readings of Chaucer, Sidney, Shakespeare, and Spenser than it does on the bibliographic difficulties she raises.

In contrast to Miskimin's notions of the poets and poetry between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, A.C. Spearing, in *Medieval to Renaissance in English Poetry*

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[26] Miskimin, 232.
[27] Miskimin, 244.
[28] Miskimin, 260.
[29] Miskimin, 249.

argues that though Chaucer displays "medieval" characteristics, there are a sufficient number of techniques and attitudes to justify classifying him as a "Renaissance" poet.[30] Spearing focuses on Chaucer's reading and use of Dante and Boccaccio, and extracts from Italian intertexts a characteristically "Renaissance" attitude in Chaucer's poetry:

> In my view, earlier scholars such as Mackail and Ker were right to see Chaucer's reading of fourteenth-century Italian writers (and possibly in a more general sense his contact with Italian culture in the 1370s) as having a crucial and transformative effect on his work. What I believe Chaucer gained from this reading, I have already indicated in general terms: a new and more exalted idea of what it was to be a poet, a higher sense of what kind of poetry was possible in a modern European vernacular, a new sense of the past and his own relation to it, and an awareness of the possibility of re-creating in poetic fiction the world of classical paganism.[31]

In responding to the work of Minnis,[32] at odds with the likes of Miskimin, Robertson,[33] and Lewis,[34] Spearing's Chaucer is a bridge between Medieval and Renaissance literature, a proto-Renaissance poet living in medieval England before the solidification of the Renaissance in Europe through the printing press.[35] Spearing's work lives up to the claims of its title: by treating Chaucerian imitators in the fifteenth century and early sixteenth century, he provides a narrative of the shift in poetic ideas and products of the middle ages to those of the Renaissance. That he ends his thorough formal investigation with Wyatt and Surrey is striking: Spenser gets merely a six-page epilogue. While taking

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[30] A.C. Spearing, *Medieval to Renaissance in English Poetry* (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
[31] Spearing, 21.
[32] A.J. Minnis, *Chaucer and Pagan Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
[33] D.W. Robertson, *A Preface to Chaucer* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).
[34] C.S. Lewis, "What Chaucer really did to *Il Filostrato*," *Selected Literary Essays* (Cambridge, 1969; original 1932), 27-44; *The Allegory of Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936).
[35] Spearing, 7; he is consciously and clearly citing ideas on the relationship between the press and the Renaissance put forward in Elizabeth Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

us up to the court of Henry VIII, Spearing leaves the work of explaining Chaucer's influence on Elizabethan and Jacobean writers—the writers commonly considered to be the best representatives of Renaissance English poetry—to others.

In the lists of studies relating Chaucer to the most famous of Elizabethan and Jacobean writers, Shakespeare, Ann Thompson's *Shakespeare's Chaucer* takes a place of precedence.[36] Starting from the fact, attested to by Pollard and Redgrave and Spurgeon,[37] that "Almost every Elizabethan or Jacobean writer we remember today referred to [Chaucer] at least once,"[38] she claims that

> Chaucer held for the Elizabethans the curious position of 'father' of a tradition which did not exist and perfection of a vernacular which was remote and archaic, while his reputation as a learned and moral writer rested on very shaky ground and was already subject to scepticism and challenge. Yet it is apparent from all the references to him that despite everything he was widely read and enjoyed.[39]

Thompson's enthymemic reasoning is important to note: if Chaucer was referred to regularly, then he must have been read and enjoyed by many. There are problems with this formulation: some of the writers "we remember" (who are "we"?) make reference to Chaucer in a negative fashion; Ben Jonson comes immediately to mind: "[B]eware of letting them taste *Gower*, or *Chaucer* at first, lest falling too much in love with Antiquity, and not apprehending the weight, they grow rough and barren in language onely . . .

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[36] Ann Thompson, *Shakespeare's Chaucer: A Study in Literary Origins* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1978).
[37] William Pollard and Gilbert Richard Redgrave, eds., *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640* (London: Bibliographic Society, 1946; original, 1926); Caroline F. E. Spurgeon, *Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Allusion, 1357-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925).
[38] Thompson, 3.
[39] Thompson, 7.

Spencer, in affecting the Ancients writ no Language."[40] Furthermore, one may quote a source without having read that source thoroughly. Still, it is an important inference to make when treating Chaucer in the Renaissance: writers could make references to Chaucerian works with the presumption that these references could be decoded and appreciated by their audiences.

Thompson's main focus, however, as her title indicates, is the influence of Chaucer on Shakespeare. Of the reality and nature of this influence, she is not uncertain; for Thompson, Shakespeare knew Chaucer's work, "unusually well and was influenced by it in several ways."[41] Stating that, "Shakespeare seems to have thought of Chaucer primarily as a writer of romantic and courtly poetry rather than as a comic naturalist,"[42] Thompson proceeds to note a variety of parallels to and materials borrowed from Chaucer by Shakespeare.[43] Major attention is naturally given to Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* in light of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*; through analysis of structure and characters, Thompson concludes that: "In both works there is a striking point at which we realize that the man is still ensnared in the rhetorical flummery of 'courtly love' while the woman has passed beyond this to a more straightforward and therefore moving declaration of affection."[44] While Chaucer and Shakespeare give different

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[40] Ben Jonson. *Timber: or, Discoveries*, excerpted from Bate, 113.
[41] Thompson, 14.
[42] Thompson, 82.
[43] Her surety of close connections between Shakespeare and Chaucer is unambiguous: "The sheer quantity of the material involved implies that Shakespeare did not merely use Chaucer for a plot or two (as he did some authors) but knew him so well that he recalled his work (often unconsciously, one would imagine) in virtually every play," Thompson, 59
[44] Thompson, 103.

interpretations of the same story,[45] Thompson is confident that, "Both Chaucer and Shakespeare are close to Boethius in their choice of appearance/reality metaphors."[46] Chaucer and Shakespeare seem to agree on much in Thompson's estimation, so much so that she says of *The Knight's Tale* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*: "Both Chaucer and Shakespeare saw that the story was an absurd one, but they saw that its very absurdity made it serious too."[47] In the end, Thompson appears to see Shakespeare as a dramatist who understood, agreed with, and perfected Chaucerian materials.

Without imputing Thompson's ability to divine the attitude of Chaucer and the attitude of Shakespeare towards stories, I think that a major flaw in Thompson's method and analysis becomes clear throughout her work: without recourse to the editorial options available to Shakespeare, her study of reading attitudes is limited. Sixteenth-century readers and admirers of Chaucer did not have a single critical edition of Chaucer available, and Shakespeare and his audience dealt with at least two editions: Stow's of 1561 and Speght's of 1598/1602. Furthermore, her insistence on uncovering similarities between Chaucerian and Shakespearean works seems to hamper a real appreciation of the concrete differences between Chaucer and Shakespeare; not only is Shakespeare reworking Chaucerian material to suit his own purposes, he is also drawing on non-Chaucerian sources as well, which may certainly modify his imitation. Although a solid starting point for Chaucerian studies of Shakespeare, Thompson's limited method reveals the necessity of further investigations.

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[45] Thompson, 149.
[46] Thompson, 160.
[47] Thompson, 214.

Operating in much the same manner as Thompson's work, E. Talbot Donaldson's *The Swan at the Well: Shakespeare Reading Chaucer* is an often illuminating study, comparing the treatment of themes and questions operating in the works Chaucer and Shakespeare.[48] That Donaldson deals with the "texts themselves" is manifest in his introduction: "Shakespeare himself provides the final indication of the way Shakespeare read Chaucer, and that way is with full appreciation of his complexity."[49] By giving close readings of Chaucer's poems and Shakespeare's works, Donaldson draws out parallels between *The Tale of Sir Thopas*, "Pyramus and Thisbe," and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *The Knight's Tale, The Merchant's Tale,* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *The Knight's Tale* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*; *Troilus and Criseyde* and *Troilus and Cressida*; *Troilus and Criseyde* and *Romeo and Juliet*; and the Wife of Bath and Falstaff. What Donaldson's close readings yield, perhaps unsurprisingly, are a multitude of agreements between these two great authors. On the Chaucerian ties to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Donaldson concludes: "The two poets agree that lovers are lunatics living in a dream world; but both would probably also agree that the dream world must underlie the real world as the real world underlies that of the dream."[50] He divines Shakespeare's reading of *Troilus and Criseyde* through Cressida's characterization in the drama:

> I think Shakespeare was particularly struck by the vulnerability of Chaucer's heroine, her precariousness, as the daughter of a traitor, in a city

[48] E. Talbot Donaldson, *The Swan at the Well: Shakespeare Reading Chaucer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).
[49] Donaldson, 2.
[50] Donaldson, 49.

> at war . . . I'm sure Shakespeare was not fooled by Chaucer's narrator's misleading introduction of Criseyde as all alone and not knowing to whom she might complain, but he adopts its suggestion for the predicament in which to place his Cressida.[51]

And from such evidence as their use of Biblical quotations, their concern for vocation, and their love of life, Donaldson concludes that the Wife of Bath is an ancestress of Falstaff.[52] Donaldson's Shakespeare is a Shakespeare who knows Chaucer well, and draws on him often, in profound ways.

The two major problems with Donaldson's approach should be evident from the passages above. In the first place, although Donaldson does give the text of the 1561 Stow printing of Thynne's 1532 edition when quoting Chaucer, he does not treat the physical medium in which these lines would have been read by Shakespeare. While we can salute Donaldson for sticking to the words Shakespeare would have read, by not treating the physical peculiarities of the 1561 Stow, Donaldson leaves his analysis incomplete. Furthermore, Donaldson's Shakespearean quotations come from the 1979 Arden edition, without recourse to original printings of Shakespeare's works. Though less of a problem if the goal is to determine Shakespeare's use of Chaucer through the words Shakespeare most likely wrote, it does leave open a question of whether or not early readers of Shakespeare's plays would have recognized as Chaucerian echoes what Donaldson recognizes as Chaucerian echoes.

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[51] Donaldson, 84.
[52] Donaldson, 129-39.

Remedying the first limitation in Donaldson's study may well remedy the second limitation, which is the tenuousness of evidence Donaldson uses to make his claims. Even granting that literary scholarship is always, at its best, a study of the probable and not the certain, Donaldson admits to the ephemeral quality of his evidence with surprising boldness:

> That they [*Troilus and Criseyde* and *Romeo and Juliet*; the Wife of Bath and Falstaff] are not part of the same structure is suggested by the lack of verbal echoes—and even echoes less narrowly defined—in what Shakespeare created; yet though the lack of such echoes is considered technically fatal to establishing influence, the fact remains that one work may be strongly influenced by another without ever repeating a single phrase or word from it: borrowers do not always leave fingerprints by which they may be detected, and totally efficient assimilators devour their substructures. A discussion of the similarities between the earlier and the later can be revealing to both even if it fails to prove borrowing; and if the similarities are sufficiently impressive despite the absence of echoes the argument for influence becomes less questionable.[53]

Donaldson is correct in one respect: an author may be powerfully influenced by another author without lifting words and lines directly. What is more disturbing is the epistemological problem this fact raises: absent direct evidence, how can we be sure of influence? Donaldson's answer is to note parallels, but such parallels, absent further contextual evidence, will always remain tenuous: the Wife of Bath and Falstaff are not the only two characters in the history of Western literature to betray a "love of life." What constitutes whether or not similarities are "sufficiently impressive"? And even if the similarities are "sufficiently impressive" how "revealing" is a study that "fails to prove borrowing"? Donaldson's work on Chaucer and Shakespeare betrays a

[53] Donaldson, 5.

magnificent wit and attention to detail, particularly to structural or paradigmatic similarities, but is ultimately limited by its reliance on broadly formal parallels.

The persistence and value of the formal approach to Chaucerian reception is shown in *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, edited by Theresa M. Krier. Although the studies in this collection are often informed by contemporary (as opposed to sixteenth-century) critical theory, almost all of the studies rely on the echoes of Chaucer present in the language and structures of Renaissance poems. Despite her heavy reliance on post-Lacanian psychoanalytical concepts of "gratitude" in making her arguments,[54] Krier's method of analysis in "The Aim Was Song: From Narrative to Lyric in *The Parliament of Fowles* and *Love's Labour's Lost*" shows itself to be heavily formal: "I argue that Shakespeare learned from Chaucer's *Parliament* a certain plotting of poetic language and history: in each work there is an implicit drive from narrative to the release of what each work gradually defines as lyric—a particular historical family of lyric."[55] While bringing poststructuralism to bear on Spenser and Chaucer, Judith Anderson's analysis remains clearly focused on the formal characteristics of Chaucerian and Spenserian narrators.[56] Watkins, Berry, Steinberg, and Cooper all contribute essays dealing with imitations of formal aspects of Chaucer's poetry.[57] Formalist methodologies

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[54] Theresa M. Krier, "The Aim Was Song: From Narrative to Lyric in *The Parliament of Fowles* and *Love's Labour's Lost*," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 165-188. For Krier's debt to Lacan, see particularly 4 and 167.
[55] Krier,166.
[56] Judith Anderson, "Narrative Reflections: Re-envisaging the Poet in *The Canterbury Tales* and *The Faerie Queene,*" *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 87-105.
[57] John Watkins, "Wrastling for this World: Wyatt and the Tudor Canonization of Chaucer," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 21-

persist in a study of Chaucer in the English Renaissance precisely because they ground their claims in data more solid than Donaldson's "infrastructure": the words of the works of Chaucer paired with the words of Renaissance poets. Still, as we shall see, these words were not conveyed to Renaissance poets free of mediation.

Another common and illuminating method of approaching questions of Chaucerian reception in the English Renaissance has been the bibliographic approach, both in purely descriptive studies—noting bibliographic features of specific editions and book-copies, much in the same manner as paleographers describe manuscripts—and in more politically analytical studies—arguing how features in these editions and/or book-copies reveals socio-political dimensions of Renaissance book production and consumption. As we shall see, this methodology may serve to reveal insights into how Chaucer was refigured in the Renaissance by printers; what such studies tend not to treat are the connections between these refigurations and the Chaucerian imitations produced in the period.

On the purely descriptive end of the bibliographic spectrum, *Editing Chaucer: the Great Tradition* is a model of careful bibliographic scholarship.[58] With chapters written by some of the giants of contemporary bibliography and book history, the collection is

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39; Craig A. Berry, "'Sundrie Doubts': Vulnerable Understanding and Dubious Origins in Spenser's Continuation of the Squire's Tale," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998),106-127; Glenn Steinberg, "Idolatrous Idylls: Protestant Iconoclasm, Spenser's *Daphnaida*, and Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess*," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 128-146; Helen Cooper, "Jacobean Chaucer: *Two Noble Kinsmen* and Other Chaucerian Plays," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 189-210.

[58] Paul G. Ruggiers, ed., *Editing Chaucer: The Great Tradition* (Norman, OK: Pilgrim Books, 1984).

focused on the evolution of the texts presented in major printed editions of Chaucer from the fifteenth to twentieth centuries. Concerning the Renaissance editions of Chaucer, Beverly Boyd, James E. Blodgett, Anne Hudson, and Derek Pearsall examine editions produced by Caxton, Thynne, Stow, and Speght, respectively. Although there are references to typography[59] and arrangement of materials,[60] the main concern of these scholars is the Chaucerian canon and the texts themselves: what works and words were attributed to Chaucer by these Renaissance editions. These editions fare rather poorly as faithful witnesses to Chaucer's presumed authorial intentions:[61] Caxton printed no apocrypha,[62] while Speght, who reprinted and augmented an already reprinted and augmented canon,[63] worked in a seemingly hopeless state: "Unfortunately, the tradition of the printed texts was by now so degenerate that no attempt to improve a text set up from a printed copy could do more than tinker with defects."[64] From the perspective of a textual critic, Renaissance editions of Chaucer after Caxton are scholarly dead-ends.

Because the focus of Ruggiers's collection is on the canon and text itself, the non-textual features of these editions tend to get short shrift. Although purely descriptive bibliography is perhaps the most noble and necessary work of a scholar of manuscript and incunabular texts, providing a foundation for more interpretive forms of scholarship,

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[59] Some examples: Caxton used a Flemish Bâtarde type for printing Chaucer (Boyd, 18-19); Thynne was the first editor to use a single-column blackletter (Blodgett, 50); Stow reused woodcuts found in Pynson's 1526 edition (Hudson, 58); Speght, though copying the editorial practices used for Classics solidified Blackletter as an integral type for Chaucer (Pearsall, 75).
[60] For instance, Hudson's note on Stow following Thynne's placement of *The Ploughman's Tale* and other items (58-59).
[61] Though "authorial intentions" is dirty phrase for literary critics, it is remarkably less so for textual critics.
[62] Boyd, 29.
[63] Pearsall, 71.
[64] Pearsall, 87.

when one concerns oneself primarily with how far the text of a given Renaissance edition differs from the critically edited Chaucer canon of the twentieth century, the rhetorical character of that Renaissance edition is overlooked and even forgotten. Furthermore, by choosing to focus solely on the text, little attention is given to minor printers of the period: de Worde and Pynson are mentioned,[65] but because their changes to the text were minimal, they did not apparently warrant chapters of their own. The same is true of printers who printed only small or fragmentary works—Notary and Rastell, and printers of the "Protestant Chaucer" works—Godfray, Nicholson, Gybson, and Hyll. To appreciate fully the range and style of Chaucerian materials given in the period, greater attention would have to be paid to the lesser printers of the period.

When one moves away from purely descriptive studies into interpretations of editions and book copies, one ventures into the concerns and problems treated by many scholars of the "History of the Book," concerns of postmodern literary and cultural criticism applied to the study of book-copies: the economics of production and consumption, the construction of gender, identity, and self through textual presentation and reading practices, and cultural anxieties and negotiations manifested through the physical artifacts: book-copies.[66] Such patterns of production, consumption,

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[65] Ruggiers, 3; Blodgett, 41; Hudson, 58.

[66] For some indication of the range of History of the Book concerns and approaches, see the following: Douglas A. Brooks, *From Playhouse to Printing House: Drama and Authorship in Early Modern England*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Frances E. Dolan, *Whores of Babylon: Catholicism, Gender and Seventeenth-Century Print Culture* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1999); Cecile M. Jagodzinski. *Privacy and Print: Reading and Writing in Seventeenth-Century England* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 1999); Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Brian Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

construction, and negotiation are made manifest through both the features of books produced in the printer's shop (text, layout, illustrations) and through the features of books produced by their owners (glosses and marginalia). Such an approach often relies on Marxist and Cultural-Materialist assumptions, and proceeds through deconstructive methodology, moving away from an "essentialist" approach to bibliography.[67]

My study relies on a History of the Book methodology insofar as I shall seek to relate textual presentation to suggested strategies for interpretation and imitation. Insofar as I am interested more in the specifically aesthetic qualities of these books and their imitations, as opposed to their political, social, or psychological—although these qualities obviously exist—I have concerns more in common with formal critics.

With a similar attention to the particular details of Chaucerian book-copies as Ruggiers' collection, though much more revolutionary in its tone, Joseph A. Dane's *Who Is Buried in Chaucer's Tomb: Studies in the Reception of Chaucer's Book* challenges the presumptions of traditional bibliographic studies of printed Chaucer from the middle ages to modern times.[68] Dane is highly suspicious of the concept of editions, preferring to talk about "individual book-copies":

1999); Eve Rachelle Sanders, *Gender and Literacy on Stage in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000); J. Christopher Warner, *Henry VIII's Divorce: Literature and the Politics of the Printing Press* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998).

[67] See David L. Gants, "Review: *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Vol. IV, 1557-1695* by John Barnard, D.F. McKenzie, and Maureen Bell," *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 67.3 (2004): 473-79. 478.

[68] Joseph A. Dane, *Who is Buried in Chaucer's Tomb? Studies in the Reception of Chaucer's Book* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1998).

> Textually, no two copies [of the 1561 Stow Chaucer] are likely to be the same. And even on such basic matters as paper, no two copies I have examined show the same use and distribution of various paper stocks—a situation that is typical of books of this and earlier periods. Their natures are determined by accidents at press, corrections at press, and the chance of collation. When one has two copies in hand, one can speak of the material existence of each during the present, but to project that material presence into the past and to write a history of that presence very quickly devolves into pure speculation.[69]

Leaving aside the pure speculation that sixteenth-century readers actually cared about the use and distribution of the paper stocks in the books they read, we can see that though Dane claims to start from "conservative" assumptions,[70] his project is to undermine attempts by scholars such as Boyd, Blodgett, Hudson, and Pearsall at giving unified accounts of editions, which contribute to what Dane calls "the modern institution of Chaucerianism" (10):

> My concern with the history of the Chaucer book is in part a rejection of critical theories of coherence—theories that several years ago I characterized as conspiratorial in nature. While I don't doubt that Chaucer at one time had a plan (of some sort), that he worked for people who had other plans, that Chaucerians later disputed about Chaucer in self-serving ways, I have been struck repeatedly by how seldom any of these plots and counterplots form any coherent pattern and further by how much effort I must expend to be persuaded by arguments that Chaucer's plan or the plans of earlier generations of Chaucerians are similar to our own.[71]

Scholars inclined to precious parentheses may talk about Dane's anxiety over the author(ity) behind Chaucerian books.[72] What is clear, though, is that Dane's use of

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[69] Dane, 7-8.
[70] "My study is addressed primarily to Chaucerians, and my initial assumptions are conservative; my own skepticism and the skepticism I hope to provoke depend on these assumptions," 10.
[71] Dane, 9.
[72] "The arguments I have discussed here extend the claims of Hartmann and Bloom, by denying as well the traditional distinctions scholar/critic and finally poet/scribe." Dane, 212.

bibliography in addressing the Renaissance Chaucer is not to attempt to provide a coherent picture of Chaucer in the Renaissance, but to provide evidence that seeks to undermine and deconstruct studies that aim at coherence.

One fascinating aspect of Dane's study, however, that seems to me to be somewhat at odds with his overall tenor, is his treatment of the "character" of different types. In his third chapter, "Toward a Typographical History of Chaucer: The Blackletter Chaucer," Dane notes the importance of typography to the overall "effect" of a book:

> I focus here on typography because it is an aspect of the book that most readers recognize quickly: for most readers, it constitutes what might be called the "character" of the book (a word used by fifteenth-century printers to describe a typeface). In its own evolution and in the often naïve classifications that are applied to type, we can see Chaucer first defined as a canonical author, and later transformed into a medieval author and finally a classical one. What I am concerned with in this chapter is the deceptively simple representation of Chaucer in the early varieties of blackletter—reserving for later chapters the history of the transformation of Chaucer into a classic writer with all the dignity of roman type. The history of Chaucerian typography is one marked by persistent anomalies, much like the more familiar literary history of Chaucer.[73]

Although the "persistent anomalies" may fit into Dane's overall project, what is striking—and valuable—about this chapter is that by focusing on an "aesthetic abstraction" that is "strictly reproducible,"[74] Dane somehow manages to arrive at a "theory of coherence," an overarching interpretation of Chaucerian aesthetics over the Renaissance: "[W]e can see Chaucer first defined as a canonical author, and later

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[73] Dane, 51.

[74] "In discussing typography I refer to an aesthetic abstraction, like a text, composed of typeface and page format—one that is strictly reproducible, even if the details of individual copies may vary within the same issue; anything worth saying about this subject should be to some extent contestable with facsimile evidence and bibliographical description," Dane, 52.

transformed into a medieval author and finally a classical one."[75] This part of Dane's bibliographical project manages to venture into the realm of aesthetics (no mean feat), linking descriptions of book-copies to their likely effect on contemporary readers:

> Chaucer was thus caught in two transformations: (1) the standardization of English typography—whereby all medieval works would be printed in a blackletter in the genre of the textura used by de Worde, and (2) the transformation of French typography, from bâtard to roman. The discrete series of Chaucer editions with their separate type fonts become transformed into a coherent continuum.[76]

As the sixteenth century progressed, readers were more likely to read Chaucer in blackletter, a type that—at least in England—was generally used to print medieval works, a detail worth noting when talking about aesthetic reception.

Alexandra Gillespie's *Print Culture and the Medieval Author* provides a bibliographic approach similar to Dane's in its anxiety over authorship, but more comfortable with speaking of editions and making coherent observations and arguments.[77] Inspired by Michel Foucault's treatment of authors as "author functions,"[78] Gillespie examines the ways in which Chaucer and Lydgate were used as author functions by early printers both to memorialize the medieval past and add status to the books they were selling. In contrast to those who would diminish the difference between the worlds of manuscripts and print, Gillespie notes:

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[75] Dane, 51.
[76] Dane, 72.
[77] Alexandra Gillespie, *Print Culture and the Medieval Author: Chaucer, Lydgate, and Their Books, 1473-1557* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
[78] See Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" *Professing the New Rhetorics*, ed. Theresa Enos and Stuart C. Brown (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994), 178-93.

> It was rapidly apparent to the likes of Caxton that printed books ***were*** different than their scribal analogues. They existed in greater numbers. It is estimated that the average London scribe was capable of copying about 2 pages of continuous prose in textura hand and 4-6 pages in a more cursive script per day.[79]

Given the steadily increasing numbers of books available, and the corresponding diminishing of control over given texts,[80] Gillespie argues that Caxton and other early printers promoted Chaucer as a standard for evaluation: "There was an opening for something or someone that might sort the good from the bad, the small from the substantial, truth from lies—'this noble man Geoffrey Chaucer'—was employed to fill that gap."[81] The prefaces and other editorial apparatus used in early printings were employed to praise Chaucer, and as such "authorize" the books produced. Such a use of Chaucer was good for business and helped establish the preeminence of printing as the new medium of book production:

> By resorting to traditional ways of valuing fictional works—as monuments to or prayers for their authors, as celebrations of a chivalric or civic culture, as versions of the manuscripts owned by gentlemen and made by noble writers and patronized artizans—printers made a case for printed texts as well as for fiction itself.[82]

Gillespie examines features of Chaucerian books printed by Caxton, de Worde, Pynson, and Thynne, with an eye to how Chaucer is figured by each of them. In the end, Gillespie concludes that Chaucer and Lydgate ultimately cease to be thought of as actual

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[79] Gillespie, 65.
[80] "An old and a Chaucerian concern was given new voice and new urgency by the press. How can one control the meaning of an utterance?" Gillespie, 67.
[81] Gillespie, 67.
[82] Gillespie, 100.

authors and become shorthand for the concept of medieval literature in the English Renaissance:

> Both authors [Chaucer and Lydgate] could be and were made to stand out from all the other vernacular works that might be and were published. They lent a kind of dignity, as the value of the past, to books produced at moments when for various reasons—in the context of a large number of new printed books and amid political, religious, and intellectual change—it was especially important to define the value of texts.[83]

In the end, Gillespie sees the use of medieval authors in the English Renaissance as the fulfillment of anxieties raised by Chaucer and Lydgate themselves:

> Both Chaucer and Lydgate understood authorship in terms of persistently unstable textual traditions, and that their complex response to this understanding served as a basis for the "critical terminology" that was, increasingly, applied to their works in print . . . A medieval author is one way to define a text among many, a history for a book that does not eliminate uncertainty, but instead describes the multiple forms in which we encounter texts and the meanings that they continue to make long after their author is himself "vncertain"—a name on a title page, a drawing in a margin, a memory, and so, as Chaucer would have it, "noon auctor" at all.[84]

Although printing gives texts a greater stability than manuscript production, the result predicted by medieval authors comes to pass: the meanings of their works are removed from their control and put into the hands of editors and printers.

Gillespie does make excellent observations in this book. That Chaucer was used in the Tudor era to "authorize" works, often for monetary and nationalistic reasons, seems clear; Gillespie does a fine job of tracing exactly how this "authorizing" took place, with minute bibliographic detail. That editions of Chaucer became catch-alls for

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[83] Gillespie, 232.
[84] Gillespie, 233.

random and anonymous medieval poems also seems clear; the Chaucerian canon grew throughout the sixteenth century precisely because editors were continually adding medieval lyrics to the contents in editions of Chaucer. But that some printers and readers saw Chaucer as more than a "medieval author" (an "author function" term that pops up at significant points in the book) seems to escape her study. As scholars using more formalist methodologies have noted, the readers and imitators of Chaucer in the English Renaissance considered Chaucer to be an author—a man, not an "author function"—whose works had some kind of contemporary relevance, at least relevant enough to merit praise and imitation. The attention Gillespie gives to the kinds of Chaucer produced by different editions is quite helpful; less so is her reduction of Chaucer's function to one of prestige and profit.

Even though current bibliographic treatments are illuminating, the studies that treat a range of editions have not yet taken into account all editions produced during the English Renaissance.[85] Those that treat specific editions—generally articles or chapters, but also some dissertations—are helpful for further details possibly missed by more wide-ranging treatments.[86] The common feature of these studies, though, is a focus on the

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[85] See Derek S. Brewer, ed., *The Works, 1532, with Supplementary Material from the Editions of 1542, 1561, 1598, and 1602* (Menston, Yorkshire: Scolar [sic] Press, 1969; facsimile); W.W. Greg, "The Early Printed Editions of the *Canterbury Tales*," *PMLA* 39 (1924): 737-61; John R. Hetherington, *Chaucer, 1532-1602, Notes and Facsimile Texts* (Birmingham: Privately published, 1964); Kristin Rochelle Hofer, *Printed witnesses: A study of Geoffrey Chaucer's printed editions 1476-1598* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University, 2000); Charles Muscatine, *The Book of Geoffrey Chaucer* (San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1963).

[86] See Norman Francis Blake, *Caxton and His World* (London: Deutsch, 1969); James E. Blodgett. *William Thynne and His 1532 Edition of Chaucer* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1976) *Dissertation Abstracts* 36 (1976): 5311-A; Gavin Bone. "Extant Manuscripts Printed from W. de Worde with Notes on the Owner, Roger Thorney," *Library*, 4th ser., 12 (1931-32): 284-306; Beverly Boyd. *Chaucer According*

editions or book-copies themselves, without a treatment of the imitations produced by the writers who read them.

Having examined the virtues and shortcomings of both the formal and bibliographical methods of approaching the Renaissance Chaucer, I would like to suggest that a careful and detailed combination of the two approaches may be most helpful in providing a clearer view on how Chaucer was figured and refigured in the English Renaissance. The question I shall explore in my own study is whether or not attention to the rhetorical and aesthetic qualities found in the history of the Chaucerian book can reveal trends in imitation that can complement and clarify the insights of the formalist scholars.

The foundational question that must be answered before undertaking this study is whether or not we can even speak of "editions" in any kind of real sense. While much debate has gone into this topic[87]—generally turning on the degree to which variations

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to William Caxton: Minor Poems *and* Boece, *1478* (Lawrence, Kansas: Allen Press, 1978); A.I. Doyle. "An Unrecognized Piece of *Piers the Ploughman's Creed* and other Work by its Scribe." *Speculum* 34 (1959): 428-36; Thomas F. Dunn, *The Manuscript Source of Caxton's Second Edition of the Canterbury Tales*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Libraries, private ed.: part of a dissertation, 1940); B.Y. Fletcher. "Printer's Copy for Stow's *Chaucer*." *SB* 31 (1978): 184-201; P.L. Heyworth, ed. *Jack Upland, Friar Daw's Reply and Upland's Rejoinder* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968); Clare R. Kinney, "Thomas Speght's Renaissance Chaucer and the *solaas* of *sentence* in *Troilus and Criseyde*," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 66-86; Ernest Kuhl, "Francis Beaumont and Speght," *TLS* September 23, 1926, 632; Francis P. Magoun, "The Chaucer of Spenser and Milton." *MP* 25 (1927): 129-31; A. Wawn, "Chaucer, *The Ploughman's Tale* and Reformation Propaganda: the Testimonies of Thomas Godfray and *I Playne Piers*," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 56 (1973): 174-92; H. G. Wright, "Thomas Speght as a Lexicographer and Annotator of Chaucer's Works," *ES* 40 (1959): 194-208.

[87] See Eisenstein, Elizabeth. *Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Joseph Dane, *The Myth of Print Culture* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2003); David McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order, 1450-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1998); Lucien Febvre and H.-J. Martin,

between and among book-copies are tolerated—the fact that one can speak of common features present in a large sampling of book-copies (though possibly not every single one) suggests that the term "edition" is still a valid one to use. Claims about editions must be qualified and probable rather than absolute and apodictic, but if one's concern is trends in perceptions and imitations of a given author at a given time, one can and should make use of the concept of editions. If the majority of people reading book-copies of a given edition saw the same textual features in the same places, that is worth noting, and may be valuable in articulating trends in reading and imitation.

Moving past poststructural anxieties, one finds that, with due qualifications, each edition of a given work (or collection of works) has a perceptible character, composed of the verbal and non-verbal features found on its pages. McKitterick notes the importance of considering non-verbal features in bibliographic study:

> [T]he bibliographic study of books and other printed documents, of texts and of images, has to do with the manipulation of alpha-numeric signs or of pictures as they are applied by compositors, printers, proof-readers and others in a host of different environments . . . I believe that by seeking to understand the purposes of illustration, and the artistic and technical conventions, opportunities and restrictions of illustrative reproduction, we may also reconcile in a more satisfactory way our understanding of different forms of print.[88]

From these arrangements "of alpha-numeric signs or of pictures," we can perceive a kind of syntax in a given book. There is a syntagmatic relation between and among the parts of a book—not merely the text, but verbal editorial interpolations, non-verbal parts, and

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The Coming of the Book, tr. David Gerard (London, N.L.B.; Atlantic Heights, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1976; First Edition: *L'Apparition du livre*, Paris, 1958).

[88] McKitterick, 5.

the ordering of such parts. From this syntax of parts comes the "character" of a given edition, whether said edition is produced in the sixteenth century or the twenty-first.

These parts of a book add up to a concept I think fundamental to my analysis of Renaissance editions of Chaucerian works: the "physiognomy" of books treated by Daniel Javitch. In his *Proclaiming a Classic: The Canonization of Orlando Furioso*,[89] Javitch is concerned with: "[H]ow sixteenth-century readers interpreted and manipulated the text [of *Orlando Furioso*] in their efforts to establish its poetic aristocracy."[90] Javitch is able to analyze this process of interpretation and manipulation through an attention to what he calls the "physiognomy" of editions:

> What can be discerned about a vernacular text that is proclaimed a classic in the sixteenth century is that it assumes an institutional physiognomy as a book. Publishers "package" it in a format that resembles the one adopted for the ancient classics, to advertise as well as to facilitate its educational uses. The textual 'physiognomy' of the *Furioso* was so altered. From the midcentury on, editions of the poem acquired paratextual features—the *allegorie* mentioned above, notes about the poem's normative linguistic and rhetorical features, commentaries about Ariosto's imitative practice—that betoken its institutionalization as clearly as its eventual entry into Italian classrooms.[91]

While an examination of the physiognomy of Chaucerian books will most likely yield different conclusions, the method appears to be a sound one; the "package" in which a text is encountered shapes the reading of that text, to the point at which a text is not only canonized solidly, but begins affecting the literary tradition as a model for other works:

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[89] Daniel Javitch, *Proclaiming a Classic: The Canonization of Orlando Furioso* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991).
[90] Javitch, 4.
[91] Javitch, 6-7.

"The most prevalent sign [of canonization] is that the text becomes a model."[92] Careful attention to the physiognomy of Chaucerian works will be crucial to my treatment of patterns of Chaucerian imitation.

The way in which readers approach and understand the physiognomy of books is articulated well by the semiotic methods of Umberto Eco.[93] Once one becomes accustomed to Eco's jargon of Linguistics—"The Model Reader is a textually established set of felicity conditions . . . to be met in order to have a macro-speech act (such as a text) fully actualized"[94]—one finds an approach remarkably straightforward and grounded in the reality of communication: the, "Cooperative role of the addressee in interpreting messages."[95] According to Eco, a text is a, "[N]etwork of different messages depending on different codes and working with different levels of signification."[96] If we extend this idea of the language of a literary work as code (syntagmatic and paradigmatic language structures; symbolic frames and relations) to include non-verbal coded features[97]—font, layout, apparatus—that are media in which a literary work is encountered, we find that by articulating the patterns of the codes, we articulate the way in which a book is presented to be read. If a text (or in our case, an edition of a text) is a "network of different messages depending on different codes," the sum total of these codes suggests the ways

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[92] Javitch, 7.
[93] Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Indiana University Press, 1979).
[94] Eco, 11.
[95] Eco, vii.
[96] Eco, 5.
[97] Eco himself treats non-verbal codes in his works. See especially *Travels in Hyperreality*, trans. William Weaver (San Diego, New York, and London: Harcourt, Inc., 1986; original 1967); *History of Beauty*, ed., Umberto Eco, trans. Alastair McEwan (New York: Rizzoli, 2004; original, 2002); *On Ugliness*, ed. Umberto Eco, trans. Alastair McEwan (New York: Rizzoli, 2007).

in which the text is to be decoded: "If there is a 'joissance du texte (Barthes, 1973), it cannot be aroused and implemented except by a text producing all the paths of its 'good' reading (no matter how many, no matter how much determined in advance)."[98] Though readers participate in constructing the meaning of a text, the text itself suggests "good" readings through the structures put in place: "I call these interpretive moves *inferential walks;* they are not mere whimsical initiatives on the part of the reader, but are elicited by [discursive structures] and foreseen by the whole [textual strategy]"; "The *work in movement* is the possibility of numerous different personal interventions, but it is not an amorphous invitation to indiscriminate participation. The invention offers the performer the chance of an oriented insertion into something which always remains the world intended by the author."[99] Readers of Chaucer—whether in the sixteenth century or the twenty-first century, find themselves confronted by codes and patterns into which they were to insert themselves to decode the meaning intended by a particular edition.[100] Articulating the codes at play in a given edition gives us the physiognomy of the work encountered by its readers.

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[98] Eco, 10.
[99] Eco, 32, 62.
[100] The role of the author—and by extension, editor—is problematic in Eco. Although he approaches authorship in much the same way as Foucault: "The 'author' is nothing else but a textual strategy establishing semantic correlations and activating the Model Reader" (Eco, 11), he does not remove the living author as the principle of rational order behind a text: "In other words, the author offers the interpreter, the performer, the addressee a work *to be completed*. He does not know the exact fashion in which his work will be concluded, but he is aware that once completed the work in question will still be his own. It will not be a different work, and, at the end of the interpretive dialogue, a form which is *his* form, will have been organized, even though it may have been assembled by an outside party in a particular way that he could not have foreseen. The author is the one who proposed a number of possibilities which had already been rationally organized, oriented, and endowed with specifications for proper development" (Eco, 62).

What the approaches of Javitch and Eco lead up to, I think, is really an old and venerable form of criticism: the rhetorical criticism of *êthos* articulated and performed by Wayne Booth in *The Company We Keep*.[101] Just as an orator presents an *êthos* to his audience, so Booth argues that a text also demonstrates an *ethos*. Booth spends much of the book—too much, perhaps—demonstrating through lengthy sets of quotations, which approach the feel of a Renaissance commonplace book, that ethical criticism, the criticism of the "character" of a work and its effects on the characters of the reader, is not only a very old practice, but also one that Booth points out persists in coded forms wherever poststructural critics protest the psychological and emotional harm certain works cause to their readers.[102] Contemporary critics may protest the tie between aesthetic objects and human behaviors, but Booth concludes, based on the persistence of ethical criticism, that "Whenever any human practice refuses to die, in spite of centuries of assault from theory, there must be something wrong with the theory."[103] Ethical criticism, simply put, attempts to articulate the character of a literary work and the effects of this character on the life and actions of the reader:

> For us here the word [ethical] must cover all qualities in the character, or ethos, of authors and readers whether these are judged as good or bad. . . . From ancient Greece to the present, the word 'ethos' has meant something like 'character' or 'collection of habitual characteristics': whatever in a

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[101] Wayne Booth, *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1988). Booth's primary case study in the persistence of this kind of reading among poststructuralist critics is the criticism that Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* should not be read due to the anxiety its racial epithets cause among many African-American readers: despite protests to the contrary, such a text *does* have a perceivable character which can profoundly disturb the characters of its readers.

[102] Booth, 3-5.

[103] Booth, 6.

> person or a society could be counted on to persist from situation to situation. I express my ethos, my character, by my habits of choice in every domain of my life, and a society expresses its ethos by what it chooses to be. Ethical criticism attempts to describe the encounters of a story-teller's ethos with that of the reader or listener.[104]

Although Booth's treatment of what constitutes the "collection of habitual characteristics" is a bit vague in his book, the point is clear: the sum total of the parts of a story (or book, as I would have it), its form and its content, do have effects on readers; reading can be seen as a meeting and mutual shaping of *ethe*.

I think that the traditional rhetorical term *ethos* (character) is a helpful means of summing up the more contemporary insights of scholars like Javitch and Eco on how the physiognomy or codes found in a given book work on and with a reader. I do wish to make one point very clear: Booth is interested in discerning which characters/works are valuable to the *growth* of an individual reader/character; in this sense, he is more interested in the idea of books that set up patterns of desire in readers, fulfill these patterns, and by doing so become lifelong companions to readers.[105] I am interested in the impact editorial features have on these characters/works: how can we separate the *êthos* of a text from the editions in which that text is found? The words of a text vary to some extent from edition to edition, but these words appear to me to be more constant than the editorial features that color the work in question. These editorial features seem

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[104] Booth, 8.

[105] Consider: "No matter how high the quality or how 'aesthetic' the goal, all stories will produce a practical patterning of desire, so long as I stay with them. And each pattern, in itself narrow as compared with all the other possible patterns, will imply that it is the best. . . . Stopping after two paragraphs [of Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*], I may, of course, choose not to read any more of this giant of a novel. But if I do go on, it will be because I desire more of 'this,' whatever this kind of companionship is" (Booth, 204).

to me to be a key consideration in establishing the *ethos* of a given text. Put another way, Booth is interested primarily in the effect of the character of the works themselves on readers; I am interested both in the creation of characters through the dynamic between works and editorial shaping and their effects on specific readers—readers who produce their own literary *ethe* from the *ethos* of a specific Chaucerian book. Whereas Booth is interested in the character of the reader, I am more interested in the character of the edition read: the effect of the "characters" (linguistic signs) in constructing an *ethos*.

Booth is valuable to my study, however, precisely by examining the act of reading in terms of the *ethos* of the reader interacting with the *ethos* of the text: a view that seems most pertinent to reading in Tudor England by writers trained to think in rhetorical terms who themselves produced works with discernible characters: the creation of new characters that somehow respond to, reflect, or otherwise refigure not merely the form of Chaucer, but the specific book in which they encountered his works.[106]

I think that a sufficient foundation has been made to conclude that by studying a book's physiognomy—its set of codes that produce a very specific *ethos*—we are able to understand something of a book's rhetorical and aesthetic dimensions. Political critics have already made use of this premise, seeing patronage and structures of power are

[106] It is true that Aristotle's understanding of *ethos* in the *Rhetoric* was not widely influential in the Renaissance; Cicero technical rhetorics from the Second Sophistic were much more widely read. On this phenomenon, see Laurent Pernot, *Rhetoric in Antiquity*, trans. W.E. Higgins (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 2005), particularly chapter Six; Thomas M. Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). Still, the importance of self-presentation is clearly evident in this period, attested to by rhetorical manuals and books on courtly conduct.

present in the very structure of the book.[107] Without denying the presence and impact of these political structures, critics should recognize that readers who approached Chaucer in the English Renaissance seemed to approach him for the reasons their grandfathers had: *sentence* and *solaas*. While the political aspects of editions may well have been recognized by readers in the English Renaissance—the king's *cum privilego* on the title pages—they read him for Horatian instruction and delight.

Poets and playwrights who read Chaucer for material for their own work read with an added attention to the specific linguistic effects found in Chaucer; these linguistic effects have been noted by formalist critics, and as we have seen they provide one way of approaching the imitation of Chaucer: Spenser's archaisms in *The Shepheardes Calendar* and *The Faerie Queene* are perhaps the most prominent examples of the effects of this kind of reading. In this respect, the corruption of Chaucer's language through successive editions by editors who had forgotten what Middle English sounded like and how its structure worked played a great role in how these poets read Chaucer.[108] Those who read him for plots, characters, and themes were perhaps more immune from editorial changes to language, but other editorial factors—arrangement of materials, typeface, and commentaries, for example—still shaped how they interpreted Chaucer's text, and thus shaped the imitations they produced. How these poets and playwrights refigured Chaucer depended on how Chaucer was refigured for them by editors.

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[107] These power structures are treated by Gillespie in *Print Culture and the Medieval Author.*
[108] Consider Blodgett's treatment of Thynne's process of "archaizing" Chaucer's English; Ruggiers, 47.

Additionally an important consideration in examining the reading and imitating of Chaucerian *êthê* in the English Renaissance is an attention to the audience of Chaucerian imitations. In the post-Romantic age, one may not immediately consider the inspired poet to have any attention for the readers or auditors of his works, but in the English Renaissance, when poetics and rhetoric were often the same, the audience can be presumed to have been a greater consideration. This consideration would have been particularly important in the case of dramatists, whose plays were generally written for a wide, popular audience. When consciously borrowing from Chaucer, such poets and playwrights intended that this borrowing be recognized; both they and at least a segment of their audience were readers of the same Chaucerian sources. Thus, Chaucerian imitations reveal not only a specific writer's relationship with Chaucerian materials, but also the intended relations with the writer's immediate audience.

The relationship between Chaucerian imitators, their audiences, and the editions of Chaucer read by both can be articulated by the idea of "horizons of expectation" discussed by Hans Robert Jauss in *Towards an Aesthetic of Reception*.[109] The connection between the critical concerns of Booth and Jauss should be apparent; in treating the social function of literature, Jauss notes that, "the literary experience of the reader enters into the horizon of expectation of his lived praxis, performs his understanding of the world, and thereby also has an effect on his social behavior."[110] The books we read affect the way we live; Jauss develops his method in response to the limitations of traditional

[109] Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward and Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982).
[110] Jauss, 39.

Marxist approaches, articulating how works of literature can be produced by a given culture, but also transcend it.[111] Each author writes, in one way or another, in response to past authors:

> [T]he writer who conceives of his work in light of positive or negative norms of an earlier work . . . [is] first simply [a reader] before their reflexive relationship to literature can become productive again. . . . The historicity of literature as well as its communicative character presuppose a dialogical and at once processlike relationship between work, audience, and new work that can be conceived in the relations between message and receiver as well as between question and answer, problem and solution.[112]

Comparing the works read by an author to the works written by an author may give us insight into the attitudes of one to the other, but are most productive only when they take into account the "horizons of expectation"—the attitudes towards a work typical of that moment in history:

> The analysis of the literary experience of the reader avoids the threatening pitfalls of psychology if it describes the reception and the influence of a work within the objectifiable system of expectations that arises for each work in the historical moment of its appearance, from a pre-understanding of the genre, from the form and themes of already familiar works, and from the opposition between poetic and practical language.[113]

By grounding one's analysis in a comparative study of generic expectations and generic products, a critic is less likely to rely on speculative guesswork, and provides a methodology very well suited to interrogating the status of a text in its given historical moment and throughout its reception history:

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[111] "But it is precisely at this point [of aporia over base-superstructure relations in developing art] that the possibility of grasping the revolutionary character of art is foreclosed to Marxist aesthetics: the characteristic that it can lead men beyond the stabilized images and prejudices of their historical situation toward a new perception of the world or an anticipated reality," Jauss, 14.
[112] Jauss, 19.
[113] Jauss, 22.

> The reconstruction of the horizon of expectations, on the face of which a work was created and received in the past, enables one on the other hand to pose questions that the text gave an answer to, and thereby to discover how the contemporary reader could have viewed and understood the work.[114]

Chaucerian works of the English Renaissance should thus not only be considered in light of the works of Chaucer in and of themselves, but also in light of how Chaucer's works were viewed by readers in the English Renaissance—what expectations they brought to a "Chaucerian" work. Perhaps the most fruitful way of uncovering this view, what readers and audiences "expected" to find in a Chaucerian imitation, is by considering the characters of editions, characters that have power to shape readers and audiences. The characters of these editions need to be checked against the characters of other editions to give a just estimation; Jauss seems to suggest this method himself: "It must be possible to take a synchronic cross-section of a moment in the development, to arrange the heterogeneous multiplicity of contemporaneous works in equivalent, opposing, and hierarchical structures, and thereby discover an overarching system of relationships in the literature of a historical moment."[115] Jaussian horizons of expectation, then, are the final methodological piece in my project of examining editorial *ethe* and their effects on readers and writers of the English Renaissance.

Perhaps the most important corollary to the premises raised by Jauss applied to an examination of editions is that new editions give rise to new patterns of interpretation and imitation. If editorial physiognomy can shape a reader's encounter with the *ethos* of the

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[114] Jauss, 28.
[115] Jauss, 36.

work read, then new physiognomies, new systems of code, will lead to new readings. Eco notes that readers always encounter new texts through the lenses of old texts—the texts one has read already shape one's understanding and interpretation of the texts newly encountered.[116] Eco, in treating the writing process of producing new texts, goes so far as to speak of texts generating texts—the questions or problems raised by previous works are left to be responded to by new ones.[117] This treatment appears to be a just one—writers often consciously and openly set themselves up against former works through intertextual allusions. Building on this observation, to understand something of the complex nature of literary imitation and response, one must attend to the effect of editions in generating new texts. Put another way, the introduction of a new edition of a work—of a new editorial character and set of interpretive cues—affects literary production in a manner similar to the introduction of a new work.

Such an observation has a clear application to the study of Chaucer in the English Renaissance. At apparently salient points in the period, we find new editions being produced and distributed. Caxton and his successors printed during the end of the Wars of the Roses and the dawn of the Tudor era. Thynne's edition was apparently produced at the behest of Henry VIII around the time of his divorce and break with Rome. Stow revises and republishes Thynne early into Elizabeth's reign, and Speght edits and reedits Chaucer in the heyday of Shakespeare, with the cult of Elizabeth firmly established. If Eco, Eisenstein, and Dane are correct, these new editions were prepared to have effects

[116] "No text is read independently of the reader's experience of other texts"; Eco, 20.
[117] This process is, of course, also treated by Harold Bloom in *The Western Canon* (New York, San Diego, and London: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1994).

on their world and were themselves "events." One would expect that new physiognomies and codes of Chaucer should lead to new ways of responding to and imitating him.

My course of investigation, then, will fall into two sections. In the first six chapters, I shall treat the editions of Chaucer printed during the English Renaissance to the end of making some judgment of their individual characters. For the sake of ease, I shall divide my chapters along the lines of printers/editors: William Caxton's Chaucer; The Chaucer of Other Early Printers: de Worde, Notary, Pynson, and Rastell; Protestant Polemical Chaucer: Godfray, Nicholson, Gybson, and Hyll; William Thynne's and John Stow's Chaucer; and Thomas Speght's Chaucer. In each of these cases, I shall turn to the features and physiognomy of the edition, noting what materials are present, how they are ordered, and how they are presented to be read. After the first six chapters, the characters of Chaucerian works presented to readers throughout the English Renaissance should be clear.[118]

The next two chapters will focus on imitation. I will restrict my treatment almost exclusively to authors whose works are generally taken to show sustained Chaucerian influence (as opposed to one or two references or allusions). Furthermore, while Chaucer's effect on the drama of the period is fascinating and worthy of further study, for the purposes of this dissertation I shall focus on the printed materials of the two most prominent Chaucerian poets of the sixteenth century: John Skelton and Edmund Spenser. Insofar as he is arguably the first Renaissance English poet, Skelton provides a

[118] Unless otherwise noted, the facsimiles consulted for this dissertation are taken from Early English Books Online: http://eebo.chadwyck.com, accessed through the Washington Research Library Consortium.

compelling test case for the presence of Chaucer at the beginning of the English Renaissance. Spenser's *Shepheardes Calendar* appeared to contemporaries as a herald of a new kind of English poetry: the fully-developed "golden" or "ornate" style of Renaissance poetry in English; Spenser's persistent use of Chaucer in this work and others provides an example of Chaucer's reception at the height of the English Renaissance. As such, a study of these two poets will provide a picture of Chaucerian reception around the beginning and the end of the Renaissance in England, spanning the Caxton editions of the beginning of the Renaissance in England to the Speght editions of that became the standard for the end of the English Renaissance.

Furthermore, focusing on poetry will allow me to examine the rhetorical effects of the physiognomy of the early editions of Skelton and Spenser themselves: the performative quality of drama means that the reconstruction of the original character of a play is very difficult, if not impossible. The character of printed sixteenth-century poetry is more straightforward, and allows the dissertation to have methodological consistency: I will examine the rhetorical characters of Renaissance editions of Chaucer, then compare them with the rhetorical characters of the Renaissance editions of two of Chaucer's most prominent imitators in the sixteenth century. This approach will shed new light on the general trend of Chaucerian imitation in the English Renaissance, grounded in the

characters of editions printed, read, and imitated. The story of Chaucerian imitation in the English Renaissance is the story of Chaucerian editions in the period.[119]

[119] Insofar as this study treats the artistic project carried out in the reigns of the Tudor monarchs of England, an artistic project that self-consciously considered the past from a distance and sought to renew past glories through imitation, I think that "Renaissance" is the proper term, if understood as one renaissance among many, made more or less permanent through printing. See Eisenstein, 136.

Chapter 2

William Caxton's Chaucer

1976—the 500th anniversary of Caxton's press—began what has been, in many respects, a renaissance in Caxton scholarship. With new attention paid to Caxton's biography, his press, and his editions, a general portrait of the man and his products has emerged.[120] The most widely-held stance on Caxton was that he was first and foremost a businessman. Blake points out that Caxton was a member of the Mercer's Guild,[121] a membership with which he identified for his entire life, never once listing his profession as printer or publisher.[122] His turn to printing while on the continent appeared to be a calculated move, with the intention of establishing a monopoly on printing in English.[123]

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[120] See Norman Francis Blake, *Caxton: England's First Publisher* (London: Osprey, 1976); George Duncan Painter, *William Caxton: A Quincentenary Biography of England's First Printer* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1976); Beverly Boyd, *Chaucer According to William Caxton:* Minor Poems *and* Boece*, 1478* (Lawrence, Kansas: Allen Press, 1978); B. Belyea, "Caxton's Reading Public," *ELN* 19 (1981-2): 14-19; R.F. Yeager, "Literary Theory at the Close of the Middle Ages: William Caxton and William Thynne," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 6 (1984): 135-64; Lotte Hellinga, "Caxton in Focus: The Beginning of Printing in England," *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 100, No. 397 (Oct., 1985): 879-881; Russell Rutter, "William Caxton and Literary Patronage," *Studies in Philology*, Vol. 84, No. 4 (Autumn, 1987): 440-470; Norman Francis Blake, "William Caxton, *"Authors of the Middle Ages: English Writers of the Late Middle Ages*, ed. M.C. Seymour (Brookfield, VT and Aldershot, Hants: Variorum, 1996), 1-68; David Burnley, "Scogan, Shirley's Reputation and Chaucerian Occasional Verse," *Chaucer in Perspective: Middle English Essays in Honour of Norman Blake*, ed. Geoffrey Lester (Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 28-46; Brian Donaghey, "Caxton's Printing of Chaucer's *Boece,*" *Chaucer in Perspective: Middle English Essays in Honour of Norman Blake*, ed. Geoffrey Lester (Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 73-99; William Kuskin, "Caxton's Worthies Series: The Production of Literary Culture," *ELH*, Vol. 66, No. 3 (Fall, 1999): 511-551; Alexandra Gillespie, "Poets, Printers, and Early English "Sammelbande"," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 2, Manuscript, Print, and Early Tudor Literature (2004): 189-214; Yu-Chiao Wang, "Caxton's Romances and Their Early Tudor Readers," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 2, Manuscript, Print, and Early Tudor Literature (2004): 173-188; Alexandra Gillespie, *Print Culture and the Medieval Author: Chaucer, Lydgate, and Their Books, 1473-1557* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); William Kuskin, *Symbolic Caxton: Literary Culture and Print Capitalism*. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008).

[121] Blake, *Authors of the Middle Ages*, 10.

[122] Blake, *Authors*, 33.

[123] Blake, *Authors*, 18, 39.

Although Caxton knew the process of printing, Blake contends that he is to be seen primarily as an editor, translator, or publisher, *not* as a printer.[124] As a consequence, his editions are not to be treated as carefully researched, finely crafted books; their point was to be sold in large quantities to the middle class and court. Blake and others contend that the editorial cues that form the characters of Caxton's editions—headings, incipits, explicits, layout—were most likely merely copied from his manuscript exemplars (which are now, in most cases, lost), and when Caxton did insert his own prose in prologues and epilogues, his motives were purely commercial: advertising his books as items for the elite, following the literary and aesthetic tastes of the day. Caxton may have been a good businessman, but a good reader and presenter of Chaucer he was not.[125]

Without denying the financial motives of Caxton in his printing, Blake and other scholars who take a more strictly mercantile view of Caxton seem to do a disservice to Caxton by downplaying his interest in English vernacular letters. Although Blake calls him England's first literary critic, and notes his laments about the current state of English, Caxton's work as an editor is subordinated to his interests as a publisher.[126] This view is balanced by Eisenstein's ideas of printer-humanists and Kuskin's recent treatment of Caxton in terms of vernacular humanism.[127] Caxton's decision to become England's first printer and his act of perpetuating current literary taste and theory did much to strengthen

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[124] Blake, *Authors*, 23.
[125] This view is continued by Gillespie and Wang.
[126] Blake, *Authors*, 37-38.
[127] Elizabeth Eisenstein, *Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); William Kuskin, *Symbolic Caxton: Literary Culture and Print Capitalism* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008).

the presence of the texts he chose to print in the minds of the English reading (and listening) public. Regardless of whether he himself was devoted to current humanist interest in vernacular languages, his editions promoted this interest, and the rhetorical characters of these editions served as the standards for printed works of Chaucer at the beginning of the English Renaissance.

Without minimizing the realities of Caxton's practical considerations and marketing ploys, one should not ignore the reality that his editions of Chaucer—produced in greater numbers and with greater standardization than fifteenth-century manuscript copies—presented their readers with physiognomies that produced clear aesthetic and rhetorical effects. Caxton may simply have copied physiognomy from unknown Chaucerian manuscripts, but this copied physiognomy became the starting point for how Chaucer was presented to be read in large, standardized quantities to the readers of the early English Renaissance. While manuscript production survived for over a century after the advent of the press, and continued to influence the features of books in the early sixteenth century,[128] the physiognomy of Caxton's Chaucers set the tone for how Chaucer would be read in the English Renaissance. While not as heavy-handed as subsequent editors, Caxton produced editions whose characters stressed the usefulness of Chaucer's works over their pleasure, beginning a process of editorial interpretation that would continue until the end of the English Renaissance. In other words, Horace's oft-quoted maxim on the end of poetry—"The aim of the poet is to inform or delight or to combine

[128] See, for instance, Kuskin in *Symbolic Caxton*: "The significance of print is less that it signals a fundamental break with the past than that it reasserts this past by transforming it, restating the symbolic basis for vernacular literary authority through material reproduction" (4-5).

together, in what he says, both pleasure and applicability to life"—is taken by Caxton and his followers as the standard for interpretation of Chaucer, with the stress put on information and applicability over delight.[129]

In order to situate the characters of Caxton's editions in the context of manuscript exemplars, one would ideally consider the physiognomies of every extant manuscript of Chaucer from the fifteenth century, then compare them not only to every Caxton edition, but to every extant Caxton book-copy. For the purposes of understanding the main rhetorical/aesthetic characters of these editions—the characters that are more or less preserved from book-copy to book-copy[130]—I would like to consider the characters of five particularly telling Chaucerian manuscripts: MS Tanner 346; Cambridge University Library MS Ii 3.21; Bodley MS. Arch. Selden. B.24; MS Pepys 2006; and MS Bodl. 638. These manuscripts were produced during Caxton's lifetime and demonstrate trends in how Chaucer was being presented, trends with which Caxton's editions interact. By understanding the character of some contemporary manuscripts, we can understand better the characters run off by Caxton's press.[131]

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[129] Horace, *The Art of Poetry*, trans. Walter Jackson Bate, *Critical Theory Since Plato*, ed. Hazard Adams (Orlando, FL, et al: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1992, original, 1971), 68-74.

[130] That is to say the words themselves and their layout; quiring, binding, and non-woodcut/engraving decoration are less stable.

[131] Even were all manuscripts accounted for, the fact that Caxton's copy-texts are unknown would still leave unanswered questions. For the purposes of this study, having some understanding of rhetorical and aesthetic options of the period will reflect on the characters found in Caxton's editions.

The Characters of Five Manuscripts Contemporary to Caxton

Its earliest known owner—John Greystoke—dying in 1501, MS Tanner 346 is placed by Robinson as having been made late in the second quarter of the fifteenth century, putting it in the period just before Caxton.[132] There is a mixed-secretary influence on the hand in the book, though scribes A and C use Anglicana formata.[133] The text is given in a single column with no running titles and only the occasional marginal gloss or citation. Decorated capitals, however, are abundant, and help guide the reader through the text.[134] The complete contents of this manuscript are as follow:

1. Chaucer: *The Legend of Good Women*
2. Hoccleve: "Lepistle de Cupide"
3. Lydgate: "A Complaynt of a Loveres Lyfe"
4. Chaucer: *Anelida and Arcite*
5. Chaucer: *The Complaint of Mars*
6. Chaucer: *The Complaint of Venus*
7. "The Complaint to Pity"
8. "The Lover's Plaint"
9. "The Complaint for Lack of Sight"
10. Lydgate: *The Temple of Glass*
11. Clanvowe: *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*
12. "Envoy to Alison"
13. Chaucer: *The Book of the Duchess*
14. Chaucer: *The Parliament of Fowles*

Insofar as this manuscript is one of the earliest collections of Chaucer's minor poems,[135] it may be treated as an early witness of the anthologizing of Chaucer begun by John

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[132] *Manuscript Tanner 346: a Facsimile: Bodleian Library, Oxford University*, introduction by Pamela Robinson (Norman, OK: Pilgrim Books, and Suffolk, U.K.: Boydell-Brewer, 1980), xix.
[133] Robinson, xix-xx.
[134] Robinson, xxiii.
[135] Robinson, xxiv

Shirley.[136] The editorial apparatus is fairly sparse; the text is allowed to stand by itself, with only intermittent framing by incipits and explicits (which tend to be in Latin); even titles are rare in this manuscript. MS Tanner 346 is at the head of the practice of Chaucerian collection and presentation seen in the following, later manuscripts.

The next manuscript to consider, Cambridge University Library MS Ii 3.21, is a beautiful example of Chaucer's translation of Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, presented to the reader in an eminently accessible and navigable manner.[137] The text is presented in single blocks, with virgulae used for punctuation and rubricated capitals marking textual divisions. The manuscript shows a particular penchant for decoration using scrolls: even catch-words are enclosed in little scrolls, adding a touch of elegance to a scribal necessity. In terms of editorial apparatus, the manuscript opens with a double-columned table of contents and index of topics, and includes line-by-line commentaries at the end (beginning fol. 181r). Such an apparatus ensures the reader easy navigation through the text, establishes topical categories through which to read the work, and gives the reader a handy set of glosses. The hierarchy of scripts is preserved by giving the Latin text in textura, while Chaucer's English is rendered in Anglicana/Bâtarde. Interestingly enough, the glosses and commentary are also given in Bâtarde, neatly joining Chaucer's translation to the commentary through hand. Insofar as the topics and index relate to matters in Boethius' work, Chaucer's role as translator is diminished; he is the vehicle through which readers with little Latin can access a seminal

[136] Robinson, xxiv
[137] The photographed facsimile of Cambridge University Library MS Ii 3.21 housed the Library of Congress was consulted for this section.

text. Chaucer is acknowledged as translator, but with little fanfare: a scroll on fol. 52v reads: "Chawc[er] vpon this fyfte met[er] of the second book." Cambridge MS Ii 3.21 thus presents Chaucer in an appropriately humble relation to Boethius; his presence is acknowledged, but overshadowed by the matter of the author whom he was translating.

Bodley MS Arch. Selden B.24 is contemporaneous with Caxton, having been produced in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century; it contains both English and Scottish verse, and is perhaps most famous for containing *The King's Quair*.[138] In addition to this monument of Scottish verse, the manuscript contains a beautiful presentation of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, written in late Anglicana/Bâtarde with sweeping calligraphic capitals and floral decorations (as at fol. 91v). Chaucer's masterpiece is given a place of honor as the first item in the manuscript; as the first work encountered by the reader, it is given as a poetic standard by which the other items are to be read.[139] The margins are left wide, encouraging readerly glossing; a face drawn in at fol. 89v is not the most scholarly reaction to the text, but a good indication of just how much room is given around the text itself. In terms of editorial features, incipits, explicits, and proems are given much space, catching the eye and providing easy points of navigation. Many annotations are given, but more for the purpose of keeping track of dialogue and noting significant portions of the text (as "Cant[us] Troli" on fol. 6v).

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[138] *Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and The kingis quair: a facsimile of Bodleian Library, Oxford MS Arch. Selden B. 24.*, introduction by Julia Boffey and A.S.G. Edwards; appendix by B.C. Barker-Benfield (Cambridge and Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 1997).

[139] Chaucer's importance to Scottish poetry makes this placement quite understandable; see H.S. Bennett, *Chaucer and the Fifteenth Century*.

Chaucer's text is presented in a manner not only aesthetically pleasing but quite accessible, encouraging readers to dip back into the text at favorite and significant points.

Besides the editorial features given as aids to reading, immediately following *Troilus and Criseyde*, on the same page (fol. 118v), we find a title-less verse relating back to Chaucer's poem:

> Blak be thy bandis and thy wede also
> Thou soroufull book of mat[er] disesparent
> In tokenyng of thyn[n] inwared mortall wo
> Quhiche is so bad yt may not bey apparent
> Thou oughtest mad outward bey asaert
> That hast within so many a sorouful claus
> Swich be thyne habyte as thou hast thy cause.

The Scottish writer of this addition[140] gives a final reflection that appears contrary to the Chaucerian end of the poem. Troilus' palinode and vision from the heavens put the tragedy of Troilus within the frame of Divine Providence, thus mediating the sorrow and pain of the work with words lifted from Dante:

> Thow oon, and two, and three, eterne on lyve,
> That regnest ay in thre and two and oon,
> Uncircumscript, and al maist circumscrive,
> Us from visible and invisible foon
> Defende, and to thy mercy, everichon,
> So make us, Jesus, for thy mercy, digne,
> For love of mayde and moder thyn benigne.
> Amen.[141]

Chaucer chooses to end the poem from a divine perspective; Arch. Selden B.24's addition refocuses the reader back to a human perspective, presenting a lachrymose work,

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[140] By "writer" I mean either the auctor who composed this stanza or the scribe who rendered it (or both). The Scottish form for "which" ("Quhiche") clearly marks the provenance of the scribe, at least, as Scottish.
[141] *Troilus and Criseyde*, 1863-1870. Taken from *The Riverside Chaucer*, General Editor, Larry D. Benson (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

clothed forever in "black weeds", and consisting of "sorrowful clauses". The character of this *Troilus*, then, is not one of theological comfort in the face of sublunary vicissitude but of all too mortal woe, illustrating aptly how editorial additions may shape the character and interpretation of a text.

Of another character altogether, MS Pepys 2006, named after its famous former owner and diarist, consists of two different manuscripts from the "very late 15th century"[142] bound together. The text throughout is presented in a single column, with the exception of *The House of Fame* and two stanzas "Fortune". The latter (p. 124) is clearly a move to save space, while the former appears to have been an unusual aesthetic choice: works before and after *The House of Fame* demonstrate the usual single column blocks, setting *The House of Fame* apart from its other contents. Stanzas are marked by paraphs and *The Parson's Tale* has its Latin text rubricated. The hands given in this manuscript are a standard collection of hand routinely used for vernacular works: "secretary, bastard secretary, bastard, Anglicana and secretary."[143] Both of these manuscripts demonstrate well the major trend in Chaucerian manuscript circulation during Caxton's day; as its facsimile's editor, A.S.G. Edwards notes:

> They [the two manuscripts in Pepys 2006] represent forms in which [Chaucer's] texts were transmitted during the late fifteenth century and the process of compilation that brought various of this texts into conjunction. They also suggest the broadening of the audience of Chaucer's works, since they seem clearly aimed at an audience very different from the courtly, sophisticated ones generally postulated for such Chaucer

[142] *Manuscript Pepys 2006: a facsimile: Magdalene College, Cambridge*, introduction by A.S.G. Edwards (Norman, OK: Pilgrim Books and Suffolk, UK: Boydell-Brewer, 1985), xxiii.
[143] Edwards, xxvii.

> anthologies as Fairfax 16 or Tanner 346, one content with less elaborate and hence less expensive manuscripts.[144]

MS Pepys 2006 is less adorned than other Chaucerian manuscripts, but clearly focused on collecting Chaucerian materials into anthologies, as the table of contents makes clear:

1. Lydgate: "Complaint of the Black Knight"
2. Lydgate: *The Temple of Glass*
3. Chaucer: *The Legend of Good Women*
4. Chaucer: "ABC"
5. Chaucer: *The House of Fame*[145]
6. Chaucer: *The Complaint of Mars*
7. Chaucer: *The Complaint of Venus*
8. Chaucer: "Fortune"
9. Chaucer: *The Parliament of Fowles*
10. Three Kings of Cologne
11. Conclusion of the former
12. *Lydgate: The* Serpent of Division
13. Lydgate's L'envoy to the previous
14. Benedict Burgh: *Cato Minor*
15. Benedict Burgh, *Cato Major* [End of First Manuscript]
16. Chaucer: *The Tale of Melibee* [Beginning of Second Manuscript]
17. Chaucer: *The Parson's Tale*
18. Chaucer: "Retraction"
19. Chaucer: *The Complaint of Mars*
20. Chaucer: *The Complaint of Venus*
21. Chaucer: *Anelida and Arcite*
22. Chaucer: "Fortune"
23. Chaucer: "Envoy to Scogan"
24. Chaucer: "ABC"
25. Chaucer: "Complaint to his Purse"
26. Chaucer: "Truth"
27. Chaucer: "Merciless Beauty"
28. Collation

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[144] A.S. G. Edwards, xvii.

[145] Blake asserts that Caxton was the first to attribute *The House of Fame* to Chaucer: Blake *Caxton and His World*, 106. Although lacking an authorizing colophon, however, the inclusion of this work in this Chaucerian manuscript (and in MS Bodl. 638 below!) suggests that Blake's assertion needs to be qualified.

Even though the first manuscript demonstrates the fifteenth-century practice of including among Chaucerian works those of his imitator Lydgate,[146] the second manuscript shows an exclusive interest in Chaucer, albeit in an order to which twenty-first century readers are unaccustomed, single tales from *The Canterbury Tales* standing alone. Pepys 2006 bears witness to the trend of collecting Chaucerian works well before the appearance of the first *Works* in 1532: "Such a conjunction [of Chaucer's prose Canterbury Tales and lyrics] is also representative, albeit of a less pronounced tendency in fifteenth-century compilations . . . Collections of Chaucer's shorter poems appear with *The Canterbury Tales* in Gg.4.27, but no other manuscript of *The Canterbury Tales* includes as many of these poems as the nine included here."[147] The Chaucerian character presented in these manuscripts is one of works that stand on their own, without much editorial interference, but whose literary interest derives from common attribution to Chaucer.

The last manuscript considered, MS Bodley 638, is a Chaucerian anthology from the late fifteenth century, focused primarily on items related to genre and courtly love.[148] Written in a mixed Anglicana/Secretary hand[149] (with some texturaish incipits and explicits in *The Legend of Good Women*), the layout does not appear well planned, although textual divisions such as stanza breaks, divided couplets, incipits and explicits make finding contents very easy; if not elegant, Bodley 638 does present its contents

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[146] See Gillespie, *Print Culture and the Medieval Author: Chaucer, Lydgate, and Their Books, 1473-1557*.
[147] Edwards, xxii.
[148] *Manuscript Bodley 638: a facsimile: Bodleian Library, Oxford University*, introduction by Pamela Robinson (Norman, OK: Pilgrim Books and Suffolk, U.K.: Boydell-Brewer, 1982), xvii.
[149] Robinson, xxvi.

efficiently. The Chaucerian contents of this manuscript are more or less bundled together in the middle, from fol. 46r to fol. 209v; the complete list of contents is as follows:

1. Lydgate: "A Complaynte of a Lovers Lyfe"
2. Chaucer: *Anelida and Arcite*
3. Clanvowe: *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*
4. Lydgate: *The Temple of Glass*
5. Hoccleve: *The Letter of Cupid*
6. "Chaucer": *Complaint to Pity*
7. Chaucer: *The Legend of Good Women*
8. Chaucer: *The Parliament of Fowles*
9. Chaucer: *The Book of the Duchess*
10. Chaucer: *The House of Fame*
11. *The Game of Dice*
12. Chaucer: "ABC"
13. Chaucer: "Fortune"
14. "Complaint against Hope"
15. "Complaint Damours"
16. *Ragmanys Rolle*
17. *Order of Folia*

The text is presented in a fairly straightforward manner, with little editorial apparatus beyond traditional headings, incipits and explicits. The treatment of the latter two aspects is bilingual in some cases, as at fol. 45v: "Explicit the letter of Cupide god of loue directide to his suggestyd louers." In cases such as this one, the significance of the Latin has become a commonplace, leading to a mixture of English and Latin, the vernacular and the literate. Robinson notes that the contents of this manuscript and MS Tanner 346 are so close that Hammond derived a single archetype, "Oxford."[150] Regardless of whether or not these two manuscripts were derived from a single exemplar, they do bear

[150] Robinson, xxxv.

witness to the phenomenon of making Chaucer more available and accessible at the beginning of the English Renaissance.[151]

Caxton's First Set of Chaucerian Printings (1477-78)

Now knowing something of the textual features of Chaucerian works contemporaneous with Caxton, we shall turn to his Chaucerian printings of 1477-78.[152] These editions carry forward many of the conventions found in the manuscript Chaucers of this period, but with specifically Caxtonian refashioning.[153] Even in this first set of Chaucerian printings, Caxton takes pains to market and authorize Chaucerian texts, a rhetorical move much noted by contemporary historians of the book.[154] Less thoroughly treated are the aesthetic choices found in his editions, choices—whether generated by Caxton or his exemplars is a moot point—that would shape the fountainhead of Chaucer in the English Renaissance, the Chaucer mass-produced and circulated to the literate gentry and court.

As with all of Caxton's Chaucerian printings (with the possible exception of his 1483 *Canterbury Tales*), the textual physiognomy of the first printed edition of *The*

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[151] The fact that MS Bodl. 638 appears to have belonged to a grammar school by the 1560's (xxxvii) makes this accessibility all the more palpable. See also David Thomson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Middle English Grammatical Texts* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1979).

[152] The 1477 printings are termed by some as 1476; I shall follow the dating given by Boswell and Holton in *Chaucer's Fame in England: STC Chauceriana 1475-1640* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2004), as reflecting the most up-to-date consensus.

[153] William Kuskin takes this view of Caxton's printing and its relationship to manuscript culture; see Kuskin, *Symbolic Caxton: Literary Culture and Print Capitalism*.

[154] Wang, Gillespie, and Kuskin all point out the "authorization" of Chaucer through Caxton's additions.

Canterbury Tales (1477)[155] cannot necessarily be attributed to inventive deliberation on the parts of Caxton and his compositors; it is more likely than not that Caxton merely reproduced the format found in his copy-text of *The Canterbury Tales*, a b-text lost to history.[156] Although its appearance may tempt one to consider his exemplar a plainer, less costly (and hence more reproduced) kind of Chaucerian text common in the later fifteenth century, we do not, ultimately, know what the exemplar for Caxton's 1477 *Tales* looked like exactly. Still, the character of this *Tales* was the first to be mass-produced in nearly identical format, and as such is the first character of the Renaissance editions of Chaucer.

The first aspect of the 1477 *Canterbury Tales* worth noting is that it begins immediately, with no colophon or title for its single block of text: "WHan that Apprill with his shouris sote" is the first text the reader encounters. The type is Caxton's type 2, which is a Bâtarde type; this choice of type keeps with the convention of presenting vernacular works in Bâtarde, Secretary, or Anglicana, rather than the Latinate Textura.[157] Strikingly, this type is so persistent is that even Latin is also given in Type 2 throughout. No running titles are given, making navigation from book to book a tricky process. Incipits and explicits are given with paraphs before them, sometimes in English,

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[155] STC 5082-1

[156] For Caxton's printing practices, see Blake, *Caxton and His World*, 74-78. Contemporary bibliographers have identified Caxton's copy text as belonging to the "b-group" (see Boyd's article on Caxton in Ruggiers), but Caxton himself would not have thought in those terms. Hence, for the sake of comparing textual characters, contemporary manuscripts of various textual traditions have been instructive, so long as they are roughly contemporaneous, to give a point for comparison.

[157] For hierarchies of hand, see M.B. Parkes, *English Cursive Book Hands, 1250-1500* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

sometimes in Latin, though the English "Here begynneth" / "Here endeth" is the most common. These incipits and explicits are often combined into single utterances, most likely to save space, as at fol. 78r: "Here endith the Cokis tale And / begynneth the man of lawis prolog." Spatial considerations also probably dictated that the incipits and explicits not be separated from Chaucer's text with spaces; this method most likely was motivated out of a desire to save space, but this practice also has the twofold effect of making navigation between parts harder—one must scour solid blocks of text for the paraphs marking incipits or explicits—while also cutting down on editorial intrusion: Caxton's 1477 edition gives the reader the bare minimum of cues required to differentiate text from the other.

One sign of textual junctures in this edition is the use of capitals. Guide-letters are printed for Capitals (as in the first line), which mark textual divisions; Capitals appear, for example, at the beginning of each pilgrim's description in *The General Prologue* (fol. 2r-16v). Although *The Knight's Tale* in the 1477 Caxton does not conform to the divisions found in the most authoritative critical edition based on Ellesmere 26 C9— this *Knight's Tale* does not divide itself into books—capitals do mark natural divisions in the story, serving as guideposts for the reader. In other tales—the Clerk's and the Parson's—book divisions are given. The contents and order of the 1477 Caxton are as follows, with notable features:

<u>General Prologue</u> (fol. 2r-16v)
<u>Knight's Tale</u> (fol. 16v-54v)
<u>Miller's Prologue</u> (fol. 33v-56r)
<u>Miller's Tale</u> (fol. 56r-67r)

Reve's Prologue (fol. 67r-68v)
Reve's Tale (fol. 68v-76v)
Cook's Prologue (fol. 76v-77r)
Cook's Tale (fol. 77r-78r)
Man of Law's Prologue (fol. 78r-80v)—No explicit/incipit between Prologue and Tale
Man of Law's Tale (fol. 80v-98r)
Squire's Prologue (fol. 98r-98v); Incipit; no explicit
Squire's Tale (fol. 98v-110r)
Merchant's Prologue (fol. 110r-110v)
Merchant's Tale (fol. 110v-131r)
Wife of Bath's Prologue (fol. 131r-145v)
Wife of Bath's Tale (fol. 146r-153r)
Friar's Prologue (fol. 153r-153v)
Friar's Tale (fol. 153v-160r)
Summoner's Prologue (fol. 160r-161v)
Summoner's Tale (fol. 161v-170v)
Clerk's Prologue (fol. 170v-171v) Incipit; no explicit for previous tale
Clerk's Tale (fol. 171v-192r)
fol. 174r—"Prima pars Grisildis"—indented and paraphed
fol. 178v—"Secunda pars"
fol. 181v—"Tercia pars"
fol. 182v—"Quarta pars"
fol. 187r—"Quinta pars"
fol. 191v—"Verba hospitis"
Franklin's Prologue (fol. 192r-192v)
Franklin's Tale (fol. 192v-207v)
Second Nun's Prologue (fol. 207v-209v)
Second Nun's Tale (fol. 209v-216r)
Canon Yeoman's Prologue (fol. 216r-219r)
Canon Yeoman's Tale (fol. 219r-232r)
Physician's Tale (fol. 232r-237r)
Pardoner's Prologue (fol. 237r-237v)
Pardoner's Tale (fol. 237v-248v)
Shipman's Tale (fol. 248v-256v)
"Here endith the Shipmannys tale. / Verba hospitis"
"Here begynneth the Prioresses prolog / Domine d[omin]us noster qua[m] admirabile / est nomen tuu[m] in vniuersa terra"
Prioress's Prologue (fol. 256v-257v)
Prioress's Tale (fol. 257v-261r)
Ryme of sir Topas (fol. 261r-262v)—"Sequitur Chawcers tale."

Tale of Melibee (fol. 265v-292v): “Here endeth Chawers tale of Mellebe 7 / Prudence his wif
[and] sophie his doughter. / And here begynneth the Monkis prolog”
Monk’s Prologue (fol. 292v-294r)
Monk’s Tale (fol. 294r-307r)—Divisions between stories are marked by capitals, not titles/breaks
Nun’s Priest’s Tale (fol. 307v-318v); Tale has incipit; prologue does not; tale lacks explicit
Manciple’s Prologue (fol. 318v-320r)
Manciple’s Tale (fol. 320r-324v)
Parson’s Prologue (fol. 324v-326r)
Parson’s Tale (fol. 326r-372r); Paraphs used to mark textual divisions
fol. 336r: “Explicit prima pars penitencie. / Incipit secunda pars.”
fol. 340v: “De septe[m] peccatis mortalib[us]. Incipit de sup[er]bia.”—Capitals begin chapters of the seven deadly sins.
fol. 344v: “Sequitur de Jnuidia”
fol. 346v: “Sequitur de Jra”
fol. 353v: “Sequitur de Accidia”
fol. 356r: “Sequitur de Auaricia”
fol. 359r: “Sequitur de Gula”
fol. 360r: “Sequitur de Luxuria”
fol. 366v: “Adhuc secunda pars penitencie”
fol. 369v: “Incipit tercia pars penitencie”
fol. 372r: “Explicit Tractatus Galfrydi Chaucer de / Penitencia vt dicitur pro fabula Rectoris.”
Chaucer’s Retraction (fol. 372v)

As difficult as it may be to navigate without running titles, this first printed edition of *The Canterbury Tales* still shows a great deal of order with minimal editorial interpolation.

One striking division between the incipits/explicits in this edition is the use of Latin for the divisions in *The Clerk’s Tale* and *The Parson’s Tale*; whether or not this division is to be attributed to Caxton or to his exemplar, the fact remains that two of the most literate characters in the story have the textual divisions of their tales indicated in Latin, not in English. Also striking are the other examples of Latin cues: “Verba hospitis” (“the words of the host”) at fol. 191v and fol. 256v; the Latin Psalm before *The*

Prioress' Tale (the Psalm which is translated and glossed by the Prioress in her opening lines); the link between *The Ryme of Sir Thopas* and *The Tale of Melibee*: "Sequitur [Here followeth] Chawcers tale"; and the final explicit before the *Retraction*: "Explicit Tractatus Galfrydi Chaucer de / Penitencia vt dicitur pro fabula Rectoris" ("here endeth the treatise of Geoffrey Chaucer on penance as is said through the tale of the Parson"). The host, the master of the story-telling competition, the prioress, a nun of high rank, and the poet all are highlighted and raised above other characters through the use of Latin incipits and explicits (the macaronic quality of Chaucer's "sequitur" notwithstanding). Furthermore, the 1477 *Canterbury Tales* highlights the moral and religious quality of Chaucer by asserting a closer link between him and the Parson than between him and other characters; *The Parson's Tale* is "the treatise of Geoffrey Chaucer on Penitence, as said in the Parson's tale": the Parson is asserted—in Latin—to be a vehicle through which Chaucer speaks, rather than simply a character like the others. This selective use of Latin in editorial cues thus serves to highlight the status of certain characters and tales over and against the others.

With minimal editorial apparatus and wide margins (the result of the text being printed in a single block), Caxton's 1477 *Canterbury Tales* is an edition whose character invites and encourages active reading and engagement with the text, though not without investing Chaucer with authorial gravity.[158] Between Chaucer's words (or some variation

[158] Kuskin is gives a thorough reading of the *Retraction* from this edition, arguing for its authorization of the Chaucerian canon through its textual character: "Printed in folio but lacking the prologues, tables, initials, woodcuts, and even signatures that identify many of Caxton's later editions, it presents the reader with a single column of unadorned text. Appearing on its last verso leaf, the Retraction affects a clean

on them) and the reader there is little interference from the editor, with plenty of marginal space for glossing and decoration as the reader sees fit. Caxton's 1477 edition, although navigationally cueless at times, presents Chaucer as a living author, not ossified through weighty editorial presentation and glossing.

In the spirit of the fifteenth-century manuscript anthologies treated above, Caxton's 1477 collection of minor Chaucerian poems (STC 5090-1) includes "Anelida and Arcite" ("Compleynt of Anelida") (fol. 2r-10r), "Chaucer vnto his empty purse" (fol. 10r-10v); and "Chaucer's Prophecy" (fol. 11r). The format is simple: stanzas are separated by spaces (three stanzas per page), a single block of text is used, and the traditional Bâtarde type (Type 2) is the font. There is no title for the first item, and no running headings, although the "complaint" section of the poem is clearly marked at fol. 7r: "Here foloweth the compleynt of anelida queen of hermenye vpon false arcyte of Thebes." "Anelida and Arcite" receives an explicit: "Thus endeth the compleynt of

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finale to the book overall. Indeed, firmly separated from the Parson's tale by a rubric on the previous page as it is, it fits Caxton's twenty-nine-line page perfectly, offering a final turn of the page that modulates Chaucer's voice from frame-tale-pilgrim to authorial farewell through an almost . . . solid surface of black ink. The effect is understated but unambiguous, the self-explanatory end to Chaucer's book and career. But if Caxton's Retraction brings the book to a convincing close visually, it is nonetheless constructed to do so, for the page layout is not entirely natural to the fall of Chaucer's text. Separated from the paratextual apparatus that appears in so many manuscripts, and neatly compressed to a single page, it is missing a number of coherent and discrete phrases for which there are no complete analogues in any manuscript tradition, let alone the family of which his exemplar is said to belong. The evidence for this constructed nature is easily swallowed up in the page itself, for here is textual production without human hands, the only personal touch a rubricated initial in some remaining copies over the telltale printed guide letter. That *The Canterbury Tales* is a book that ends where it should—on its last page—should not be taken for granted: it is a significant construction that involves the thinking through of the relationship between authorship and the nature of the book which achieves simplicity only in the success of its performance. Behind the straightforward appearance of Caxton's 1476/7 Canterbury Tales is a history of artifice and labor, of scribes and compositors making intellectual decisions about what a book should look like" (Kuskin, 127, 129: plate is interpolated between pages of text).

anelida" (fol. 10r); "Chaucer vnto his empty purse" has a title: "The [com]plei[n]t of Chaucer vnto his empty purse" (fol. 10r), a textual divider marking the poem's envoy: "Thenuoye of Chaucer vnto the kynge" (fol. 10v); and an explicit, which merely states "Explicit" (fol. 9v). "Chaucer's Prophecy" does not have a title, but is finished with "Et sic est finis" (fol. 11r), neatly concluding the small collection.

As with the *Canterbury Tales* printed in the same year, the text is presented in a strikingly straightforward fashion, with a low degree of editorial interpolation and plenty of room for a reader gloss the text. The selection and arrangement of texts in this anthology links Chaucer's moral narrative with his lyrical ability. "Anelida and Arcite"—a woeful tale of a jilted woman during the Siege of Thebes—provides an example of a sympathetic and tragic female character (found more prominently in *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Legend of Good Women*) to serve as a reprimand against false lovers. "Chaucer's Complaint vnto his empty purse"—the familiarly witty lyric begging royal patronage—and "Chaucer's Prophecy"—an apocryphal work prophesying future civic doom and salvation through virtue—may be odd companions to the main piece, but ultimately function together to demonstrate something of the range of Chaucerian verse. The reader moves from a tragic, pathetic short narrative poem, to a witty lyric, to a rather staunch prophecy; Caxton's *Anelida and Arcite* anthology might be said to be an apt Chaucerian sampler. This function as a sampler may have been intentional,[159] but even

[159] See Gillespie on the use of Sammelbande for marketing purposes: "Poets, Printers, and Early English "Sammelbande"," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 2, Manuscript, Print, and Early Tudor Literature (2004): 189-214.

though the collection's genesis was most likely the result of commercial considerations, its overall textual effect highlights Chaucer's contribution to a range of English verse.

1477 also saw the publication of another Chaucerian anthology through Caxton's press (STC 5091-1), which includes *The Parliament of Fowles* ("The Temple of Brass" in this edition), Scogan's "Treatise," "Fly Thou the Press" ("The good counceyl of chawcer" here), "Fortune" (the "Balade of the vilage without peyntyng" here), and "Lenvoy de Chaucer a Scogan" ("Thenuoye of chaucer to skegan" here). As with the other Caxtons of this year, there is no initial title, no running titles, and generous marginal space. Type 2-Bâtarde is the type, the text is given in single columns, and stanzas are spaced out (with three stanzas per page being the usual number). Explicits and incipits are as follow:

> Explicit, fol. 17r: "Explicit the temple of bras"
> Incipit, fol. 17r: "Here next foloweth a tretyse which John / Skogan Sente vnto the lordes and gentil / men of the kynges hows exortying them to / lose no tyme in theyr youghte but to vse / vertues."
> Explicit, fol. 21v: "Thus endeth the traytye which John
> Skogan sent to the lordes and esta
> Tes of the kynges hous."
> Incipit, fol. 21v: "The good counceyl of chawcer"
> Incipit, fol. 22v: "Balade of the vilage without peyntyng"
> Incipit, fol. 24r: "Thenuoye of chaucer to skegan"

This collection, like the *Anelida and Arcite* collection, is in the tradition of fifteenth-century Chaucerian anthologies, and produced to be quite usable to readers: a Chaucerian reader could easily have these materials bound with other Chaucerian pieces of his choosing. As with other Chaucerian printings by Caxton at this time, only the most basic editorial insertions are found in the texts, resulting in a clean and uncluttered appearance.

The choice of texts, however, does give rise to the pointed rhetorical and aesthetic effect of focusing the reader on the serious moral qualities of Chaucer's poetry, moral qualities that seem oddly out of place when set between his charming love debate, *The Parliament of Fowles*,[160] and his teasing "Lenvoy de Chaucer a Scogan." In the first place, the insertion of Scogan's treatise casts explicitly moral character on Chaucer. Scogan (John in Caxton; Henry in Shirley)[161] writes a treatise praising virtue, both in and of itself, and its social utility: "Thurgh virtue haue ben set in grete honour / And euer haue lyued in gret prosperite / Thurgh cherisshyng of virtuous labour" (fol. 18v). Chaucer is presented as an authority on morals and virtue, quoted before Boethius:

> My *maister chawcer* / god his soule haue
> That in his langage was so curyous
> He saide the fader thet is ded [and] in graue
> Bequeth nothing his vertue with his hous
> Vnto his sone / therfore laboryous
> Owe ye to be / bysechyng god of grace
> Thurgh whiche / ye ought to be vertuous (fol. 19v-20r; italics added)
> . . . . . .
> *Boece* the clerk / as men may rede and see
> Saith in his book of consolac[i]o[u]n
> What man desireth to haue of the vyn[n] tree
> Plentyuous fruyt / in the ripyng seson
> Muste aye eschewe to do oppression[n]
> Vnto the rote / whiles it is yonge [and] grene
> Ye may see / by this conclusion
> That youghte vertueles doth ofte moche bene (fol. 20v; italics added)

[160] *The Parliament of Fowles* displays a high degree of *solaas* insofar as it displays the generic discourses of dream vision, beast fable, and debate poetry.
[161] On the identity of Scogan, see David Burnley, "Scogan, Shirley's Reputation and Chaucerian Occasional Verse," *Chaucer in Perspective: Middle English Essays in Honour of Norman Blake*, ed. Geoffrey Lester (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 28-46.

Chaucer's language may be "curious," but his real value comes from the moral stature of his verse. The argument of the social utility of virtue—through the positive examples of Caesar and Cicero (fol. 21r) and the negative examples of Nero, Balthazar, and Antiochus (fol. 21r)—fits well with the constructed audience of courtiers: virtue, while good in itself, also serves a useful function in political life. [162] As if this treatise were not enough, Caxton's edition has the following short, titleless verse set between the explicit of "Scogan" and the incipit of "Good counsel":

> Wyth empty honde men may no hawkes lure
> Bye yf thou maye / for al is for to selle
> Lytyl wit suffyseth with good auenture
> And alway as the wi[n]de sta[n]deth set thy melle
> The heuene to heuens lord / [and] feend to helle
> Man to the world p[re]te[n]de / [and] thou shal strecche
> And wene thy self be noght / [and] be a wrecche (fol. 21v)

Although pretending to the world may allow for economic gain—"Lytyl wit suffyseth with good auenture"—its ultimate reward is wretchedness; thus only true virtue will yield the social prosperity promised by Scogan through Chaucer. Caxton has thus included Scogan's treatise as suggestion on how to read Chaucer: for sentence on true virtue, to the end of prosperity in heaven and on earth.

"Fly thou the press" (fol. 22r) and "Fortune" (fol. 22v-24r)—both highly Boethian in their stances—continue the moralizing tone of the collection. The former is a warning of the dangers of seeking the praise of fellow humans at the expense of truth; rather than trusting Fortune, "her / that torneth as a balle," the man addressed is exhorted to self-

[162] The explicit indicates that the treatise was composed for the "lordes and esta / Tes of the kynges hous" (fol. 21v), implying an ideal audience of courtiers.

knowledge and truth: "Rede wel thy self that other folk rede / And trouthe the schal delyue[r]" (fol. 22r). The latter is a debate poem between a plaintiff and Fortune; though Fortune claims that her buffets benefit the plaintiff by teaching him true friends from false—"I haue the taught deuysion bytewene / Frende of effect / and frende of co[u]ntenance" (fol. 23r)—the plaintiff renounces Fortune like Socrates (fol. 22v), and forces Fortune to admit her fickleness: "Thou pynchest at my mutabilite / For I the lent a drope of my richesse / And now me liketh / to withdrawe me" (fol. 23v). Having these two poems follow Scogan's treatise provides the reader with the very kinds of Chaucerian verses praised in the treatise; the reader is invited to check the Horatian usefulness of Chaucer for himself after having been presented with Chaucer as a moral authority.

This collection concludes with "Thenuoye of Chaucer to skegan" (fol. 24r-24v), a playful verse chastising Scogan for causing Venus to cry by breaking "[the] lawe of loue" by spurning a lady at Michelmas. This final work appears to bookend well the first item in the collection: Caxton's *Parliament of Fowles* anthology begins with a joyful poem of courtly love debate and ends with a lighthearted verse exhorting Scogan to follow the laws of Venus. The character of the collection highlights Chaucer as a poet of courtly love and Boethian virtue, as well as drawing out the relationship between Chaucer and Scogan that serves to highlight Chaucer's status as a courtly poet.

The Boethian verses in Caxton's *Parliament* anthology serve as apt preludes to Caxton's printing of Chaucer's translation of *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, *Boece*, in

1478 (STC 3199). The first aspect of the character of Caxton's printing of Chaucer's translation of Boethius to note is that it preserves the hierarchy of scripts from manuscript culture into the printed edition: the Latin verses are printed in Textura/Blackletter (type 3), while the English text is printed in Bâtarde (type 2).[163] The fact that the typeset is type 2 is less important than the textual effect it creates: following custom, the Latin is given precedence over the vernacular. [164] That Textura is tied to the language and not to Boethius is evident from the fact that the Latin epitaph by Stephen Surgio that follows the text is printed in Textura as well (fol. 93r-93v). The sole exception to this hierarchy of scripts following linguistic lines is in the incipits and explicits within the text, which are also given in Bâtarde. As ordinary editorial markings in the text, rather than the words of an author, they seem to have been accorded little notice, which should not be considered unusual.

Regarding the format of Caxton's *Boece*, Gillespie notes that it is constructed in such a way so as "to be set easily alongside editions of Latin printed volumes of *De Consolatione* available to contemporary book buyers like Edward Smith [who owned the Magdalen College, Oxford book, which has Caxton's *Boece* and a Latin version bound together]."[165] Chaucer's text is presented as solid blocks of prose, broken up by the Latin verses of Boethius, which are printed in a larger point than the English text. The effect is

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[163] Again, for a treatment of the hierarchy of scripts, see M.B. Parkes, *English Cursive Book Hands, 1250-1500*.
[164] The type for this edition was made by Johannes Veldener, Caxton's associate and typecutter ; see N.F. Blake, "William Caxton" *Authors of the Middle Ages: English Writers of the Late Middle Ages*, ed. M.C. Seymour (Brookfield, VT and Aldershot, Hants: Variorum, 1996), 1-68. 23.
[165] Gillespie, *Print Culture and the Medieval Author*, 68.

to give readers easy reference points between the sections of the text of the *Consolation*, a translation that can easily be used with the more prestigious Latin original.

If the character Caxton's *Boece* seeks to direct the reader to the greater prestige of Boethius's original Latin,[166] the epilogue and dedicatory poem at the end refer the reader back to the fact that he has been reading *Chaucer's* authorized translation; the complete epilogue is as follows:

> Thus endeth this boke whiche is named the boke of Consolacion of philosophie . whiche that boecius made for his comforte and consolacion he beyng in exile for the comyn[n] and publick wele hauyng grete heuynes [and] thoughtes and in maner of despayr / Rehercing in the sayde boke how Philosophie appiered to him shewyng the mutabilite of his transitorie lyfe / and also enformyng how fortune and happe shold bee vnterstonden / with the predestynacion and prescience of God as moche as maye and ys possible to bee knowen naturelly / as a fore ys sayd in this sayd boke (fol. 93r)

After this outline of the book's argument—lest the reader has forgotten—Caxton gives the reader an account of Boethius' authorial ethos:

> Whiche Boecius was an excellente auctour of dyuerce bokes craftely and curiously maad in prose and metre / And also had translated dyuerce bookes oute of Greke into latyn[n] / and had ben senatour of that noble [and] famous cite Rome. And also his two sones Senatours for there prudence [and] wisedom. And for as moche as he withstode to his bower the tyran[n]ye of theodorik then[n]e Emperour / [and] wold haue defended the sayde cite [and] Senate from his wicked hondes/ wherupon he was

[166] Donaghey does not read STC 3199 in this manner, arguing that because Chaucer's English appears to have been printed first, then lines of Boethius' Latin fit into the blank spaces left between sections, the value of the Latin is diminished: "To return to *Cx*: here, then, within a vernacular text, we see the ultimate reduction of a Latin text to the status of a convenient aid to fit the constraints of a mechanical process, without regard to the intrinsic value of that text, or any necessary connection with the translation of it" (Donaghey, 90). I would argue, however, based on Gillespie's observations, the retention of the hierarchy of scripts, and the end material, that the effect can be seen to be just the opposite: Chaucer's translation is presented as borrowing authority from Boethius' Latin, authority that must be presented effectively before it can be drawn on.

> conuict [and] putte in prison / in whiche prison[n] he made his forsaide boke of co[n]solacion for his singuler co[m]fort. (fol. 93r)

Boethius' status as author is then immediately linked to Chaucer's status as translator, followed by Caxton's critical judgment of Chaucer:

> And for as moche as the stile of it / is harde [and] difficile to be vnderstonde of simple p[er]sones. Therfore the worshipful fader [and] first fou[n]der [and] enbelissher of ornate eloquence in our englissh. I mene / Maister Geffrey Chaucer hath translated this sayd werke oute of latyn in to oure vsual and moder tonge. Folowyng the latyn as neygh as is possible to be vnderstande. Wherein in mine oppynyon he hath deseruid a perpetuell lawde and thanke of al this noble Royame of Englond / And in especiall of them that shall rede [and] vnderstande it. (fol. 93r-93v)

Caxton's major criterion for his praise of Chaucer is, not surprisingly, the *sentence*/moral worth in the work, which he presents—linking himself to Chaucer—as his main motive for printing the work:

> For in the sayd boke they may see what this transitorie [and] mutable worlde is And wherto euery man[n] liuyng in hit / ought to entende. Thenne for as moche as this sayd boke so translated is rare [and] not spred ne knowen as it is digne and worthy. For the erudicion and lernyng of suche as ben Ignoran[n]t [and] not knowyng of it / Atte requeste of a singuler frende [and] gossib of myne. I William Caxton haue done my debuoit [and] payne tenprynte it in fourme as is here afore made / In hopyng that it shal prouffite moche peple to the wele [and] helth of them selues / [and] for to lerne to haue and kepe the better pacience in aduersitees (fol. 93v)

Practicing the virtue that he is preaching, Caxton closes his postlude with a pious request for prayer, even while highlighting Chaucer's status as a literary monument of perpetual fame, evidenced by his Westminster tomb:

> And furthermore I des[i]re [and] require you that of your charite ye wold praye for the soule of the sayd worshipful man[n] Geffrey Chaucer first transla//tour of this sayde boke into englissh [and] enbelissher in making the sayd langage ornate [and] fayr. Whiche shal endure perpetuelly. And therfore he ought eternelly to be reme[m]berid. Of whom the body and corps lieth buried in thabbay of westmestre beside london to fore the chapele of seynte benet. By whos sepulture is wreton on a table hongyng on a pylere his Epitaphye maad by a Poet laureat. Whereof the copye foloweth [et]c (fol. 93v)

In this postlude, we see much of the advertising Caxton so thoroughly treated by Blake, Gillespie, and Kuskin.[167] In terms of inventing a Chaucerian ethos and aesthetic, Caxton parallels well Boethius—grave auctor that he is—and Chaucer the translator. Caxton first gives a brief outline of the contents of *De Consolatione*, then establishes Boethius' ethos as a virtuous and learned auctor, then highlights the nobility of Chaucer's ethos insofar as Chaucer translated Boethius for the benefit of England, for which Caxton thinks Chaucer deserves praise. Caxton is keen to reveal that both Boethius and Chaucer translated from older languages into newer ones (Greek-Latin; Latin-English). Both were concerned with instructing others in the wisdom of philosophy. Furthermore, Caxton's claim that Chaucer was the *first* English translator of Boethius (technically untrue, if Anglo-Saxon is considered English) associates Chaucer with the humanist tradition of translation and moral instruction. Chaucer is a benevolent Christian humanist, translating for the benefit of those simple persons for whom the style of the Latin *Consolation* is

[167] Kuskin treats the use of this epilogue for the purpose of audience-creation and authority particularly well: "The distinction between the gossip and the audience runs throughout the epilogue in a silent juxtaposition of known individuals—the gossip ("a singuler frende"), Chaucer ("the worshipful fader"), and Boethius ("a excellent auctour")—and a community desperate for authority but defined by its very lack: 'them that shall rede & understand it,' 'such as ben Ignoraunt & not knoying of it,' and 'euery man lyuyng'" (Kuskin, 146).

hard and difficult to understand. Of course, the style itself is not terribly different from the Latin, since Chaucer "hath translated this sayd werke oute of latyn in to our vsual and moder tonge. Folowyng the latyn as neygh as is possible to be vnderstande." Aesthetically, Chaucer is presented somewhat paradoxically as the simplifier of a lofty style and the preserver of it from one language into the other, thereby "ennobling" the English language to an ornate and fair state on par with Latin. As we have seen the very textual layout has made this argument, integrating large sections of Latin with the English.

Furthermore, Chaucer's monumental canonization marks an early instance of Chaucer being promoted as a standard for vernacular canon formation.[168] What is perhaps most interesting, though, is that the means Caxton chooses to use refer the reader back to a Continental poet (Surgio), writing in Latin, the noble language Chaucer's English sought to make more accessible to Englishmen. Chaucer is a poet in his own right elsewhere, but here in Caxton's *Boece*, he must imp his poetical wings onto Boethius, Surgio, and the Latin language. The usual preservation of the hierarchy of scripts makes this distinction all the more evident, as the eye shifts from Caxton's paratactic, prosaic Bâtarde into Surgio's Latin verse of Textura:

> fol. 94r: Epitaphiu[m] Galfridi Chaucer. Per
> Poetam laureatu[m] Stephanu[m] surgionu[m]
> ¶ Mediolanense[m] in decretis licenciat[um]

[168] Noted by Dane, *Who Is Buried in Chaucer's Tomb?*, Kuskin, *Symbolic Caxton*, and Christopher Canon, "The Myth of Origin and the Making of Chaucer's English," *Speculum*, Vol. 71, No. 3 (Jul., 1996): 646-675.

[Cap P] yerides muse si possunt numina flet[us]
Fu[n]dere. Diuinas atq[ue] rigare genas
Galfridi vatis chaucer crudelia fata
¶ Plangite. Sit lacrimis abstiunisse nephas
Uos coluit viue[n]s. at vos celebrate sepultum
Reddatur merito gracia digna viro
Grande decus vobis. E[st] docti musa maronis
¶ Qua didicit meli[us] lingua latina loqui
Grande nouu[m] q[am] dec[us] Chaucer. Fama[m]q[ue] p[ar]auit
Heu q[uan]tum fuerat prisca brita[n]na rudis
Reddidit insignem maternis versib[us]. Vt iam
¶ Aurea splendescat. Ferrea facta prius
Hunc latuisse viru[m] nil. Si tot opuscula vertes
Dixeris egregus que decorata modis
Socratis ingenium vel fontes philosophie
¶Quitquid [et] archani dogmata sacra ferunt
Et q[ua]scunq[ue] velis tenuit dignissimus arces
Hic vates. P[ar]uo conditus hoc tumulto
Ah laudis q[uan]tum preclara britannia perdis
¶ Dum rapint tantu[m] mors odiosa virum
Crudeles parce. Crudelia fila sorores
Non tamen extincto corpora. fama perit
Uiuet ineternum. viue[n]t dura scripta poete
¶ Uiuant eterno tot monumenta die
Si qua bonos tangit pietas. Si carmi[n]e dign[us]

fol. 94v: Carmina qui cecinit tot cumulata modis
Hec sibi marmoreo scribantur verba sepulchro
¶ Hec maneat laudis sarcina summis sue
Galfridus Chaucer vates. Et fama poesis
Materne. hac sacra sum tumulatus humo

Post obitum Caxton voluit te viuere cura
¶ Willelmi. Chaucer clare poeta tuj
Nam tua non solum compressit opuscula formis
Has quo[que] s[ed] laudes. Iussit hic esse tuas"[169]

[169] The translation given in Boswell and Holton is as follows: "Epitaph of Geoffrey Chaucer by the laureate poet Stephen Surgio of Milan, licensed (doctor) by decree at Milan. Pierian Muses, if heavenly powers can pour forth tears and moisten their divine cheeks, lament the cruel fate of the bard Geoffrey Chaucer. Let it be a crime to refrain from weeping. He worshiped you in his lifetime, but [I bid you] honor him now that he is buried. Let a worthy reward be paid to a deserving man. The Muse [or Music] of learned Maro is a

Despite having to be praised in the international language of ancient authority, Chaucer is still here elevated to the status of a "vates"! Chaucer himself may well have been critical of the status of poetry claimed by Dante and other poets of the Italian Renaissance,[170] but here in Caxton's Boece we have an Italian poet conferring on him a prophetic title. This Latin apotheosis serves to raise the status of Chaucer, ironically, by lowering the status of English, focusing on Chaucer's philosophical qualities and Latinitas at the expense of the English language. The construction of this kind of *ethos* for Chaucer the poet would have important effects on the *ethe* of the editions of his works produced by Caxton and his successors.

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great honor to you, the Muse through whose agency the Latin tongue learned to speak better. A great new honor and fame has Chaucer provided for you. By the verses [that he composed] in his [British] mother tongue he made it [as] illustrious as, alas, it had once been uncouth, so that now it takes on a golden splendor where formerly it was iron. One will affirm that there was nothing in which this man was not distinguished if he turns the pages of so many works that [are] embellished with excellent measures. The genius of Socrates or the springs of philosophy, and all the secrets that holy doctrine contains and all the arts that you could wish for—these were in the possession of this most worthy bard [who is] buried in this tiny grave. Ah, how much renown you lose, famed Britannia, now that hateful death has snatched away so great a man! Cruel [are the] Fates, curel their threads, O Sisters! Yet even when the body is dead fame does not perish. It will live forever, as long as poets' writings live. May all these monuments live in everlasting day. If the good are touched by any piety and if the man who sang songs amassed in so many measures is [himself] worthy of a song, let these words as spoken on his own behalf, be inscribed upon his marble tomb, let this remain the crowning burden of his own praise: 'I, Geoffrey Chaucer the bard, glory of my native poesy, am buried in this sacred ground.' It was the eager wish of your admirer William Caxton that you should live, illustrious poet Chaucer. For not only has he printed your works but he has also ordered this eulogy of you to be here" (Boswell and Holton, 4-5).

[170] See Helen Cooper, "The Four Last Things in Dante and Chaucer: Ugolino in the House of Rumour" *New Medieval Literatures III* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 39-66.

Caxton's Second Set of Chaucerian Printings (1483)

In the six years between Caxton's first round of Chaucerian editions and his second, Caxton appears to have discovered the advantage of entitling Chaucerian works from the start; Caxton's 1483 edition of *The House of Fame* (STC 5087) begins with both the title and author of the work, as well as an attribution of poetic authority (insofar as poets are "makers"): "The book of Fame made by Gefferey Chaucer" (fol. aii r). The type, by now taken for granted as generically Chaucerian, is number 2, Bâtarde, and the layout is single-columned, with wide marginal space. There are no running titles, though Latin incipits and explicits are given for the chapter divisions, with spaces and indentations to set them off from the rest of the text: "Explicit liber primus / Incipit liber secundus" (fol. aviii v); "Explicit liber secundus / Incipit liber Tercius" (fol. bviii v). Guide letters are printed for rubricated capitals at significant divisions in the text: "**G**od torn vs every dreme to good" (fol. aii r); "**T**he tenthe day of decembre / The whych as I can remembre / I wyl make inuocacion" (fol. aii v); "**N**ow herkene as I haue you seyd / What that I mette or I abreyd / Of Decembre the tenthe daye" fol. (aiii r) "**N**[t]Ow herkene euery maner man / **T**hat ony maner of englyssh can / And listeneth" (fol. aviii v)[171]; "**O** God of science and of lyght / Appollo thurgh thy grete myght / Thys lytyl last boke // thou now gye" (fol. bviii v). An indentation is also used at fol. biii v to highlight this discourse from the Eagle to Geoffrey: "Geffrey / thou wotest wel thys / That euery kynde that is / Hath a kyndly stede that he / May best in it conserued be" (fol. biii v). As

[171] In this printing, the guide letter given is for second line, not the first; the intention, however, is clear.

in past editions, the presence of Caxton's editing in the text is minimal for most of the text.

At the very end of the Caxton *House of Fame*, however, we find Caxton's famous ending to this authorially unfinished work. Although he attributes the following lines to himself through a marginal "Caxton" (reproduced below) and gives a brief apologia in his following epilogue, here we find evidence of Caxton taking on the function of an editor and not simply a printer of Chaucer:

> And wyth the noyse of them wo Caxton
> I Sodeynly awoke anon tho
> And remembryd what I had seen
> And how hye and ferre I had been
> In my ghoost / and had grete wonder
> Of that the god of thonder
> Had lete me knowen / and began to wryte
> Lyke as ye haue herd me endyte
> Wherfor to studye and rede alway
> I purpose to doo day by day
> Thus in dremyng and in game
> Endeth thys lytyl book of Fame (fol. diii r)

The lines are appropriately Chaucerian, and fit well into the dream-vision genre. Caxton is at least honest in his composition in clearly marking himself as the author of the lines, giving closure to an otherwise open-ended and unfinished story. Caxton appears to have been a good reader of the *House of Fame* insofar as he attributes the revelation to Jove—the Eagle who snatches up Geoffrey—while downplaying the Chaucerian joke about the threat of pederasty.[172] In perhaps less faithful a manner, Caxton latches on to the themes

[172] "'O God,' thoughte I, 'that madest kynde, / Shal I noon other weyes dye? / Wher Joves wol me stellyfye, / Or what thing may this sygnifye? / I neyther am Ennok, ne Elye, / Ne Romulus, ne Ganymede, / That was ybore up, as men rede, / To hevene with daun Jupiter, / And mad the goddys botiller.'" (584-590)

of memory and transmission: the dreamer remembers his state upon awaking and writes to tell others of his dream. In Caxton's addition, however, memory and transmission are sure and simple: we have before us the text of the dream, written down immediately after the revelation, "Lyke as ye haue herd me endyte." This ending rather undercuts the very nature of Chaucer's House of Fame, in which reports are transitory, apt to die or at least corrupted. And though Caxton includes an appropriately Chaucerian playfulness in the final lines—"in dremyng and in game"—the morally didactic Chaucer is also highlighted in an exhortation "to studye and rede alway."

Caxton's epilogue, following the "Explicit" for the work as a whole, demonstrates a degree of Chaucerian praise and promotion more akin to his *Boece* than any of his 1477 Chaucerian printings:

> I fynde no more of this werke to fore sayd / For as fer as I can vndersto[n]de / This noble man Gefferey Chaucer fynysshyd at the sayd conclusion of the metyng of lesyng and sothsawe / Where as yet they ben chekked and mayde not departe / Whyche werke as me semeth is craftyly made / and dygne to be wreton [and] knowen. For he towchyth in it ryght grete wysedom [and] subtyll vnderstondyng / And so in alle hys werkys he excellyth in myn oppynion alle other wryters in our Englyssh / For he wrytteth no voyde wordes / but alle hys mater is ful of hy and quyke sentence / to whom ought to be gyuen laude and preysynge for hys no//ble makyng and wryting / For of hym alle other haue borowed syth and taken / in alle theyr wel sayeng and wrytyng / And I humbly beseche [and] praye yow / emonge your prayers to remembre hys soule / on whyche and on alle crysten soulis I beseche almyghty god to haue mercy Amen Emprynted by Wylliam Caxton (fol. diii r)

While Caxton's praises of Chaucer in the epilogue to *Boece* were tempered by the status of Chaucer as a Latin translator, the authorial praise of Chaucer in *The House of Fame*'s epilogue knows no such bounds. Caxton the marketer of *sammelbaende* and books is

clearly present in this Explicit, advertising the worthiness of Chaucer to potential buyers. Aesthetically, his praise of this "craftyly" made work argues that Chaucer's literary virtues come from his literary economy ("he wrytteth no voyde wordes"), his thought ("ful of hye and quycke sentence"), and his influence ("For of hym alle other haue borowed syth and taken / in alle theyr wel sayeng and wrytyng"). Chaucer's often comedic digressions in this very work—particularly those caused by the scholastic Eagle—may appear to strike against economy, though Caxton is saved from outright hypocrisy by the late medieval taste for such rhetorical flourishes.[173]

Perhaps more significant is the assertion in this claim that Chaucer's words are faithfully reproduced by Caxton: no words need be voided, even if some need to be added. Caxton's addition seems to run contrary to his assertion of Chaucerian completeness, but may be understandable insofar as Chaucer has been a source of inspiration for all contemporary English writers—according to Caxton; Caxton's ending may be presented as one such borrowing of language for the specific epideictic purpose of lauding Chaucer through imitation, the first imitation of Chaucer in print in the English Renaissance. And though less blatant than in Surgio's Latin, Caxton's English here bestows on Chaucer high poetical status; not only is he a writer, but also a "maker"—in other words, a poet. Thus Caxton's conclusion to the *House of Fame* takes up authentic

[173] Consider C.S. Lewis's point on the medieval taste for digression: "Nearly all of us, when we first began reading medieval poetry, got the impression that the poets were unable to keep to the point. We may even have thought that they were drifting with the stream of consciousness. The revived study of medieval *Rhetoric*—a welcome novelty in twentieth-century medievalism—puts an end to that idea. For good or ill the digressiveness of the medieval writers is the product not of nature but of art," *The Discarded Image* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003; original printing, 1964), 193.

Chaucerian themes in the poem, yet turns them to new purposes: poetic praise and memory have become fixed and certain through Caxton's printing and imitation, giving Chaucer the poet the *ethos* of a great author, while presenting a textual *ethos* whose meaning is inscribed through Caxton's aesthetic categories.

Caxton's second edition of *The Canterbury Tales*, produced in 1483 (STC 5083) demonstrates a textual physiognomy very different from the first printing six years earlier. Not only is the reader now provided with running titles which (generally) correspond to the contents on the page and regular capitals; Caxton's 1483 *Canterbury Tales* stands as the first printed edition of *The Canterbury Tales* to include woodcuts of the pilgrims, adding a dimension of visual art to the textual character.[174] Moreover, the presumed reason for this new edition is given by Caxton in his prologue, a reason that not only presents the presumed advent of Chaucerian textual criticism (in theory, at least), but also, as many have noted,[175] serves to demarcate a fashionable readership:

> [Captial G] Rete thankes lawde and honour / ought to be gy//uen vnto the clerkes / poetes / and historiaph[er]s that haue wreton many noble bokes of wysedom of the lyues / passio[n]s / [and] myracles of holy sayntes of hystoryes / of noble and famous Actes / and faittes / And of the cronycles sith the begynnyng of the creacion of the world / vnto thys present tyme / by whyche we ben dayly enformed / and haue knowleche of many thynges

[174] Portraits of the pilgrims, of course, were not unheard of in the manuscript tradition, as the famous Ellesmere manuscript demonstrates beautifully.

[175] Blake, Gillespie, Wang, Kuskin. Blake, in particular, reads nothing more than monetary motives into the 1483 printing, resulting in a hasty, sloppy edition (see *Caxton and His World*, 102); Kuskin takes a more positive view of Caxton's methods: "Caxton did, in fact, revise his earlier edition extensively, editing his b-group version against another manuscript, perhaps from the a-group, reordering the tales, revising and eliminating lines, as well as adding running titles, clarifying the relationship of the links to tales through the page layout, and including his famous set of woodcuts" (Kuskin, 150).

> / of whom we shold not haue knowen / yf they had not left to vs theyr monumentis wreton (fol. Aij r)

This Exordium gives generic kinds of writing and establishes the propriety of epideictic rhetoric for poets who produce such works. Caxton continues directing his praises to the specific poet at hand, along with his reasons for this praise:

> Emong whom and inespecial to fore alle other we ought to gyue a synguler laude vnto that noble [and] grete philosophre Gefferey chaucer the whiche for his ornate wrytyng in our tongue may wel haue the name of a laureate poete / For to fore that he by hys labour enbelysshyd / ornatd / and made faire our englisshe / in thys Royame was had rude speche [and] Incongrue / as yet it appiereth by olde bookes / whyche at thys day ought not to haue place ne be compared emo[n]g ne to hys beauteuous volumes / and ournate writynges of whom he made many bokes and treatyces of many a noble historye as wel in me//tre as in ryme and prose / and them so craftyly made / that he co[m]prehended hys maters in short / quyck and hye sentences / escshewyng prolyxyte / castyng away the chaf of superfluyte / and shewyng the pyked grayn of sentence / vtteryd by crafty and sugred eloquence (fol. Aij r)

After this praise of Chaucer's "sugared eloquence," Caxton then gives his pitch for *The Canterbury Tales* specifically, and, as in previous Chaucerian editions, links himself to the printing overtly, and his mission to preserve these texts from corruption with the help of learned gentlemen:

> of whom emonge all other of hys bokes / I purpose temprynte by the grace of god the book of the tales of cantyrburye / in which I fynde many a noble hystorye / of euery astate and degre / Fyrst rehercyng the condicio[n]s and tharraye of eche of them as properly as possyble is to be sayd / And after theyr tales whyche ben of noblesse / wysedom / gentylesse / Myrthe / and also of veray holynesse and vertue / wherin he fynnysshyth thys sayd booke / whyche book I haue dylygently ouersen and duly examyned to thend that it be made accordyng vnto his owen makyng / For I fynde many of the sayd bookes / whyche wry//ters haue abrydgyd it and many thynges left out / And in som[m]e place haue sette certayn versys / that he neuer made ne sette in hys booke / of whyche

> bookes so incorecte was one brought to me vi yere passyd / whyche I supposed had ben veray true [and] cor//recte / And accordyng to the same / I dyde do enprynte a certayn Nombre of them / whyche anon were sold to many and dyuerse gentyl men / of whome one gentylman cam to me / and said that his book was not accordyng in many places vnto the book that Gefferey chaucer had made / To whom I answerd that I had ma//de it accordyng to my copye / and by me was nothyng added ne mynusshyd / Thenne he sayd he knewe a book whyche hys fader had and moche louyd / that was very trewe / and accordynge vn//to hys owen first book by hym made / and sayd more yf I wold enprynte it agayn he wold gete me the same book for a copye / how be it he wyst wel / that hys fader wold not gladly departe fro it / To whom I said / in caas that he coude get me such a book trewe and correcte / yet I wold ones endeuoyre me to enprynte it agayn / for to satysfye thauctour / where as to fore by ygnourau[n]ce I erryd in hurtyng and dyffamynge his book in dyuerce places in settynge in som[m]e thynges that he neuer sayd ne made / and le//uyng out many thynges that he made whyche ben requysite to be sette in it / And thus we fyll at accord / And he ful gentylly gate of hys fader the said book / and delyuerd it to me / by whiche I haue corrected my book / as here after alle alonge by thayde of almyghty god shal folowe (fol. Aijr-Aijv)

This narrative of the genesis of Caxton's 1483 *Canterbury Tales* significantly places primary emphasis on the gentlemanly quality of the editing, adding a genteel character to the work as a whole. Caxton closes with a now-expected call to prayer, highlighting a Boethian reading of *The Canterbury Tales*:

> whom I humbly beseche to gyue me trace and ayde to achyeue / and accomplysshe / to hys lawde ho//nour and glorye / and that alle ye that shal in thys book rede or heere / wyll of your charyte emong your dedes of mercy / remember of thys book / And also that alle we that shal see and rede therin / may so take and vndersto[n]de the good and vertuous ta//les that it may so prouffyte vnto the helthe of our sowles / that after thys short and transitorye lyf we may come to euerlastyng lyf in heuen / Amen
> By Wylliam Caxton (Aij v)

There is much to say about this proheme, but besides the obvious sales-pitch and audience creation in the narration of the correcting,[176] this proheme makes important aesthetic and rhetorical assertions before and after the narration. In the first place, Chaucer is dubbed a "philosopher." If one is to take this merely to mean a lover of wisdom, the term may be well applied to a poet. Given Caxton's focus on *sentence* rather than *solaas*,[177] however, such an appellation focuses the reader's attention on the ideas and themes given in Chaucer at the expense of the purely aesthetic quality of his language, language which was one hundred years removed from Caxton's readers.[178] True, Caxton does praise Chaucer's style (in fairly broad terms), but it is the *volumes* of Chaucer which are "beauteous", not his *poetry*. For all the time Caxton spends praising Chaucer for improving the English language, Caxton ultimately presents Chaucer as a poet of beautiful *content*, not form. After the narration, this line continues in Caxton's suggestion at the ethical value of reading Chaucer.[179] The value of reading Chaucer is not to be found in the beauty of the lines but in the effect these lines have on a the reader's character; reading Chaucer—attending to his Boethian philosophy—will apparently improve the reader's soul. Thus we see clearly in this proheme the aesthetic

[176] See Wang, "Caxton's Romances and Their Early Tudor Readers."
[177] This is seen particularly in Caxton's treatment of *The House of Fame* above.
[178] Blake argues for Caxton's attachment to morals rather than poetics: Blake, 37.
[179] See Kuskin's ideas on "vernacular humanism" related to such a project: "Chapter 6 reads Caxton's 1480 Methamorphose and 1490 Eneydos (STC 24796) to argue that these texts represent a brand of English humanism—what I term vernacular humanism—more interested in exploiting the authority of classical writings than in translating actual texts of the past, which remain lost to English readers of the time. Importantly, where I see Chaucer's vernacular writings as often descending from erudition to vulgarity, vernacular humanism presents itself as a scholarly endeavor" (Kuskin, 23).

character of Chaucer subordinated to his ethical character, a move by no means unusual in the period, but worth noting in terms of material for imitation.

Turning from the proheme to *The Canterbury Tales*, one finds an elegant and eminently navigable edition, effected mostly through running titles, more regular capitals (*The Monk's Tale* provides a striking instance of this phenomenon, individual stories being much easier to find than in the 1477 edition), incipits and explicits (the Latin instances are retained from the 1477 edition, and Latin book divisions are added to *The Squire's Tale*), and the famous series of woodcuts. These woodcuts—given for most of the pilgrims in *The General Prologue* and preceding the individual tales—not only provide another means of navigating the text; they also serve to reinforce the religious nature of *The Canterbury Tales*, bringing the pilgrimage to the forefront through the depiction of rosary beads in almost all of the portraits. In *The General Prologue* (fol. aiii r-cv v), woodcuts are given for the following pilgrims: the Knight (fol. aiii v), the Squire (fol. aiiii v), the Yeoman (fol. av r), the Prioress (fol. av v), the Monk (fol. avi v), the Friar (fol. avii v), the Man of Law (fol. bi v), the Franklin (fol. bii v), a Guildsman (fol. biii r), the Cook (fol. biii v), the Shipman (fol. biiii r), the Wife of Bath (fol. biiii v), the Parson (fol. bv r), the Plowman (fol. bvi r), the Reeve (fol. bvi v), the Summoner (fol. ci v), and the Pardoner (fol. cii v). Of these, only the Knight, the Squire, and the Yeoman lack a clear depiction of rosary beads; this omission may serve to highlight their status as members of the first estate, but the more powerful effect is that of seeing beads over and over again with the pilgrims: rosaries are rather appropriate accessories for pilgrims.

Furthermore, before the *Ryme of Sir Thopas* (fol. ii ii v), Caxton gives a woodcut depicting Chaucer: his sword and spurs betoken a man of nobility, while the beads about his neck show him to be a pilgrim as well.

These woodcuts, in addition to adding to the art of the 1483 *Canterbury Tales*, function iconically to aid the reader in linking individual tales back to the descriptions of the pilgrims in *The General Prologue*. Although some of the woodcuts are more appropriate for pilgrims than others, they are generally generic; the Summoner, the Franklin, and the Merchant are all depicted by the same woodcut. When giving a catalogue of guild members and their wives in *The General Prologue*, Caxton sees fit to provide one pilgrim to stand for them all (fol. biii r). Perhaps most inappropriate are the woodcuts used for the Plowman and the Clerk; the former shows a man riding a rather well-trimmed horse and wearing an ample robe with a mozzetta and hood (fol. bvi r), the latter depicts an archer (or at least a bowman) riding a horse (fol. aaii r). Although not proper eichastic representations of a poor farmer and a poor Oxford student, even these woodcuts can function iconcially to help the reader find and remember the parts of the text associated with them. Particularly iconic is the depiction of what are presumably the Canterbury pilgrims at table together (fol. ciiii r). This woodcut—which Gillespie has demonstrated was reused for at least one other text[180]—presents people of various estates—from a bewimpled lady to a tonsured monk to a hooded fool—sitting at table together. As an accurate depiction of the pilgrims, it is not the best; as a sign for the text

[180] Gillespie, *Print Culture*, 94-100.

"**G**Ret chere made our ost to vs euerychon / And to soupere sette he vs anon," which appears after the woodcut, it serves its purpose excellently.

The 1483 *Canterbury Tales*, then, shows itself to be a solid step in the direction of more pronounced editorial presence within Chaucer's works. Beginning with a personal narrative recounting the editor's process of assembling the new edition, this edition is the first printed *Canterbury Tales* to highlight the fact that it has been revised in some manner by an editor. The mediation of the printing-house between Chaucer's text and the reader is further highlighted by the more extensive presence of editorial features in the text, particularly the woodcuts, which clearly and unambiguously mark salient textual divisions for the reader. Caxton allows Chaucer to give his own epilogue through the *Retraction* (fol. Liii v-Liiii r), but the overall textual effect is clear: the meaning and reading strategies applied to Chaucer's poetry are becoming more directed by the presence of the editor.

Caxton's final Chaucerian edition—the 1483 *Troilus and Criseyde* (STC 5094-1)—provides a step away from the intensive editorial practice seen in contemporaneous Caxtonian Chaucers, returning to the simpler and more "open" editions of 1477. The text is presented in type 2, Bâtarde (as usual), with five stanzas per page; no title is given at the beginning, and running titles are absent. English incipits and explicits divide the books, and capitals are given at the beginnings of books and prologues; plenty of room is given in margins for glossing. Perhaps the most editorially invasive practice in this edition, and a small invasion at that, is the use of virgulae for punctuation; most stanzas

include at least one, sometimes leading to entire stanzas with clear medial caesurae in their lines, as at fol. hi r:

> Criseyde wyth that / felt hyr thus y take
> As wryten clerkis / in theyr bokes old
> Ryght as an aspen leef / shegan to quake
> Whan she hyr felt / in hys armes fold
> And Troylus al hool / of hys cares cold
> Gan thankyn tho / the bryght goddis seuene
> That sundry peynes / bryngen folk to heuene

Although occasionally rendering the poetry in such a broken manner, the virgulae do not generally interfere to this level, leaving the editorial presence through punctuation minimal.

Slightly more prominent are the effects of indentation in the 1483 *Troilus and Criseyde*; indentations are used to mark three sections the text deemed particularly noteworthy:

> fol. Avii v—indentation for Troilus' song: "Yf no loue is / O god what fele I so"
> fol. Bii v—Indentation to Pandarus' discourse: "Phebus that fyrst founde / art of medicyne"
> fol. Dvii r—Indentation to Troilus' letter to Criseyde: "Fyrst he gan her / hys ryght lady calle"

One could well wonder why other parts of the text were not indented in a similar fashion; Statius' Latin from fol. nvi v-nvii r merely gets a space after it, and Troilus' palinode is left un-indented. Still, though this indentation may point the reader to these sections of the text, it is a very subtle pointing indeed, the barest editorial suggestion of significance.

At the very end of this edition, Caxton gives the only indication of his involvement in the printing through the explicit: "Here endeth Troylus / as touchyng

Creseyde / Explicit per Caxton" (fol. piiii r). The traditional title of the work is not given, and Caxton, who had taken so many pains in other editions to link himself to the work printed in prologues and epilogues, merely indicates that it was finished through him. The causes of this lack of editorial apparatus may be speculated: the 1483 *Troilus and Criseyde* appears well suited to be bound with other works in the manner of a *sammelbande*; Caxton's shop may have used a simpler exemplar and lacked the time or concern to insert a more thorough apparatus; Caxton may have started applying his penchant for prologues and epilogues to Chaucerian works after this *Troilus and Criseyde*.[181] Whatever the causes of the textual character, though, the character stands as it is: a simpler presentation of one of Chaucer's greatest works.

To summarize the *ethe* of Caxton's Chaucers, one should note that as the first printed editions of Chaucerian works, the textual physiognomy of Caxton's Chaucers thus look, Janus-like, back to the manuscript tradition that provided exemplars for the press and forward to later developments in editorial text presentation. Kuskin articulates well the complexities of fifteenth-century bibliography, complexities that are by now taken for granted: "the impact of print occurs neither through slow evolution nor sudden burst; it is an uneven combination of established and insurgent textual practices, a partial revision of the previous mode that transmutes the handmade codex into a wholesale commodity by adjusting the relationship between the book and the capital investment."[182] In the case of Caxton's Chaucers, the result of this "uneven combination" was a shift—

[181] His long epilogue to the 1478 *Boece*, however, shows that he already had put time and attention into an epilogue for a Chaucerian work, albeit a translation of Boethius.
[182] Kuskin, 127.

spotty and incomplete as it might be—from presenting Chaucer's text as simple, unadorned and directly accessible to the reader to presenting Chaucer's text as an authoritative monument, editorial apparatus interposing itself quite clearly between the text and the reader. If Caxton is to be seen as Blake characterizes him, a man standing between the medieval and the modern periods,[183] so too are his editions of Chaucer when taken as a whole.

[183] Blake, 46.

Chapter 3

Caxton's Immediate Successors: Pynson, de Worde, and Notary

When William Caxton died in 1492, his press continued under the supervision of his apprentice, Wynkyn de Worde, who continued to print until his death in 1535.[1] The production of the de Worde press was astonishing: in addition to introducing to print such practices as title-pages and rubricated Lombardic capitals, the sheer number of printed works produced in de Worde's printing house attests to the perceptible difference between manuscript production and the production of printed works.[2] As Hutmacher explains:

> [de Worde] published more than one hundred single works during the years 1493-1500 (including undated ones), a production which nearly doubled that of his master; so that in a seven year period, he published more than Caxton had published in fifteen. The number of books that Wynkyn de Worde published has been variously given, but Plomer says only that it was 'upwards of eight hundred in his entire lifetime.'[3]

The output of de Worde's printing house showed a significant increase over Caxton; more and more books bearing nearly identical features were put into circulation, leading to an ever-growing number of readers encountering texts with the same *ethe*.

In addition to de Worde, other printers took up the task of reproducing works of Chaucer: whole or partial editions of Chaucerian works survive from the printers Julian Notary, Richard Pynson, John Rastell, Thomas Godfray, John Gough, William Hill, and

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[1] William F. Hutmacher, *Wynkyn de Worde and Chaucer's* Canterbury Tales: *A Transcription and Collation of the 1498 Edition with Caxton2 from the* General Prologue *through* The Knight's Tale. (Amsterdam, NL: Rodopil, 1978). 7.
[2] Hutmacher, 12.
[3] Hutmacher, 8-9.

James Nicholson. The relations between and among these men are often striking: despite de Worde's status as Caxton's apprentice, Pynson put out the first non-Caxtonian printed edition of *The Canterbury Tales*; Julian Notary shared addresses with both de Worde and Pynson; and Notary made use of woodcuts formerly owned by de Worde.[4] All of these printers, as Caxton had before them, reproduced Chaucerian works either separately—as in the various editions of *The Canterbury Tales* produced during the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII demonstrate—or in anthologies reminiscent both of Caxton's print anthologies and the manuscript anthologies of Chaucer's works produced in the fifteenth century.[5] While many of these presses continued the Caxtonian practice of minimal editorial shaping (a prologue or epilogue, interpretational cues given primarily through the selection and arrangement of materials), one begins to see in these editions greater involvement by the editor in shaping readings of the text. As such, the characters of these editions, the ways in which readers encountered book-copies of these editions as aesthetic objects, stand between the Caxton Chaucers and the *Complete Works* that will be treated in chapters five and six.

One class of editions from this period, treated in the next chapter, is contemporaries of the *Complete Works*: the "Protestant" Chaucerian works. These editions—Godfray's *The ploughman's tale* (STC 5099.5, 1534), Nicolson's *Jack Vp*

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[4]E. Gordon Duff, *A Century of English Book Trade, 1457-1557* (London: Printed for the Bibliographical Society by Blades, East, & Blades, 1905), 126, 112; E. Gordon Duff, *Early Printed Books* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Tübner & Co; New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1893), 141.

[5] For more on these anthologies, see Seth Lehrer, *Chaucer and His Readers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) and "English Literature and the Idea of the Anthology," *PMLA* 118.5 (Oct, 2003): 1251-1267.

Land (STC5098, 1536), and Hyll's *The plouumans tale compylled by syr Geffray Chaucher knigh*t (STC 5100, c. 1548)—are included in treatments of these editions because their characters are closer to the single-work editions that predate Thynne's 1532 *Works*. While their dates are appropriate for their propagandic function—they span the years of Henry VIII's formal break with Rome—it is their aesthetic characters that will concern their treatment in this chapter: how are they presented for the reader to encounter.

It comes as rather a shock that such important editions in the history of Chaucerian books have not been treated together. Studies of individual editions or printers exist, but these editions have generally received little attention as a group.[6] Alexandra Gillespie does consider many, but not all, of these editions, focusing on the construction of authority in (and the economic motives behind) the Pynson and de Worde editions.[7] Ruggiers, however, completely neglects these editions in *Editing Chaucer*, skipping from Caxton to Thynne.[8] This choice may not be as surprising as it may seem when considered from the perspective of strict textual criticism: the post-Caxtonian

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[6] See David C. Benson and David Rollman, "Wynkyn de Worde and the Ending of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*," *Modern Philology*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (Feb., 1981): 275-27; Julia Boffey, "Richard Pynson's *Book of Fame* and the *Letter of Dido,*" *Viator* 19 (1988): 339-53; David Carlson, "Alexander Barclay and Richard Pynson: A Tudor Printer and His Writer," *Anglia* 113 (1995): 283-302; Kathleen Forni, "Richard Pynson and the Stigma of the Chaucerian Apocrypha," *The Chaucer Review*, Vol. 34., No. 4 (2000): 428-436; P.L. Heyworth, "The Earliest Black-Letter Editions of "Jack Upland"," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Aug., 1967): 307-314; Stanley Howard Johnston, "A Study of the Career and Literary Publications of Richard Pynson" (Ph.D. diss: University of Western Ontario, 1977); Seth Lerer, "The Wiles of Woodcut: Wynkyn de Worde and the Early Tudor Reader" ; Andrew Wawn, "The Genesis of 'The Ploughman's Tale'," *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol. 2, (1972): 21-40; Jack H. White, "Richard Pynson's de Parochia Sancti Clementis Danorum," *Fifteenth-Century Studies* 8 (1983): 275-90.

[7] Alexandra Gillespie, *Print Culture and the Medieval Author* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 88-134.

[8] Paul G. Ruggiers, ed., *Editing Chaucer: The Great Tradition* (Norman, OK: Pilgrim Books, 1984).

printers often use Caxton as a copy-text for their own editions.[9] Hutmacher has pointed out that de Worde orders the *Canterbury Tales* in his 1498 edition differently from Caxton's 1483, despite the fact that Cx2 was his copy-text, but such differences tend to be relegated to footnotes.[10] Even if the actual text is substantially the same as William Caxton's, the textual characters of these editions often differ markedly from their Caxtonian predecessors. It is not the purpose of this current study to investigate the precise reasons for these changes (which may be explained most directly by collation with different manuscript exemplars or refiguring by printers); what is clear, however, is that these characters contribute to the interpretation of Chaucer in the English Renaissance. Horatian utility—a characteristic initially lauded by Caxton, found in Harry Bailey's *sentence*—is further promoted as the major means of interpreting Chaucer's works, culminating in the Protestant polemics treated in the next chapter.

Richard Pynson's 1492 printing of *The Canterbury Tales* (STC 5084) was produced around the death of William Caxton.[11] It is printed in batarde with running

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[9] C. David Benson and David Rollman note this tendency among textual critics: "Scholars may have been discouraged from pursuing this scarce volume [de Worde's 1517 *Troilus and Criseyde*] by the knowledge that 'after line 546 of Book I, Wynkyn de Worde's edition is a mere reprint of Caxton's, reproducing all the omissions, transpositions, and corruptions of Cx, and differing from it only in minor variations of spelling, and the introduction fo a few typographical errors.'" "Wynkyn de Worde and the Ending of Chaucer's 'Troilus and Criseyde'," *Modern Philology* 78.3 (Feb,. 1981): 275-279, 276 (quoting Robert K. Root, ed. *The Book of Troilus and Criseyde* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1926; reprinted, 1945], pages 1xii-iii).

[10] Hutmacher, 21. He notes, suggestively, that the 1498 de Worde gives the tales in the order found in the Ellesmere Manuscript.

[11] Duff gives Caxton's death in 1491; most current scholars put the date at 1492. This discrepancy is accounted for by the fact, noted rather ironically by Duff himself, that March 25 was considered the turn of the year in the late fifteenth century: "On January 2nd, 1500, was issued the *Liber Festivalis*. It is dated 1499 in the colophon, but Notary began his year on the 25th of March" (Duff, *Century of English Book Trade*, 113). Caxton died in March; see Norman Francis Blake, "William Caxton," *Authors of the Middle*

titles, in a single-columned format, giving it a look comparable to the Caxton edition. Pynson begins by establishing his edition's relation to Caxton by reprinting what Boswell and Holton note as being "more than half of Caxton's 1483 proem."[12] Pynson's proem demonstrates a continuity with Caxtonian interpretive concerns, while giving these concerns the gravity of history:

> GRete thankes laude and honoure ought to be yevyn vnto the clerkes poetes and historiagraphs that haue writen many noble bokes of wisdom of the lyues passions and miracles of holy seyntes of histories of noble and famous artes [and] faittes. And the cronycles sithen the begynnyng of the creacione of the worlde vnto this present tyme. By whiche we ben daily enfourmed and haue knowlege of manye thynges. Of whom we shuld nat haue knowen yf they had nat left to vs theire monimentes writen. Emong whom and inespecial to fore alle other we ought to gyue a singaler lau//de vnto that noble and gret philosopher Geffrey chaucer the whiche for his ornate writing in oure tonge may wel haue the name of a laureate poete. For to fore that he by his laboure enbelisshid ornated and made faire our englisshe in this Realme was hadde rude speche [and] incongrue as yet it apperithe by olde bokes. Whiche at this daie oughte nat to haue place ne be compared emong his beautevous volumes [and] ornate writinges Of whom he made many a noble historye as wele in metre as in ryme and prose and theym so craftely made that he comprehended his maters. In short quicke and high sentences eschewing prolixite [and] casting away the chaf and superfluite [and] shewing the py//ked grayne of sentence vtered by crafty [and] sugred eloquence Of whom I among alle other of his bokes the boke of the tales of Canterburie in whiche ben many a noble historie of wisdome policie mirth and gentilnes. And also of vertue and holynes whiche boke diligently ouirsen [and] duely examined by the pollitike reason and ouirsight. Of my worshipful master william Caxton accordinge to the entent and effecte of the seid Geffrey Chaucer and by a copy of the seid master Caxton purpos to imprent. By ye grace ayde and supporte of almighty god. Whom I humbly beseche. That he of his grete and habundant grace wit so dispose that I may it fynisshe to his plesure laude and glorye. And that alle we that shalle therin se or rede may so take [and] vnderstond the gode and vertuous tales that it may so profitte to

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Ages: English Writers of the Late Middle Ages, ed. M.C. Seymour (Brookfield, VT and Aldershot, Hants: Variorum, 1996), 1-68.

[12] Boswell and Holton, 8.

> the helth of oure soules. And inespecial of the soule of the seid Geffrey chaucer first autour [and] ma/ker of this forseid boke. That after this short and transitorye lyfe we may co[m]me to the euirlasting lyf in hevynne Amen.
> By Richard Pynson. (fol. A1r-A1v)

Pynson continues to call Chaucer a "gret philosopher" and focuses on the "ornate writing" that "embelisshid, ornated, and made faire our englisshe." Though phrased differently than Caxton, Pynson also repeats Caxton's list of the good qualities of *The Canterbury Tales*: "wisdom, policie, mirth, gentilnes, virtue, and holynes," the stress being given to the latter two: the reader or auditor: "shalle therein se or rede may so take [and] vnderstond the gode and virtuous tales that it may so profitte the helth of oure soules." From the very beginning, Pynson continues the exhortation to read Chaucer for moral profit. Mirth is not omitted, but subordinated to the higher concerns of *The Canterbury Tales*.

Mirth may be found, however, in Pynson's woodcuts. The pictures are different from those used by Caxton, but their effect is the same: they provide the reader with visual links and references throughout the text. As with Caxton, these woodcuts should be viewed primarily as functioning iconographically rather than representationally: although the Merchant *does* appear to have a forked beard (fol. A6v) and the Miller is shown with a windmill in the background (fol. B6v), single woodcuts are used to stand for multiple characters.[13] Though interpretive leaps may be made in why these characters

[13] The following groups of characters are represented by the same woodcuts: The Shipman (fol. B3r), the Franklin (fol. B1r), and the Summoner (fol B8r); The Doctor of Physik (fol. B3v), the Sergeant (fol. A8v), and the Parson (fol. B5r); The Cook (fol. B2v) and the Plowman (fol. B6r); The Manciple (fol. B7r) and the Squire (fol. A3v); The Reve (fol. B7v) and the Merchant (fol. A6v).

are linked iconographically, the clearer answer appears to be that these woodcuts are merely devices for fixing parts of the text in the memory of readers. The feast of the pilgrims given at fol. C2v does seem to be an exception to this rule, showing a collection of people from different estates sitting around a table; it gives a representation of the scene of the pilgrims dining before their journey to Canterbury. In general, the woodcuts given in the General Prologue are repeated at the beginning of the tales of the respective characters, providing links for the reader between the narrator's description of the character in the General Prologue and that character's tale. There are some exceptions.[14] These exceptions notwithstanding, the woodcuts serve as mnemonic links for the readers, as well as perhaps giving a bit of textual *solaas*.

Besides the proem, there are little overt editorial reading cues. Incipits and explicits are straightforward, simply marking where one tale begins and one ends. Running titles, however, do provide some reading cues. In *The Clerk's Tale* "Of Oxenforde" appears in the running title, highlighting the scholarly *sentence* to be found in this rather grisly tale. While linked by a woodcut, "Chaucer's Tale" is clearly marked as such in the running title, giving authorial stress to this tale, rather than to the Tale of Sir

[14] *The Cook's Tale* has a different woodcut from the Prologue: the cook now has a high hat and is not a cleric, which seems to be an improvement (fol. K2v). The Man of Law, denied a woodcut in the Prologue, gets one before his prologue of his tale (fol. K5r). The Merchant's woodcut before his tale corresponds to that of the Shipman/Franklin/Summoner (fol. M6r), further indication that the woodcuts should not be considered primarily representational. The Second Nun's woodcut is the same as the Prioress in the General Prologue (fol. EE3r). The Canon Yeoman's gets a woodcut before his tale (fol. FF4v), which is repeated for the Shipman, and different from the Shipman's woodcut in the General Prologue (fol. II7v). As in Caxton's edition, Chaucer himself twice receives a woodcut from Pynson: at fol. LL3r, before the "Ryme of Sir Topas", and at fol. **A**1r, before the "Tale of Chaucer". The Nun's Priest receives a woodcut before his tale (fol. **D**6v). The Manciple's woodcut before his tale is the same as the Pardoner, different from the manciple in the General Prologue (fol. **F**3r).

Topas, which is marked "Ryme of Sir Topas." Running titles for the other tales, however, conform clearly to the tale involved.

The ethos of this edition possesses two major features that deserve to be noted. The first is that it links "Chaucer's Tale" to *The Parson's Tale* through typography. The edition as a whole is printed in a single-column format; all but two of the tales are presented in this format. Both Chaucer and the Parson, however, speak their tales in double columns. While the choice to print these tales in double columns may have been purely economical—single-columned prose treatises would have eaten many a page—the effect is striking: the Parson's Tale takes on the character of the tale of the author.[15] Both tales are double columned, with generous spacing, indenting, and capitalization for easy navigation through the text. In an edition in which the rest of the tales are given in a single columned format, these two prose texts stand out, implying an association between the two. Recall that in Caxton's 1477 *Canterbury Tales* the Latin explicit cast *The Parson's Tale* as an authorial pronouncement, spoken by Chaucer himself; the Pynson *Canterbury Tales* retains this elevation of the authorial *ethos* of Chaucer through the voice of both the Parson as well as the tale told by "Chaucer" himself.

The second ethical feature found in Pynson is the fact that the Pynson edition omits Chaucer's Retraction at the end of *The Canterbury Tales*, a retraction that is found in Cx2. This cut further highlights the thematic argument made in this edition between the high sentence of Chaucer and the moral instruction of the Parson: the "AMEN" is

[15] Cost did not stop Caxton from continuing to print these two tales in a single column.

given in capitals at the end of the Parson's tale with no retraction following, thus giving the Parson the final, unambiguous word in this Canterbury Tales: "To that lyf he vs brynge that bought vs with hys precious blood AMEN" (fol. **K**5r, right column). While Chaucer's voice would soon become associated with the Ploughman instead of his brother the Parson through the apocryphal *Plowman's Tale* and *Jack Upland*, Pynson's edition produces a kind of ventriloquism, giving the Parson Chaucer's voice, thus continuing to stress subtly the overtly pious reading of *The Canterbury Tales* suggested by Pynson's modified proem.[16]

Six years after Pynson's *Canterbury Tales*, Caxton's heir apparent, Wynkyn de Worde, produced another edition of the *Tales* (STC 5085). Unlike STC 5083 (Cx2) or STC 5084 (Pynson), de Worde uses double columns from the very beginning of the Tales. De Worde's 1498 edition is also the first to use blackletter/textura instead of batarde. The shift in character is noticeable: Chaucer's words are now presented in the type most clearly associated with Latin, the type used by Caxton in his *Boece* (1478) to differentiate between Chaucer's English (batarde) and Boethius' Latin (blackletter/textura). The association of Chaucer with blackletter, from Thynne to the Victorian era, finds its first expression in de Worde. This edition also includes the first title-page in Chaucerian book history, giving a simple: "The boke of Chaucer named Caunterbury tales" on fol. A1r. De Worde's technical innovation also appears in the fact

[16] Although obviously not an indication of the editorial intentions of this edition, in this book-copy someone has struck the word "pope" from the Second Nun's Tale (fol. EE2r-FF1v): "And ~~pope~~ vrban him cristned right there" (fol. EE4v); "I wol the lede vnto the ~~pope~~ vrban" (fol. EE6r); and "with valerian to ~~pope~~ vrban went" (fol. EE6v). Later readers of Chaucer were not pious in quite the same way as Pynson.

that this is the first Chaucerian edition in which capitals are printed in the text, rather than given as guide-letters to be completed by later rubrication. Though de Worde clearly bases his edition on Cx2, he orders his tales differently, a choice that most likely indicates at least one other exemplar.[17]

De Worde generally reuses Caxton's woodcuts for this edition, but his choice to print in double columns throughout the edition rather increases the effect of the woodcuts: they break up larger blocks of text than in a single-columned format. In nearly every instance, de Worde reuses Caxton's woodcuts. There are two departures from Caxton, however, that are well worth noting. At the beginning of this edition, de Worde presents a woodcut that most likely represents Caxton. De Worde reprints Caxton's 1483 proem—Latinized to "Prohemium"—underneath a woodcut of a man on horseback. The figure holds a rod in his hand and wears a fine hat and cloak. At first glance, this figure may be taken to have semiotic reference to Chaucer or perhaps de Worde; when one turns the page, however, the identification becomes clear. De Worde includes after the "Prohemium," in larger type than the text, the authorship of the proem: "By Wylliam Caxton / His soule in heuen won" (fol. A2v, right column). Furthermore, de Worde prints the woodcut used by Caxton to represent Chaucer (before "Chaucer's Tale") immediately above the beginning of the General Prologue. This choice is striking: Caxton is portrayed as a pilgrim among the characters of the *Tales*, riding before Chaucer in this book so that he has "dilygently ouerseen."

[17] Hutmacher, 21.

The other significant departure from the Caxton set of woodcut is de Worde's woodcut of the Merchant (fol. L1r). Unlike Caxton, who reused the Franklin/Summoner woodcut for the Merchant, de Worde repeats the woodcut used for Caxton on fol. A2r. Why would de Worde choose to link Caxton and the Merchant visually? While the answer may be the simple economics of printing—the necessity of reusing woodcuts in more or less haphazard ways—a more significant answer may be found in the relationship between Caxton and de Worde. Blake notes that Caxton never once in his life referred to himself as a "printer"; he was a member of the Mercer's Guild all his life and arguably viewed printing as merely another mercantile venture.[18] That Caxton's former apprentice and immediate successor would not have known this fact is unlikely, and it is tantalizing to read de Worde's woodcut as an homage to his dead master.

There are other ways in which the de Worde edition subtly increases the authority and honor of Chaucer, primarily through shifts in editorial directions and the beginnings of glosses.[19] At the beginning of this edition, de Worde has chosen to Latinize English directions: "Prohemium" from Caxton's "proem". In Chaucer's text, however, de Worde's edition can show the opposite trend: he Anglicizes passages of editorial directions that were given in Latin by Caxton. Perhaps the most notable shift relates to

[18] Blake, *Authors of the Middle Ages*, 33.

[19] De Worde's 1498 edition is the first to give the pretence of textual scholarship to the end of *The Squire's Tale*. Caxton and Pynson end the tale with "There is nomore of the Squyres tale." De Worde—and by extension Thynne, Stow, and Speght—gives the following explicit: "There can be founde no more of this foresaid tale, whiche hath ben sought in diuers places. Here foloweth the wordes of the Marchaunt to the Squier, and the wordes of the Hose to the Marchaunt." Truly or falsely, De Worde presents the text as the result of much searching through various exemplars: "There can be founde no more," implies a scholarly seeker in a way that "There is nomore" does not.

the interruption of the Host between the Shipman's Tale and the Prioress' Prologue (fol. Q6r, right column): where Caxton gave "Verba hospitis", de Worde has printed "The wordis of the hoste." Again, this specific shift may relate to another copy-text, but the difference in effect is palpable: editorial insertions besides incipits and explicits are becoming Anglicized, stressing the Englishness of Chaucer's text.

The de Worde edition's treatment of the Host and Chaucerian authority becomes more marked when dealing with the Tale of Sir Topas and Chaucer's Tale. De Worde's incipit does not merely note that these are "the words of the host to Chaucer" (as in Caxton), but stress the dramatic meeting between the Host, the judge of *The Canterbury Tales*, and Chaucer, their author: "Here foloweth the prologe of comynyng of the hoste to Chaucer" (fol. R2r). The Host does not merely speak words to Chaucer in de Worde's edition: he approaches Chaucer. De Worde's edition continues to stress the dramatic action between the two through the link between the *Tale of Sir Topas* and *Chaucer's Tale*: "Here stynteth the hoste Chaucer of his tale of syre Thopas. [and] byddyth hym telle a nother tale" (fol. R4r).

De Worde's shift away from Caxton's less dramatic "Wordes of the hoost" pairs well with his editorial and typographical treatment of the *Tale of Sir Topas* and *Chaucer's Tale*. Unlike in Caxton's 1483 edition or Pynson's 1492 edition, which printed "the Ryme of Sir Topas" as the running title for the former work, the 1498 de Worde gives "The tale of Chaucer" as the running title for *both* the *Tale of Sir Topas* and *Chaucer's Tale*. While this shift may appear to be an insignificant shift, the effect is

profound: Chaucer is presented clearly as the speaker of both tales: in de Worde's edition, Chaucer speaks both a parody of metrical romance and a weighty, sententious prose tract. This editorial change stresses Chaucer's poetic range: he can write parodic doggerel or sententious moral pieces. The distance between the two pieces is further stressed typographically in de Worde's edition: unlike Caxton, who printed *Sir Topas* in a single column, de Worde uses the double column format to highlight the sing-song rhythm of the tale. This work is the only one of the Tales printed in such a way as to make the reader read across the page, jumping from the left hand column to the right hand column every three lines. Not only is this change jarring visually; it also breaks up the verse: in the aabaab stanza, all "a"-rhymes are printed on the left, while all "b"-rhymes are printed on the right:

> Lysteth lordynges. in good entent
> And I woll tell verrayment — Of myrthe. and of solas
> All of a knight. was fayre and gent
> In bataylle. and in torneyment — His name was. syre thopas
> (fol. R2v)

De Worde's typography of *Sir Topas* shows a striking parallel to the treatment of this tale in the Ellesmere Manuscript; the Ellesmere manuscript links the rhymes with brackets, creating a visual jumble in the center of an otherwise elegantly produced book; de Worde's edition creates a similar effect by segregating rhymes through columns.[20] The effect on the character of the Tale should be clear: in both Ellesmere and de Worde's

[20] Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*: *The New Ellesmere Chaucer Monochromatic Facsimile* (of Huntington Library MS EL26 C 9), ed. Daniel Woodward and Martin Stevens (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library and Tokyo, Japan: Yushodo Co., Ltd, 1997). "Chaucers tale of Thopas" runs from fol. 151v to fol. 153 r, and shows a similar textual division of verse as de Worde, with the exception of actual brackets drawn to join the lines together, causing a rather cluttered appearance of the poem on the page.

1498 *Canterbury Tales*, *Sir Topas* is clearly identified as a comedic tale presented in such a way as to heighten its contrast to the following "Tale of Chaucer."

De Worde continues to draw out the contrast between these two tales spoken *in persona Galfredi* by printing extensive marginal glosses to "Chaucers tale of Melibeus" (fol. R4v). Every *auctor* mentioned in this tale receives a note, allowing readers to see at a glance the sheer number and quality of authorities mentioned by Chaucer in this tale of Melibeus; the numerous contributions of Solomon, St. James, Seneca, Peter Alphonse, Cicero, Cato, King David, Ovid, St. Paul, and Cassiodorus to this tale are all clearly marked. Mark what effect these marginal notes have on the reader's estimation of Chaucer's *ethos*: the de Worde Chaucer is a poet who speaks first in pure doggerel, telling a rather silly metrical romance, then turns around and give a weighty list of authorities in a moral tract. The playful narrator admired by 20th- and 21st-century readers of Chaucer is already present in de Worde's treatment of *The Canterbury Tales*, a narrator who will be stifled a few decades later.[21]

The character of de Worde's edition continues to parallel that of Caxton until the very end, when the *Parson's Tale*, like *Chaucer's Tale of Melibeus*, is printed with ample marginal notes. These notes not only highlight the authorities present in this work— fol. Y1v and fol. Y2r (facing pages) show clearly the references made to Solomon, Job, Ezekiel, the Book of the Apocalypse, King David, Saint Augustine, St. Peter, St. Jerome, and Seneca—but provide the reader with a handy guide for using this penance manual.

[21] For more on Chaucerian narrative personae, see David Lawton, *Chaucer's Narrators* (New York: Boydell & Brewer, 1985).

While former and later editions mark the divisions in the homily between the stages of penance and the seven deadly sins, de Worde's edition goes into great detail to gloss the text to make it more easy to use in one's spiritual life; some examples of these glosses show the variety of markers given in this edition: "Murmure is also ofte among seruauntes; Then[n] comyth scorning of this neeyghbour; Sometyme cometh murmure of pryde" (fol. z6r); "Remedi aye[n]st slouth" (fol. &4v); "Remedye ayenst ye thir wanhop" (fol. . . .2v). The cumulative ethical effect of these glosses allows the *Parson's Tale* to be as useful as possible to the reader.

While de Worde links *The Parson's Tale* back to *Chaucer's Tale* in a similar manner as Pynson's edition, de Worde contrasts Pynson by failing to conflate Chaucer and the Parson at the end: de Worde prints Chaucer's *Retraction* (fol. . . .3v). The Parson's Tale clearly ends—"Here endyth the Person his tale"—and Chaucer is given the final word: "Here takyth the maker of this boke his leue" (fol. . . .3r). The status of the "maker" in the final explicit, however, is rather ambiguous. On the one hand, it refers to the maker of the physical book; it is similar to a scribal thanksgiving at having gotten to the end of his copying project. In this sense, de Worde may be demonstrating authorial succession: de Worde is a maker of the book made by Caxton made by Chaucer. At the same time, when coupled with the Chaucer-woodcut above it, the poetic authority ("makerly" authority) of Chaucer is stressed; Chaucer is taking leave of us, and we see him riding away on his palfrey. The ambiguity notwithstanding, the edition ends with a kind of dramatic motion seen earlier in the interaction between the Host and Chaucer: the

maker/poet takes his leave of the reader and auditors at the very end of the work, presented in the same manner as he was at the beginning of the *Tales*.

In a final estimation, the de Worde 1498 edition of *The Canterbury Tales* stresses the drama, comedy, and range of Chaucer; editorial insertions guarantee that the reader sees the humor in *Sir Topas* while stressing its common utterance with *Melibee*. The end of *The Canterbury Tales* copies Pynson's link between Chaucer and the Parson while differentiating the two: Chaucer speaks on his own behalf at the end, instead of allowing his voice to be conflated with that of the Parson. De Worde's edition shows more editorial presence than Caxton's, but this presence serves to demonstrate the complexities of *The Canterbury Tales*, rather than trying to impose an "authorial" reading of them. The *sentence* that will be so stressed in the sixteenth century editions is balanced in de Worde by a clear recognition of Chaucerian *solaas*.

At the turn of the sixteenth century, Julian Notary produced an anthology centered around Chaucer's *Mars and Venus* (STC 5089): "the love and complayntes bytwene Mars and Venus" (fol. A1r). Printed in blackletter type, in a single column, with an average of 3.5 stanzas per page, this edition is similar to Caxton's anthologies insofar as it presents the complaint of Mars and Venus against the backdrop of an array of other "Chaucerian" pieces that serve to focus the reader's attention on the wisdom one may attain from reading Chaucerian works. The strictly sententious Chaucer, challenged by de Worde's edition two years prior, has returned in this edition.

The contents of STC 5089 show a clear bias towards Chaucer as a "philosophical" poet. The anthology opens with *Mars and Venus*, a debate poem between the sexes. The woodcut on the first page highlights for the reader the theme of sexual debate: a man and a woman are presented side by side, under which is the title "the love and complayntes bytwene Mars and Venus" (fol. A1r). Though this woodcut is not clearly related to *Mars and Venus* specifically (the man is playing a pipe, which would be a rather odd accessory for the god of war), the iconic effect is clear. The matter of debate between the god and goddess is Jealousy: Mars, a courtly knight governed by Venus, complains against Cylenius being with Venus, who is "his frende full dere" (fol. A4r). Venus' retort reproves him for his jealousy, noting that she is "his for euer / I hym assure / For eu[e]ry wyght preyseth his gentylesse" (fol. B1v). Mars' courtly virtue should stand as proof enough against jealousy: Venus's argument focuses the reader on good conduct and its use in love.

After *Mars and Venus*, the reader is treated to "the cou[n]ceyll of Chaucer touching Maryag [et] c. which was sente to Bucketon [et] c." (fol. B3r). As in Caxton's *Parliament of Fowles* anthology, Notary's anthology presents Chaucer as a sage giving advice to a gentleman. Significantly, this poem is the only piece in the anthology attributed directly to Chaucer; the others perhaps have imputed Chaucerian authority, but the edition leaves no doubt in the reader's mind that this poem, at least, is the authentic voice of Chaucer. Taken rhetorically, the Envoy to Bukton serves as an authorial pronouncement on the love debate, Chaucer being given the final say in the matter, and

this final say is not the most flattering to Venus' position. Treating "The sorowe and woo that is in maryage" (fol. B3r), Chaucer's envoy puts the position of men in marriage in no uncertain terms:

> But yet lest thou doo worse take a wyf
> Bet is to wedde / than brenne in worse wyse
> But you shalt haue sorowe on this flesshe thy lif
> And be thy wyues trall / as swyn the wyse
> And yf that holo wryt / may not suffyse
> Experience shall the teche / soo may happe
> That the were leuer betake in fryse
> Than ofte falle of weddying in the trappe (fol. B3r-v)

Chaucer follows this Pauline injunction with a recommendation to read the works of the Wife of Bath, a teacher whose advice is based firmly on experience.[22] Taken on its own, this poem may be read with a certain amount of humor: expanding on the Pauline injunction that marriage is better than "burning," Chaucer compares it to a state worse than Hell and uses as an *auctor* one of his poetic creations. Positioned as it is in Notary's anthology, however, it takes on a more serious tone: Mars becomes an example of the kind of man who falls into the trap of marriage, a thrall to Venus whose jealousy, it is suggested, most likely has merit.

Immediately after Chaucer's advice against marriage, the reader is presented with a crowd of men pressing a letter on a man who has removed himself from their company: the envoy is followed by a woodcut of a small crowd of men approaching a bearded man in a long gown (fol. B3v). The bearded man looks rather trepidatious: with his hands

[22] "Experience, though noon auctoritee / Were in this world, is right ynogh for me / To speke of wo that is in mariage;" (Frag. III (D).1-3; *Riverside* 105)

pursed together, he appears to be drawing away from the crowd. The man closest to him is presenting him with what appears to be a sealed letter, and this messenger points at him as though to exhort him to read. Notary's edition thus dramatizes the event of male council against marriage, an apt illustration of the serious manly wisdom Chaucer is trying to impart on the hapless Bukton.

As if its position after *Mars and Venus* and the following woodcut were not enough to make the envoy serve as a serious exhortation against marriage, the materials following it further suggest that the reader interpret it unironically. The rest of Notary's anthology is taken up with Chaucerian apocrypha relating to matters of philosophical education:

> The first fynders of the vii sciences artyficyall (fol. B4r)
> The auctors of the vii sciences (fol. B5r)
> The seven sciences lyberall (fol. B5r)
> he disposicyon of the vii planetes (fol. B5r)
> The disposicyon of the xii sygnes (fol. B5v)
> The desposicyon of the iiii co[m]plexions (fol. B6r)
> The disposicyon of the iiii elements (fol. B6v)
> The disposicyon of the four seasons of the yere (fol. B7r)
> The dispocyon [sic] of the world (fol. B8r)

Notary's edition becomes a small encyclopedia of tidbits of philosophy that any learned gentleman should know: the artificial sciences, the liberal arts, the planets, the zodiac, the humors, the elements, the seasons, and the nature of the world. This last item is particularly significant semiotically. While the other verses serve to boost Chaucer's status as a thoroughly educated poet, the kind one should read for instruction on what one should know to present an educated *ethos*, this last one makes a clear statement on the

nature of the sublunary world, a kind of all-encompassing horizon against which the other parts of the anthology are to be read. "The dispocyon of the world" presents a world wracked by mutability: nature, the seasons, the lives of men—all are open to change, ruin, and rack; the poet concludes that: "thou shalt see in this lyf a pylgremage / Ie [In] which ether is noo sted[f]ast abydyng" (fol. B8v). Not only does this poem thus provide a nod back to other Chaucerian works (*The Canterbury Tales* and *Boece* particularly); it closes the anthology with a verse on personal piety, exhorting the reader against trusting in anything on earth:

> The[nne] [l]yft vp thyn eyen vnto heuen
> And praye thy lorde which eis eternall
> That sytte soo ferre aboue the sterrys seuen
> In his ryall place moost Imperall
> To graunt the grace in this lyf mortall
> Contricion shrift howsyll at departing
> And er thou parte hens remssyon [sic] fynall
> Toward t[h]e lyf where Ioye is euerlastyng
> A M E N (fol. B8v)

The moral gravity of this edition could scarce be put in more serious terms: at the end of the anthology, the reader is exhorted to pray for the grace of a happy death so that the reader may have good hope for Heaven.

Notary's *Mars and Venus* anthology, then, can be seen as a grand presentation of Chaucer as a poet who moves his readers from courtly love lyric through the rigors of philosophy to the renunciation of this world for the sake of Heaven. The central piece—Chaucer's *Envoy to Bukton*—is rendered wholly serious by its position between love debate and didactic poetry, thus continuing the trend of presenting Chaucer primarily as a

poet of *sentence*. At the end of the day, one is tempted to read the Notary anthology as a kind of de Worde's *Canterbury Tales* in miniature, moving from courtly romance in an antique setting, as in *The Knight's Tale*, to a gesture towards heaven, as in the *Retraction*.

After his 1498 *Canterbury Tales*, Wynkyn de Worde appears to set aside printing Chaucerian works until 1517, when his version of *Troilus and Criseyde* (STC 5095) appeared.[23] Printed in the now traditional Blackletter, with 28 lines per page, clear running titles, and elaborate capitals at the start of each book, the de Worde *Troilus* demonstrates from its very outset subtle cues to the reader on how to read the poem. The title page presents the work as: "The noble and amorous au[n]cyent history of Troylus and Cresyde / in the tyme of the syege of Troye. Co[m]pyled by Geffraye Chaucer" (fol. A1 r). There are several details worth noting in this title. In the first place, the genre of this work is presented as an "au[n]cyent history" and a "noble and amorous" one at that. De Worde signals to readers that this work will treat events of pagan antiquity that have value as examples both of courtly valor and of love: a generic advertisement that would work well with the sensibilities of the early English Renaissance.[24] Furthermore, *Troilus and Criseyde* is set "in the tyme of the syege of Troye"; this important piece of information links the poem to one of Chaucer's most prominent fifteenth-century imitators, Lydgate. As we shall see in the next chapter, and as Alexandra Gillespie has treated well, Lydgate's *Troy Book* and other works will be linked with Chaucer in the

[23] Boswell and Holton, 25.
[24] A. J. Minnis, in *Chaucer and Pagan Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), treats well the status of pagans in Chaucer's poetry; the de Worde title suggests that this category was present to readers in the early English Renaissance.

folio editions of the next few decades; de Worde's title signals implicitly this link before the folia.[25] Finally, de Worde's edition asserts that Chaucer is the *compiler* of *Troilus and Criseyde*. This choice is striking, insofar as it diminishes Chaucer's authority by demoting him from an author—one who composes and makes—to a simple compiler, a collector of the works of other, greater writers.[26] As we shall see, Chaucer will regain authorial status at the very end of this edition, but at the beginning of the work, the reader is encouraged to think of Chaucer in relation to his sources for this Trojan material, perhaps the Classical *auctors* to whom he commends his book at the end: Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Lucan, and Statius. In four printed lines, then, de Worde has characterized *Troilus and Criseyde* primarily in terms of its status as a work of courtly love that gestures back to Classical poetry.

Below this pregnant title, the reader finds the first woodcut: a depiction of a man and a woman standing in a garden. The man is handing the woman a gage—in this case, a ring—and scrolls above their heads unambiguously name them as "Troylus" and "Creseyde." Seth Lerer has gone into great detail on this particular woodcut, seeing in it an in-joke among the literati of Tudor England, a complex reference to the poetic

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[25] Gillespie's *Print Culture and the Medieval Author* examines the links between these two poets in Renaissance printing, and their use as "author functions": "I argue that by ascribing printed texts to Chaucer and to Lydgate early printers implied that there was some limit to the meaning of the fictions contained by the books that they produced. By doing so, somewhat paradoxically, they sought to promote the movement of those books. They assigned a particular kind of value to the goods they sold, but they also made those goods—literary texts—available for the multiple determinations of multiple customers, for the assignment of new values and the overturning of intended ones. The difference between the medieval author I identify in early printed books in England and Foucault's author (or more precisely author-function) is therefore the difference between a reductive category—one that manages, controls, and answers—and a category that is *also* productive, that proliferates, energizes, changes" (Gillespie, 16).

[26] For more on this distinction, see Jennifer Summit, "Women and authorship" *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Women's Literature* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003), 91-108, 92-93.

rivalries between Skelton and Hawes.[27] Insofar as it relates to the character of the edition, the woodcut's most important rhetorical function is to focus the reader on the exchange of love-tokens between Troilus and Criseyde. As Lerer points out, this woodcut is not drawn from Chaucer's actual text: the exchange takes place in Troilus' room: the woodcut shows a ring being given in the *locus amoenus* of courtly love.[28] Regardless of these literal differences, however, de Worde's edition focuses the reader on the pledge of love between the two characters: this action is presented as central to a reader's understanding of the poem. This woodcut receives further emphasis by being reprinted at the very end of the edition (fol. Z8r). When the reader encounters this scene a second time, the effect is quite different: at the beginning, the scene is a portrait of faithful love; at the end, having encountered Criseyde's betrayal of Troilus for Diomede, the reader cannot help but read the scene ironically: the engagement is the point around which the tragedy of Troilus turns.

The dialogue between titles and woodcuts continues throughout this edition: each book receives its own title-page, a distinction that no other Renaissance edition of *Troilus and Criseyde* shares. De Worde chose his woodcuts carefully, and the deliberate nature of this rhetorical choice is evident in the editorial character created in STC 5095.[29] The

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[27] Seth Lerer, " The Wiles of Woodcut: Wynkyn de Worde and the Early Tudor Reader," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 4 (1996): 381-403, 387-390.

[28] Lerer argues that the choice of this scene as an "emblem" for the poem relates to the quotation of this scene by Skelton in lines 682-92 of *Phyllyp Sparowe*: "For what de Worde presents in his edition is an icon of this Skeltonized Chaucer" ("Wiles," 386). While this analysis is a persuasive account of the genesis of de Worde's choice, it does not diminish the rhetorical effect of the emblem in and of itself: a reader who did not recognize the scene as an interpolation from a Skeltonic quotation would still be presented with the image of the engagement.

[29] Lerer, "Wiles," 381.

title-page of the second book of *Troilus and Criseyde* opens with a clear plot point to guide the reader: "Consequently foloweth the secu[n]de boke of Troylus / and it sheweth how that Pandare vncle of Creseyde / dyde the message of Troylus vnto Creseyde as foloweth" (fol. D1r). This much is fairly straightforward: Book 2 does have Pandarus pandering between the lovers. Beneath this title, however, is a woodcut that raises this particular plot to a more universal application. A gentleman appears to be walking away from two ladies, with his head turned back to them. They are outside a city wall. Of the two ladies, one is older than the other; the older interposes herself between the man and the younger woman. Depicted in this woodcut is a scene of courting that would be common in the courtly love tradition: the amorous Troilus kept from his Criseyde by a female guardian (the nurse of later love stories). While a stereotypical romantic scene, it serves as a stark contrast to the actual action of the book, in which Pandarus acts as a go-between for his friend Troilus and his niece Criseyde. Though Criseyde is attended by gentlewomen, there is no clear attempt to foil Troilus' plan; de Worde thus brings to stark contrast the course of traditional love poems—the lady protected from the lover's advances—with the course of *Troilus and Criseyde*: not only is Criseyde not guarded from Troilus, her uncle takes an active part in bringing the lovers together.

The title-page for Book 3 presents a woodcut that more directly fits with the action of the book, but nevertheless continues the theme of the hazards of love. The title conflates an incipit with an explicit: "The secu[n]de boke fynysshed here begynneth the thyrde and sheweth how that Cresyde came to Troylus and of the right piteous

complaynte of Troylus as foloweth" (fol. J1v). "Complaynte" is an apt word for the woodcut that follows: a lady, identified as "Cresyde" approaches a sick man, identified as "Troilus", who is attended by a gentleman (who seems to be holding a basin). In this instance, the woodcut illustrates rather aptly the action of Book 3: the meeting between Troilus and Criseyde in Troilus' bedroom, aided by Pandarus. What is striking about this presentation of Book 3 is the focus placed on sorrow in the book: the book treats "the right piteous complaynte of Troylus", rather than the lover's meeting and sexual consummation, which is one of the more triumphant moments in medieval love poetry (borrowing language from Dante's *Paradiso* no less!).[30] Working with the previous title pages, this editorial choice reminds the reader of the tragic consequences of this book: though the lovers are brought together in this book, it is the pain of love that remains the constant focus.

After the woodcuts chosen for the first three title-pages, the woodcut at the start of Book 4 may appear to be somewhat drab: the woodcut presents a king surrounded by gentlemen (fol. N7r). The title somewhat explains this choice by focusing on the political exchange between the Greeks and Trojans: "Now this my fourte boke sheweth how that the Imbassatoures of Grece came to Troye for Cresyde / and of the grete sorowe that Troylus and Cresyde made wha[n] they herde that Antynor shoulde be delyuered beynge prisoner and Cresyde rendred for the aquytaunce of hym" (fol. N7r). At this juncture in the poem, the reader is reminded that the private tragedy of the lovers is framed by the

[30] Troilus' address to Love in III.1261-67 is an adaptation of St. Bernard's address to the Blessed Virgin Mary in *Paradiso* 33.14-18: *Riverside*, 1042.

larger political tragedy of the Trojan War: if the King is to be taken for Priam, then the reader is reminded of the final fall of Troy, at the hands of Antenor no less.[31] Perhaps most significant, however, is the choice of the word "my". In what sense is the Fourth Book of *Troilus and Criseyde* "my" book? If the pronoun refers to Chaucer, then the editorial apparatus attains a level of authority: the interpretation suggested is somehow authorial. If, however, the pronoun refers to de Worde, a different kind of authority is being claimed: the authority of the editor to speak on behalf of the poet about the meaning of the work. Perhaps these two alternatives are not mutually exclusive, insofar as the works of the author are only encountered through the lens of the editor, but the end result stands: at this juncture in the story, the reader's attention is both turned to the broader picture, leaving the lovers behind visually and reminded of the sorrow awaiting him in the Fourth Book.

The fifth book opens with a woodcut that is notably ambiguous. The picture is divided into two sections: the upper depicts two gentlemen on horseback looking at one another; the lower depicts one man and two women on horses: the gentleman appears to be conversing with the woman nearer him, while the woman farther from him is brandishing a double-corded riding whip. Unlike prior woodcuts, none of these figures is named. The title of Book 5 may provide a clue towards identification: "This my laste boke of Troylus consequently foloweth / and sheweth how that Cresyde fell to the loue of Dyomede / and he vnto her love / [and] how she forsoke Troylus after her departynge out

[31] Medieval tradition held that Antenor betrayed Troy to the Greeks; "Antenora"—the place for those who betrayed their country—is close to the center of Hell in Dante, *Inferno* 32-33.

of Troye / co[n]trary to her promise" (fol. S3v). In light of this title, the lower picture may be identified as the moment of meeting between Diomede and Criseyde; the woman with the whip is still troubling, but given the general editorial stress on the pain and hazards of love in this edition, it serves as a tangible reminder of the pains and scourges of love. The upper picture remains ambiguous, even with the title. It may depict Troilus and Diomedes as rivals for Criseyde; it may represent Troilus and Pandarus together in Troy, opposed to Criseyde and Diomede in the Greek camp. The choice may be left up to the reader: what is most significant is the choice to present a bifurcated portrait in the title-page to this final chapter of *Troilus and Criseyde*: visually, what was once a single story has now been split in two, calling attention to the sundering and separation that close Chaucer's poem.

An unambiguous rhetorical effect of this last title-page is to blame Criseyde for the outcome of the story: de Worde tells the reader in certain terms that Criseyde's love for Diomede is "co[n]trary to her promise" to Troilus. While later critics have sought to clear Criseyde's name somewhat, exempting her from blame for her actions, de Worde's estimation echoes the opinion of Henrickson's *Testament of Cressid*, which Thynne will place firmly next to Chaucer's poem: the moral of this story is that women are not to be trusted.[32] The title-page of Book 5 thus solidifies the argument made editorially

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[32] For reappraisals of the character of Criseyde, see Marjorie Curry Woods, "Chaucer the Rhetorician: Criseyde and Her Family," *Chaucer Review* 20.1 (1985): 28-39; C.S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936); and David Aers, "Chaucer's Criseyde: Woman in Society, Woman in Love." *Critical Essays on Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. Thomas C. Stillinger (New York: G.K. Hall & Co., 1998), 195-218.

throughout this entire edition: men should be wary of the love of women because of the suffering and unhappiness that such love entails.

The final editorial insertion into this edition of *Troilus and Criseyde* completes its character as an antifeminist presentation of Chaucer's work. After the work is over—marked unequivocally by a "Finis" (fol. Z7r), de Worde gives the following verses under the running title, "The auctour":

> ANd here an ende / of Troylus heuynesse
> As touchy[n]ge Cresyde / to hy[m] ryght vnky[n]de
> Falsly forsworn[n] / defloury[n]g his worthynes
> For his treue loue / she hath hy[m] made bly[n]de
> Of feminine gendre / ye woman[n] most vnky[n]de
> Dyomede on her whele / she hathe set on hye
> The faythe of a woman / by her now maye you se
>
> Was not Arystotle / for all his clergye
> Vyrgyll the cunnynge / deceyued also
> By women inestymable / for to here or se
> Sampson the stronge / with many a .M. mo
> Brought in to ruyne / by woman mannes fo
> There is no woman / I thynke heuen vnder
> That can be trewe / and that is wondre
>
> O parfyte Troylus / good god be thy guyde
> The moste treuest louer / that euer lady hadde
> Now arte thou forsake / of Cresyde at this tyde
> Neuer to retourne / who shall make the gladde
> He that for vs dyed / and soules frome hell ladde
> And borne of the vyrgyne / to heuen thy soule brynge
> And all that ben present / at theyr latre endynge.

A M E N

> Thus endeth the treatyse / of Troylus the heuy
> By Geffraye Chaucer / compyled and done
> He prayenge the reders / this mater not deny
> Newly correcked / in the cyte of London

> In flete strete / at the sygne of the sonne
> Inprynted by me / Wynkyn de worde
> The M.CCCCC.and .xvii. yere of oure lorde. (fol. Z7v)

As with the first title-page and the title-pages of Books Four and Five, de Worde conflates Chaucer's role as "auctour" with his own role as printer and presenter: Chaucer "compiled" and "did" this treatise so that readers may attend to the matter. Not only does this ending diminish Chaucer's role as author (as in the beginning), it argues for a Chaucer focused firmly on *sentence*: the poem—or "treatyse"!—is merely the means to the end of educating the reader on the evils of women.[33] The verses are presented as an authorial interpretation of the poem: in case the reader missed the point of prior editorial choices, he is now told clearly to beware of women who "deflower" men's worthiness, and is even given a handy list of other authorities—Aristotle, Virgil, and Samson—who also bear witness to the evils of womankind. Furthermore, Troilus' fate in Chaucer's text is debatable: after death, his soul ascends to the "eighth sphere" (fol. Z6r) and from that vantage point engages in *contemptus mundi*. This end is fitting for a noble pagan, a "parfyte Troylus." De Worde's coda, however, leaves open the possibility of his *Christian* salvation: the "author" prays that Christ save Troilus' soul.[34] Chaucer himself

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[33] The fact that "treatise" focuses the reader on the *sentence* of the poem is supported by the Middle English Dictionary: "tretis": "1. (a) A formal discourse or written work expounding a topic, a work of instructional or informative character, a disquisition on a circumscribed topic, a treatise; a treatment of a theme, story, etc. in verse or prose, esp. of an edifying character, a literary work; also, the source for a translation [quot. C1450 (?a1400); also, a document or memorandum [quot. A1425(c1385)." Robert E. Lewis, Editor-in-Chief, *Middle English Dictionary*, *T* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1993), 1048.

[34] Benson and Rollman downplay the Christian implications of this coda: "Although the lines call for the salvation of all and assert that only Christ can finally rescue Troilus from sorrow, they also take a favorable and resolutely secular view of the Trojan hero. Troilus is not a sinner at all, but 'parfyte Troylus,' the 'moste treuest lover / that euer lady hadde" (Benson and Rollman, 278). Troilus' natural virtue

ended the poem with a translation from *Purgatorio* 33, but left open the question of Troilus' ultimate fate. De Worde's authorial presentation closes the matter, ending debate on a major point of medieval theological debate: noble pagans can indeed be saved.[35] The edition ends as it began with a woodcut of Troilus and Criseyde (fol. Z8r), now rendered bitterly ironic by the interposing poem and commentary. The final image a reader of this edition encounters is the seal of William Caxton, adapted by de Worde to include his own name: de Worde not only appropriates the authority of Chaucer in this edition but also the authority of his master printer.

It should now be plain that de Worde's 1517 *Troilus* is a clear step toward overt editorial interpretation embedded in Chaucer's text. By reducing Chaucer to a compiler of misogynistic moral *sentence*, de Worde authorizes his own interpretation of the text. This interpretation, of course, need not simply be de Worde's personal take on the matter: he may be (and most likely *is*) reproducing an understanding of the poem common in the second decade of the sixteenth century. What is important, though, is that this interpretation is indelibly fused to the text in print, a fusion that has major implications for Chaucer's literary *ethos* and that will be carried on in the age of Chaucer folios. These kinds of editorial interpretations will continue in the editions produced alongside Thynne's *Complete Works*, detailed in the next chapter.

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notwithstanding, the subordinate clause that opens the first sentence appears to be rather important: Christ will rescue Troilus, not his secular amatory virtues.

[35] See Minnis, *Chaucer and Pagan Antiquity*. Debates on the salvation of pagans are depicted literarily in Dante's *Commedia* (which Chaucer knew well) and *St. Erkenwald*, a poem contemporaneous with Chaucer. See also Cindy L. Vitto, "The Virtuous Pagan in Middle English Literature," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 79.5 (1989): 1-100.

Chapter 4

Editions of Chaucer in the time of Thynne and Chaucer the Protestant

The decades spent by Caxton's successors continuing the editorial tradition of presenting Chaucer as a grave, sententious author culminated in 1532 with the publication of William Thynne's *Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, the first such collection ever assembled and printed. Between the contributions of Pynson, de Worde, and Notary and the age of the *Complete Works*, however, a handful of other shorter editions were produced by other publishers. As noted in the previous chapter, these editions tend to be forgotten when considering the history of Chaucer in the sixteenth century. Taken singly, these editions are not perhaps the most impressive examples of Chaucerian works; taken as a whole, however, they fill out the picture of the world of Chaucerian presentation immediately before and during the time that Thynne was assembling his edition. One of these editions in particular, the 1526 Pynson *House of Fame* anthology, is arguably the forerunner of Thynne's project. Overall, these editions show further editorial involvement in setting interpretive parameters, demonstrating that Thynne's overt editorial shaping was part of the general trend in Chaucerian presentation in the 1520's and 1530's. The further rhetorical effect of these shorter editions printed around the advent of the *Complete Works* is the printing and dissemination of two apocryphal works, *The Ploughman's Tale* and *Jack Upland*, that present Chaucer overtly as a Protestant author, an editorial move that would shape the *Complete Works* of the end of the sixteenth century and consequently Chaucer's place in the newly Protestant canon

of English authors. Chaucer's status as a poet of ethical *sentence* is fused with his status as a proto-Protestant poet, thus solidifying his claim as the originator English vernacular literature, a position that he and his works will hold throughout the English Renaissance.

Approximately eight years after de Worde's *Troilus* (1525 is the best estimation), an edition of *The Parliament of Fowles* was printed by John Rastell that gives further evidence of a shift towards more overt editorial rhetoric in Chaucerian presentation (STC 5091.5).[1] Only a few leaves of a single book-copy of this edition survive; as such, its influence on the presentation of this work in Tudor England is hard to gauge. Its editorial insertions, however, are quite telling, insofar as they bear witness to the continued ennobling of Chaucer with attention to his language and style.

The first two leaves of this book-copy contain the description of the Temple of Brass in the middle of *The Parliament of Fowles*.[2] One should not read too much significance into this chance survival and the fact that Caxton's title for this work in 1478 was *The Temple of Brass*; Rastell's title-page (the third leaf) clearly gives what has become the traditional title of the work: "Here begynneth the parliame[n]t of fowles compiled by the noble rethorycyen Geffrey Chaucer" (fol. A1r). Like de Worde's 1517 *Troilus*, Rastell describes Chaucer as a "compiler", not a "maker" or "author". Without the rest of the text, it is hard to tell what features of the work suggested this word to Rastell, but insofar as the work deals with Macrobius' *Somnium Scipionis,* Chaucer demoted to a compiler of Ciceronian wisdom might be forgiven. Whatever slight might

[1] Boswell and Holton, 29.
[2] Lines 225-280.

be found in this word, however, is undercut by the attribution of Chaucer as a "noble rethorycyen": Chaucer is a master of his English language, and those seeking rhetorical training would do well to listen to him.[3]

Below this title is a Latin subtitle announcing Rastell's introduction to the work: "Joha[n]nes Rastell in laudem magistri galfridi Chaucer" (fol. A1r). Before the reader gets to Rastell's lines in praise of master Geoffrey Chaucer, he is treated to a woodcut depicting eight birds on the ground, engaged in typical avian activities. The bird on the extreme left is clearly a bird of prey, fitting the focus of the work on the noble Tercel and/or the desirable Formel. The woodcut advertises the work as a beast fable; the text that follows, however, exhorts the reader to attend to the excellence of thought behind Chaucer's poem, as well as the sweet *solaas* of the language:

> wHo so wolde co[n]sidere the great dilygence
> The bysy exercise and laborious study
> Of gefferey chaucer in his existence
> That famous poete of late memory
> With his fayre eloquence and elygancy
> Shall see our tonge enlumyned so with this speech
> That to the ere it is an heuynly lech (fol. A1r)

The "high sentence" used by Harry Bailey as one of his criteria for judgment in *The Canterbury Tales* is attributed outright to Chaucer in this introduction, while *solaas* in language is strongly implied:

> His hye sentence so brefe and quyke
> Hys pregnaunt resons of p[ar]fyte sustenaunce
> His sugred termys ar no thing to seke

[3] It is important to note that the relatively recent demarcation between rhetoric and poetry would not have existed at this time. Consider Puttenham's *Art of English Poesie* (STC 205195; 1589) in which Poets and Orators are conflated in Chapter 4 (fol. C3r).

His collours gay of moste p[ar]fyte plesaunce
So clere is depuryd his langage in substaunce
Of euery difference in his owne prop[er]te
Worde reson sentence poyntyd as it sholde be. (fol. A1r)

The next stanza emphasizes the enlightenment that a reader may gain from Chaucer's works:

For as aurora departith the darkenes
Toward the risyng of firy phebus bright
And the shadowes of the blake cloudy skyes
Are with drawyn through lucyfers light
So in englyssh the wark[es] who redyth a right
Of this noble man all other doth excel
In great wisdom [and] vnderstondyng suptell (fol. A1v)

Rastell then switches to self-promotion:

And by cause I am assuryd of this thing
That this lytyl treatese whiche is callyd
The parliament of fowles was of his doing
With oft inquisicyon I haue hyt achyuyd
And hyt publisshid [and] made to be prentyd
Which wark not only but all other that he made
For nobly quik sentence ben worthy to be radde (fol. A1v)

The introduction closes with a traditionally pious prayer for Chaucer:

Wherfore eterne ioye in euerlastyng blys.
I beseech god his soule to graunt in glory
Aboue the sterry palayse that he not mys
A sete in that heuynly consistory
Where as I trust in ioye his soule be mery
Praysyng the eternall lorde without pere
Of his benynge mercy shewyd to hym here (fol. A1v)

Significantly, the pleasure of reading Chaucer is here relegated to a purely stylistic pleasure: the debates of amorous avian lovers do not seem to factor into the joy of reading Chaucer in this introduction. Rather, Chaucer's subtle wisdom and

understanding are to be gleaned from this "treatise", and his language enjoyed for its stylistic flourishes and ennobling effect on the English language: word, reason, and sentence are pointed as they should be. Far more than merely a praise of his own punctuation, Rastell's assertion here is that Chaucer's form and content are perfectly wed. The irony here, of course, is that Chaucer's language is becoming ever more distant from the spoken language of sixteenth-century England; the Latin of Rastell's title is a more apt indication of the status of Chaucer's language: set, unchanging, and venerable, though not of common currency.

Rastell's edition provides yet another example of Chaucer being made into a Classical author by an editor, whose primary literary value comes from the usefulness of his wisdom. As a side note, it is significant that Rastell does not merely pray for Chaucer's soul (which may be found in many prior editions of Chaucer): also he canonizes him. While Rastell does pray that Chaucer receive a seat in the heavenly consistory, he also "trusts" that Chaucer is already in heaven: "Where as I trust in ioye his soule be mery / Praysyng the eternall lorde without pere / Of his benynge mercy shewyd to hym here" (fol. A1v). This saintly canonization not only serves to complement Chaucer's literary canonization; it indicates the complexities of the religious climate in England in the 1520's: Henry VIII was embroiled in debates with Luther, and his own Act of Succession is not far away. While former editors were only comfortable praying for Chaucer, Rastell sets in print Chaucer's spiritual, as well as literary, canonization, a bold act for such troubled religious times.

In 1526, Richard Pynson reprinted his 1492 edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* as a smaller, more compact edition, while keeping many of the same textual features (STC 5086). Unlike the 1492 edition, the 1526 is double-columned throughout; the type font is now Blackletter, rather than Batarde.[4] As a result, fewer woodcuts are presented; many are the same as in the 1492 edition, though there are significant variations. As a reprint from over twenty years past, this edition does not join in the trend, seen in de Worde's 1517 *Troilus* and Rastell's *Parliament,* of taking an active role in guiding the reader towards an interpretation of the work; rather, this edition is the last one to content itself with the subtler editorial cues of a past era in editorial rhetoric.

The other feature that does not conform with this trend is the title-page. Unlike the 1492 edition, which preceded de Worde's innovation of title-pages, the title-page for Pynson's 1526 edition begins by making an overt claim for authority and editorial oversight: "Here begynneth the boke of Canterbury tales / diligently [and] truly corrected / and newly printed" (fol. A1r). The reader is assured that the tales that follow have been prepared for reading by the highest standards of editing. The woodcut that accompanies the title-page in the book copy consulted is rather an odd choice: the woodcut of the Squire from the 1492 edition. Iconically, this choice makes sense: the first picture a reader sees is a pilgrim on a horse: any pilgrim, presumably, would do. The fact that Pynson reuses this woodcut for the Squire in this 1526 edition (fol. G3r), however, leads to an odd association and focus: the Squire is put front-and-center in this edition,

[4] For historical circumstances behind this shift, see Joseph A. Dane, *Who is Buried in Chaucer's Tomb? Studies in the Reception of Chaucer's Book* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1998).

stressing the importance of his tale of knightly romance. While the borders that surround the Squire on the title-page are fairly commonplace, the choice of a pelican, cross, and dove beneath him carries some semiotic weight: the reader is initially presented with religious imagery beneath a teller of a knightly romance. These genres are thus brought to the forefront in Pynson's reprinting.

The edition begins with the now-traditional Caxtonian proem and a table of contents (fol. A1v). When one turns to the general prologue, one finds the reader's attention focused on the presence of the author in the General Prologue by one of the few overt editorial instructions in this edition: "The Prologue of the author to wheche he maketh mencyon howe and where this company met and of their condycions and array and what they be: As ye shall se herafter" (fol. A2r). Not only does this title bring to the forefront the reality of Chaucer the pilgrim as the narrator of these tales—reinforced by the running title "The prologue of the author"—but it suggests that readers attend to the purpose, setting, state, and clothing of the Canterbury pilgrims. This direction, which does not appear in the 1492 edition, points the reader to the details of the story, rather than what moral lessons one may learn. This exhortation to close reading certainly need not rule out an overall inclination towards reading for *sentence*, but in a time when the moral authority of Chaucer was being stressed ever more overtly, this detail is perhaps a refreshing one to find.

Due to the condensed nature of this new edition—printed in double-columns, rather than the single-column format used by Pynson in 1492—the General Prologue

contains only one woodcut: the Knight, this time in a different version than the 1492 (fol. A2r).[5] This choice supports the chivalric *ethos* created by the title-page. Towards the end of the General Prologue, the 1492 woodcut of the company is given: people from different estates sitting at table and eating (fol. A6r). The Knight's woodcut is reprinted before his tale (fol. B1r). The woodcuts that precede the rest of the tales are generally the same as in the 1492 edition. Two notable differences are the Pardoner, whose woodcut is the 1492 haberdasher, and Chaucer, whose woodcut is the 1492 Franklin (P2r, P4r). Insofar as these woodcuts are used iconically, these differences need not be significant. What is significant is the repetition of the Chaucerian woodcut before the *Ryme of Sir Thopas* and *Chaucer's Tale*, highlighting the unity of the two as utterances of Chaucer the pilgrim in the 1498 *Canterbury Tales*. The unity between a rhyme of jangling *solaas* and a prose tract of heavy *sentence* thus represents a Chaucer more complex than other editions of this time.

This editorial focus on the Chaucerian nature of both Thopas and Melibee does not, however, preclude stress on Chaucerian *sentence*: Chaucer's Tale and the Parson's Tale are still visually linked: their columns are fuller than the verse tales—natural to the nature of both Chaucer and the Parson speaking in prose—causing readers to note them together. Furthermore, the *explicit* to the Parson's Tale returns to Pynson's trope in 1492 of attributing the Parson's Tale directly to Chaucer: "Explicit tractatus Galfridi Chaucer

[5] The only oddity about this woodcut—seen both at fol. A2r and fol. B1r—is the choice of letters at the border of the horse's caparison. These letters are capitals, printed backwards and, read from left to right, read thus: "I X R A L I R O S A E O C E." One explanation for this oddity would be that the letters are employed purely decoratively—to create texture for the lower border of the caparison—and thus are printed backwards and gibberish.

de Penitentia vt dicitur pro fabula rectoris" (fol. Y3v). As in 1492, *The Parson's Tal*e thus becomes a treatise that is simply spoken through the mouthpiece of the Parson, stressing the moral gravity of Chaucer's project. The Parson, however, does not get the last word in this *Canterbury Tales*: Pynson prints Chaucer's Retraction at the end of the 1526 edition, a move that differs from the 1492. This edition is the last edition of *The Canterbury Tales* in the English Renaissance printed with this Retraction included: in six years, the Thynne *Complete Works* would set the ending for the rest of the Renaissance. Whatever political and religious shifts may be behind this omission, the aesthetic effect on the character of the work is clear: after Pynson's 1526 edition, Chaucer's authorial voice does not end the Tales. Pynson's edition allows the character of Chaucer the author to step back from his work at the end and speak directly to the reader, a feature that would not be seen again in editions of Chaucer until the eighteenth century.

Around the same time as his *Canterbury Tales*, Pynson also printed an anthology edition of *The House of Fame* (STC 5088).[6] This is the last anthology of Chaucerian works printed before the rise of the folio *Complete Works*, and it bears many of the same characteristics as the Caxton *Parliament of Fowles* anthology and the Notary *Mars and Venus* anthology: a focus on moral *sentence*, constructed primarily by the selection and arrangement of materials.[7] The title given by Pynson to the collection is: "Here

[6] Boswell and Holton estimate the date as 1526.

[7] Julia Boffey, in "Richard Pynson's Book of Fame and the Letter of Dido", has asserted that this anthology is the last piece in a kind of *Complete Works*: "Together, *The Canterbury Tales* (RSTC 5068, 4 June 1526), *Troilus and Criseyde* (RSTC 5096, [1526?]), and *The Book of Fame* (RSTC 5068, [1526?]) constitute a comprehensive three-volume anthology of Chaucer's writings" (Boffey, 340). In "Richard Pynson and the Stigma of the Chaucerian Apocrypha", Kathleen Forni, while noting that "in all but fragmentary surviving

begynneth the boke of fame, made by G. Chaucer: with dyuers other of his workes" (fol. A1r). Besides the *House of Fame*, the other works printed (in order) are *The Parliament of Fowles* (here entitled "The assemblie of fowles"), *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* (for which Chaucer is attributed a translator's credit), *Flee from the Press* (here "Bonum consilium Galfredi Chaucer contra fortunam), *Moral pouerbs of Christyne*, *The Complaint of Mary Magdalene*, *The Letter of Dido to Aeneas*, and *The Prouerbes of Lydgate*. This last item provides good evidence for the yoking of Chaucer and Lydgate in the imagination of the Renaissance reader of medieval works.[8] Of these works, two are debate poems (*The Parliament of Fowles* and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*) and three are proverbial (*Flee from the Press*, *Moral Proverbs of Christians*, *Proverbs of Lydgate*). Three deal overtly with love (*The Parliament*, *La Belle Dame, The Complaint of Mary Magdalene, The Letter of Dido*), and two with the nature of language (*The House of Fame, Proverbs of Lydgate*). While arguing for the moral usefulness of these Chaucerian materials, this anthology is noteworthy for the sheer variety of generic discourses given: dream vision, beast fable, complaint, Christian, Pagan, amatory, proverbial. Pynson's anthology is an excellent example of an edition responding to a theme raised by Chaucer's own work: the selection and arrangement of materials in this edition mirrors the chatter of various voices in the House of Fame.

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copies, the three works are bound together" (Forni, 428), challenges the notion that Pynson was trying to assemble a comprehensive Chaucerian canon, and argues that the three editions should be considered as a kind of late medieval anthology. I am treating each of these three editions separately in this chapter because how surviving book-copies were bound is not necessarily an indication of how readers encountered every copy of these editions.

[8] See Gillespie, 126-134.

This edition begins with Chaucer's *House of Fame*, a work that has famously given readers trouble.[9] The poem is and does many things, but fundamentally treats the mutability and uncertainty of fame; Pynson's edition relates the supplicants in the House of Fame thus:

> As they were come into the hall
> They gan on knees downe fall
> Before this ilke noble quene
> And sayd graunt vs lady shene
> Eche of vs of thy grace abone
> And some of hem she graunted sone
> And some she warned well and fayre
> And some she graunted the contraire
> What there grace was I nyst
> For of these folke full well I wyst
> They had good fame eche deserued
> Although they were diuersly serued.
> Right as her suster dame fortune
> Is wont to serue in co[m]mune
> Now herken howe she gan to paye
> Hem / that gan her of grace praye. (fol. B4r)

Fame gives her graces to some, but not others, and the process of selection seems as arbitrary as that of her sister, Fortune. Furthermore, Aeolus is the one who carries fame around the world, in a process whose veracity is little better than rumor.[10] As if to complement perfectly the instability of this work, it has come down to us unfinished; as we have seen, Caxton saw fit to complete the work himself, while pointing out his editorial insertion with a marginal note. Pynson keeps the "finished" ending, but without

[9] See Barbara Kline and Thomas A. Prendergast, ed., *Rewriting Chaucer: Culture, Authority, and the Idea of the Authentic Text, 1400-1602* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999).
[10] *The House of Fame*, 1800-1810.

the Caxtonian marginal attribution, and follows it with the following editorial commentary:

> There is no more of this forsaid worke / for as it may be wele vnderstande / this noble man Geffray Chaucer / fynisshed it at – the said co[n]clusyon of the metyng of leysyng and sothsawe: Where (as yet) they ben checked and may nat departe. Whiche worke as me semeth / is craftely made / and digne to be writen [and] knowen: for he toucheth in it right great wysedome and subtell vnderstandyng / and so in all his workes he excelleth in myn opinyon / all other writers in Englysshe / for he writeth no voyde wordes / but all his mater is ful of hye [and] quicke sentence/ to whom oughte to be gyuen laude [and] praise / for his noble makyng and writyng: And I hu[m]bly beseche [and] pray you amo[n]g your prayers / to reme[m]bre his soule / on whiche / [and] on all christen soules / I beseche Iesu haue mercy. Amen. Also here foloweth another of his workes. (fol. C3r)

This laudatory attribution copies many of the features of the introduction to Pynson's 1492 *Canterbury Tales*: Chaucer writes no "voyde wordes", his subject matter is full of "hye [and] quicke sentence", and pious readers should give him praise and pray for the repose of his soul. In light of the complexity of *The House of Fame*, however, such an editorial ending rings rather hollow: Pynson's edition assures the reader that the work *is* completed and that it is full of "great wysedome and subtell vnderstandyng," but in what exactly this wisdom and understanding consist the ending is silent. It is as if faced with the unstable complexities of fame and rumor, the edition simply throws up its hands and asserts now-traditional pieties about Chaucer and his stylistic and moral value, while assuring the reader that a slightly more straightforward Chaucerian poem follows.

If the editorial insertion at the end of *The House of Fame* attempts to justify and gloss over the difficulties of a complex poem that deals with the problems of fame and

language, the subsequent materials appear to do just the opposite: they raise to the forefront of the reader's consciousness the complexities of human life. *The Parliament of Fowles*—introduced by a woodcut depicting various birds, a meet choice for a poem about avian mating—is an unresolved debate poem that centers on the question of how one can judge lovers. It is followed by *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, a poem that is reputedly translated by Chaucer: This boke called la bele Dame Sauns mercy / was translate out of French in to Englysshe by Geffray Chaucer / flour of poetes in our mother tong" (fol. D2v). The woodcut of a lady with a flower, attended by a serving-woman, with a border of stock floral patterns, mermen, and what appear to be worthies may be appropriate enough for this poem about a pitiless lady and an unfortunate lover, but the incipit works ethically in a much more complex manner. Chaucer's poetic *ethos* is expanded by making him a translator of French *fin amour* poetry; one way in which Chaucer ennobles his mother tongue is through translating a poem written in a noble Continental language.[11] This attribution works well with the flight of language around the world encountered in the House of Fame—Chaucer's words span languages and countries as well as ages. Furthermore, the matter of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* is worth noting: like *The Parliament of Fowles*, it is a debate, but a debate with a clear outcome: the lover dies from grief after failing to convince his lady to love him. This unambiguous

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[11] Chaucer's translation of *La Roman de La Rose* and his familiarity with French poetry make this assertion a reasonable one; Charles Muscatine has gone so far as to posit that Chaucer wrote in French prior to his career in English: see Muscatine, *Chaucer and the French Tradition* (Berkley and L.A.: University of California Press, 1960).

ending allows the poem's Envoy to serve an overtly moral purpose, exhorting men and women to abjure all loves that are disordered by passionate or pitiless lovers:

> Wherfore ye gentyll people yong and olde
> Men or women what soeuer ye be
> To loue I counsayle you be nat to bolde
> Excepte it be ordred to suche degree
> As concerneth spousayle in honeste
> Ye if ye wyll in feruent loue excel
> Loue god aboue althing [and] than do ye well (fol. E3v).

Marital love and the love of God are thus promoted at the end of the debate; having seen the pains of courtly love, the authorial voice gives a final verdict, counseling moderation and virtue.

The moralizing tone thus set, the edition proceeds to give the reader a set of works that respond to the works already given, promoting virtue while interrogating the tropes of the courtly love tradition. "Bonum Consilium Galfredi Chaucer contra fortunam" (*Fly from the Press*) is an apt rider to *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, advocating the stability of virtue against the mutability of the world; the concern with mutability further directs the reader back to Fortune's sister, Fame, thus serving as a moral commentary on the uncertain nature of seeking fame's approval. Chaucer's good advice is followed by a work not directly attributed to him: *Moral prouerbs of Christyne*.[12] As the title indicates,

[12]Pynson's copy-text was Caxton's 1478 copy of *Moral Proverbs of Christyne* (by Christine de Pizan), and Kathleen Forni argues that Pynson's failure to attribute overtly this work and *The Complaynt of Mary Magdaleyne* to Chaucer indicates that Pynson did not intend for readers to take these two works as having been written by Chaucer; they are "Chaucerian" works put alongside works directly attributed to Chaucer (Forni, "Stigma," 430-432). While Forni's analysis of Pynson's probable intentions is persuasive, it does not change the fact that these works are printed alongside Chaucer; absent a direct attribution to the contrary—as in the *Proverbs* of Lydgate later in this edition—the works appear to present themselves as Chaucer's own works. The fact that Thynne read at least two of these false works as authentic speaks to the rhetorical force of Pynson's omissions: "Two of Pynson's contributions (*La Belle Dame*, *Mary*

this work is little more than a list of moral advice, written in couplets and reminiscent of the distichs of Cato. Following the *Moral Prouerbs*—and again lacking overt authorial attribution—is *The Complaynt of Mary Magdaleyne*, complete with a woodcut of the saint holding her jar of myrrh. The *Complaynt* draws together several generic strands heretofore seen in the edition: it is certainly Christian in its focus and moral content, but has Mary Magdalene speak of her love for Jesus (who is now missing from his tomb) in the language of courtly love:

> Adue my lorde / my loue so fayre of face
> Adue my turtell doue / so fresshe of hue
> Adue my myrthe / adue all my solace
> Adue alas / my sauyour lorde Iesu
> Adue the gentyllest that euer I knewe
> Adue my most excellent paramour
> Fayrer than rose / sweter than lylly flour (fol. F3r)

Just as Chaucer's *Balade of Good Counsel* prompted the reader to remember the content of the first work in this edition, so *The Complaynt of Mary Magdalene* encapsulates several themes seen in the edition heretofore and offers another resolution: channeling one's romantic energies towards Jesus Christ.

Mary Magdalene's *Complaynt* is followed by a work that further complicates the edition, *The Letter of Dido to Eneas*. Like *The Complaynt of Mary Magdalene*, this work is a dramatic monologue spoken by a woman, Dido, about her departed lover, Aeneas.

Magdalene) did remain in folio editions of Chaucer's works until the late eighteenth century. However, Thynne, rather than Pynson, is responsible for the false attribution of *La Belle Dame*, since he omits Pynson's colophon which specifies that Chaucer is the translator. Thynne also reprints what Skeat calls the "lugubrious" *Mary Magdalen* as Chaucer's" (Forni, "Stigma," 432-433). It seems as though Thynne took Pynson's silence on authorship to imply Chaucerian attribution, and Thynne's *Works* appeared a mere six years after this Pynson edition. At least one contemporary reader—and a very influential one at that—did not understand Pynson's apparent intentions.

The contrasts between the love of Mary Magdalene and Jesus and the love of Dido and Aeneas, however, are numerous to say the least. Having been presented an example of love both erotic and divine, the reader now finds an example of the sorrows of erotic love. Like Chaucer's Tale of Dido in *The Legend of Good Women*, *The Letter of Dido to Eneas* seeks to clear Dido's name in the eyes of readers by dwelling of the falseness of Aeneas:

> Ah false vntrouth / vnki[n]de delyng [and] double
> My ha[n]de quaketh / whan I write thy [Aeneas'] name
> Thou hast brought all true louers i[n] trouble
> By thy vntrouthe / wherefore o lady Fame
> Blowe vp thy tru[m]pe of sclau[n]der [and] of shame
> Forthwith to shewe / of Ene his false delyte
> Make me your clerke / si[m]ply as I can write (fol. F3v).

The unnamed translator—who, given the fact that Chaucer is presented as the translator of *La Belle Dame*, is presumably to be understood to be Chaucer—openly invokes Fame as his Muse, asking her to tell the true story of Dido and Aeneas, and recalling immediately *The House of Fame,* which began this edition. Dido herself is portrayed as a pitiable figure in this poem, wishing Aeneas well even as she laments his cruelty before falling on her sword and burning to death, an action that is depicted with a woodcut before the poem. Significantly, the translator's voice returns at the end of the poem in much the same manner as it did in *La Belle Dame*; having heard from the main character and seen the effects of false love, the reader is given a pronouncement on the moral value of the piece:

> Ye good ladyes / whiche be of tender age
> Beware of loue / sithe men be full of crafte

Though some of the[m] wyll p[ro]myse marriage
Their lust fulfylde / suche p[ro]mise wylbe laft
For many of them / na wagge a false shaft
As dyd Enee / cause of queen Dydose dethe
Whose ded[es] I hate [and] shall duri[n]g my brethe
And if that ye wyll you to loue subdue
As thus I meane / vnto a good entent
Se that he be secrete / stedfast and true
Or that ye set your mynde on hym feruent
This is myne aduyse / that ye neuer consent
To do [that] thing / which folks may reproue
You in anythyng / [that] ye haue done for loue (fol. F5r).

The translator again has the last word, and again exhorts his readers—significantly *young ladies*—to avoid the overtures of lusty young men: it always ends badly. Instead, young women are to seek virtuous men and avoid sexual misconduct. As before, the translator / "Chaucer" pronounces a verdict exhorting his reader to virtue.

The final work given in this edition—*The Prouerbes of Lydgate* (fol. F5v-F6r)—is introduced with an explicit that continues the stress on moral conduct: "here foloweth a lytell exortacion / howe folke shuld behaue themselfe in all co[m]panyes" (fol. F5v). The clear theme of good behavior and the overt attribution to Lydgate does little to weaken the consonance between this work and the works preceding. What is most significant about these proverbs, however, is the tension presented in them between worldly, material success and otherworldly, Christian virtue. The very first stanza of the poem counsels readers to live the life of the *homo rhetoricus*, adapting one's language and behavior solely to the dictates of one's company:

I counsayle / what soeuer thou be
Of policy / foresight / and prudence
Yf thou wylte lyue in peace and vnyte

> Conforme thy selfe / [and] thinke on this se[n]tence
> Where soeuer thou holde resydence
> Among wolues / be woluysshe of corage
> A lyon with lyons / a lambe for innocence
> And lyke the audience so vtter thy langage (fol. F5v).

The poem continues to give advice on shaping one's discourse to suit the audience, when a shift occurs in the eighth stanza and Christian virtue is brought to the reader's mind: "Among all these I counsayle yet take hede / Where thou abydest or rest in any place / In chefe loue god [and] w[ith] thy loue haue drede / And be fearfull agayne hym to trespace" (F5v). This advice would seem to contradict all of the advice given heretofore: if one loves and dreads God above all things, how can he become a wolf among wolves, a glutton among gluttons, a drunkard among drunks? The poem then gets even more complex, relating the story of Diogenes and Alexander the Great as an example of the virtue of poverty, a virtue that presumably does not sit well with those seeking worldly success. The final stanza exhorts the reader to turn to Christ in language that seems opposed entirely to the beginning of the poem:

> Of hole entente / pray we to Christ Iesu
> To quicke a figure in our conscience
> Reason as heed / with members of virtue
> Afore rehersed / brefely in sentence
> Under supporte of his magnificence
> Christ so list gouern o[ur] worldly pilgrimage
> Bitwene vice and virtue to sette a differe[n]ce
> To his pleasure to vtter our langage (fol. F6r).

Christ governs our worldly pilgrimage by differentiating between virtue and vice; this seems to contradict utterly the advice given at the beginning of these proverbs, and perhaps argues against reading this work as a unified whole rather than a collection of

sometimes contradictory advice. One feature, however, complicates such a reading, and that is the prominent place of language in the poem. The last word of every stanza is "language", and what the reader finds in the poem is a catalogue of ways in which humans can use language: language can be used for profit or for sanctification, a morally neutral medium subject to human choice. Recognizing the moral ambiguities of language, however, does not dispel any notion of moral uses of it: the poem clearly exhorts the reader to a use of language consonant with Christian morality. But this exhortation does not diminish the fact that language can be used contrary to good.

In this way, *Lydgate's Proverbs* may serve as a perfect complement to *The House of Fame*; Fame is carried by language, language that is all too often untrustworthy and mutable. Without denying the problems and complexities of Fame, Language, and Love, Pynson's edition has attempted to bring some kind of stance together by pairing thematically related pieces. Having gone through the confusions of the Fame, the difficulties and pains of love, and the tribulations of fortune, the reader is ultimately exhorted to a life of Christian virtue as a way of finding unity and meaning in the chaos of human life. To a reader who delights in paradox and ambiguity, this reading may seem highly unsatisfying; to a reader seeking a principle on which to act, however, the reading given by Pynson's edition makes sense of some of the most vexing Chaucerian works, giving them a fixed, moral meaning consonant with the view of Chaucer as a noble, moral author.

This analysis of Pynson's edition further helps to explain the woodcut that begins it. Without some knowledge of the contents of the edition and the tensions and resolutions posed by the poems, it would be hard to understand the relationship between this woodcut and Chaucer's poetry. The woodcuts given before *The Parliament of Fowles*, *La Bell Dame Sans Merci*¸ *The Complaynt of Mary Magdalene*, and *The Letter of Dido to Eneas* are all clearly appropriate to their contents. The picture on the title-page of this edition is not so clearly appropriate: it shows a queen standing on a seven-headed Apocalyptic beast, holding squares over two opposing armies.[13] Stars appear over the squares. The army on the queen's left shows clearly a knight, a king, and an anthropomorphic lion. This lion is thrusting a spear at the opposing army, specifically at another anthropomorphic beast (perhaps a dog); the army on the queen's left is also shows a knight and a nobleman. The border of this woodcut is floral and avian, as well

[13] Gillespie interprets this woodcut as representing Fame as depicted by Chaucer: "in the 1526 *House of Fame*, all of these texts follow a single, controlling image, a unique title-page woodcut that depicts Fame as she appears in Chaucer's *House of Fame*: a queen who adjudicates literary endeavours She holds two banners beneath the 'sterres seven' that light her court on which are lozenges—the distinctive form of escutcheons bearing the heraldic insignia of unmarried noble or armigerous gentlewomen" (Gillespie, 129). She gives as her basis for this interpretation lines 1374-1376 of *The House of Fame*; Pynson's edition gives these lines thus: "That with her fete she therthe reyght, / And with her heed she touched heuyn, / There as shyneth the starres seuyn" (fol. B3v). While seven stars *do* appear over the squares held by the queen, I fail to see how the scene depicted is in the woodcut is unequivocally related to this scene. Gillespie notes that this woodcut is "unique": it is not recycled from another book. If it were simply a depiction of Fame as described by Chaucer, why would it have "Fame" standing on the seven-headed beast of the apocalypse, holding her "lozenges" over two opposing armies? Classical authors who treated war, such as Homer and Virgil, are mentioned in Fame's pillars of canonized authors, but St. John's Apocalypse is not listed among them. Gillespie link the Apocalypse to Fame through what Pynson gives as the description of Fame's eyes: "For as fell eyen had she / As fethers vpon foules be / Or weren on the beestes four / That goddess trone can honour / As writeth Iohan in the apocalyps" (fol. B3v). Gillespie does not, however, cite these lines, and even if she did it would still make the woodcut problematic: it is one thing to link Fame's eyes with the Four Beasts of the Apocalypse; it is another to depict her riding on a Seven-Headed Dragon. Even if one accepts that the queen in the woodcut is Fame—not an unreasonable one, given the contents of this anthology—one cannot say that this picture is a simple depiction of Chaucer's text.

as Christological: the bottom border shows the same pelican / cross / phoenix composition found on the title-page of Pynson's 1526 *Canterbury Tales*.

Most people would be at a loss to say what this picture has to do with *The House of Fame*; having considered the contents of the edition as a whole, however, its logic becomes somewhat clear. The presence of the beast of the apocalypse suggests that the battle depicted is between good and evil; though ambiguous, it is probable that "good" is on the queen's right: in addition to not being "sinister" the animal on the right is a lion, an animal most often linked to good. Pynson's *House of Fame* anthology constantly highlights the moral dimension of human life: humans can choose between good and evil, virtue and vice, and our ultimate happiness depends on this choice. Despite the importance of this conflict, identifying what is truly good may be difficult, as *The House of Fame* shows. The fact that the queen in the woodcut holds identical squares (possibly *books*) over the opposing armies depicts visually this difficulty. What Chaucer provides, according to this edition, is some kind of clarity: Chaucerian works in this edition work together to exhort the reader to Christian virtue.[14] Complex and beautiful, the Pynson *House of Fame* thus serves to promote the vision of Chaucer as a poet of moral *sentence* while recognizing the generic diversity and complexities of Chaucerian works.

Woodcuts continue to shape the argument in Pynson's edition of *Troilus and Criseyde*, printed around 1526 (STC 5096). These woodcuts are perhaps the most

[14] Boffey also notes a moralizing "flavor" in this edition: "That Pynson should have regarded two of Chaucer's own dream visions as morally instructive is perhaps surprising to modern critical understanding, which seeks to highlight in them a characteristic abstention from didactic commitment. The distinctive flavor of Pynson's anthology serves as a useful reminder of the virtues which a near-contemporary audience might perceive in Chaucer's works" (Boffey, 352).

significant contribution to the character of this edition, suggesting that the love action of the story serves as a type for courtly love, while illustrating pertinent scenes from the poem. Other textual features are fairly commonplace: blackletter type, double-columned layout, and running titles that divide the poem up by book. While perhaps not as aptly chosen as those in de Worde's edition, the sequence of woodcuts both attends to the particulars of Chaucer's story while also deriving from these particulars an interpretation of courtly love that is applicable to all lovers.

The title-page begins this process by echoing de Worde's 1516 edition while announcing the editorial care to be found in this edition: "Here begynneth the boke of Troylus and Creseyde / newly printed by a trewe copye" (fol. A1r). Surrounded by conventional floral and faunal borders, the woodcut on the title-page depicts gentleman with a gentlewoman, attended by a smaller woman (perhaps a younger woman, but more likely an attendant servant). The scene takes place indoors, with a window looking out onto the countryside. As with de Worde's edition, this woodcut focuses on the meeting between the gentleman and gentlewoman, although it is not as rhetorically direct as in de Worde: none of the figures are named, and the addition of the third woman rather detracts from the overall effect. Still, this woodcut serves to focus the reader's attention on the relation between Troilus and Criseyde, as well as make the semantic leap from the particulars of the story to the general application of its principles: even more than in the de Worde edition, the figures on this title page could represent *any* pair of lovers.

The second woodcut, given before the prologue of the second book (fol. B2r), continues this trend of generic representation of themes without clear reference to the particulars of the Troilus story. In this scene, the reader finds a gentleman and gentlewoman together; the man is holding the woman by the hand and is stepping towards her as to embrace her. An attendant lady behind the gentlewoman looks off to the side, presumably keeping watch for the lovers. The gentleman also has a male attendant behind him, who looks on the lovers. This scene takes place indoors: the floors are tiled in a checkered pattern, there are several windows, and behind the lovers is a small table (or altar) on which sit two candles. As with the initial woodcut, the particulars of this scene are less important than the action depicted: with the help of friends, the lovers meet. The fact that they need a "lookout" suggests that this tryst has a sense of secrecy, making it a good thematic parallel for Book 2, in which Troilus and Criseyde's love for one another grows with the help of Pandarus, but remains a secret from the rest of the Trojan court.

The woodcut that precedes Book 3 (fol. D2v) does have some relation to the particulars of Chaucer's story: Book 3 finds Troilus "sick" in bed for love of Crisedye, and the woodcut does depict a person in bed. The woodcut, however, shows the invalid attended by a female servant, who appears to be gesturing towards the next room, in which we find two other women. One of these women carries a small jar in her hand, while the other holds up three banners. An open chest sits on the floor beside them. While one could conjecture that the two women are allegorical representations or

symbols, the scene itself rather too ambiguous to suggest a single, unequivocal reading. In point of fact, Pynson's printing house may have chosen it purely for its iconic value in suggesting a sick Troilus, regardless of the semantic ambiguities aroused by the women in the next room. Whatever the explanation for the origin of this woodcut in this edition, it further challenges the reader to approach the story in terms of general themes, rather than particulars.

As with the former woodcut, before the Prologue of Book 4, the reader is presented with a woodcut that suggests some connection with particulars of the story, but nevertheless functions more iconically than eichastically. In this picture (fol. F4r), a man with a letter is led into a city by a man dressed to suggest a Turk: he has a turban on his head and a scimitar at his side. The central Turk is attended by another man in fine garb, and the man bearing the letter has three clerics behind him. The scene takes place in a piazza of a city: the company is just inside the gate (a portcullis is visible), with buildings all about and a central fountain. Just inside a doorway to the left of the scene, a man appears to be furtively observing the action in the square. As in the previous woodcuts, the action of Book 4 is suggested: a reader could easily see in this scene a Grecian embassy being received by Trojans, Troy being in modern Turkey. The spying figure could be read as Troilus: observing the tragic reversal, yet not showing his reaction openly: "This Troylus was present in the place / Whan asked was for Anthenore Creseyde / For whiche full sone changed he his face / As he that with tho wordes full nygh deyde / But nethelesse he no worde to it seyde" (fol. F5r). As with the other woodcuts, however,

such a reading asks much of the reader: the reader is to draw pertinent ties between a scene that gestures towards the action of Book 4 without having anything *specifically* to do with it—one must practice eisegesis and read much meaning into the picture. Still, thematically, the picture focuses the reader's attention on a clearly pivotal moment in the story: an outsider coming into the city, being greeted civilly, observed with apprehension by one of the city's residents.

The final woodcut presented by Pynson's press is found on H5r, immediately before the prologue of Book 5. This scene depicts a woman kneeling before a gentleman at the gate of a city: the man appears clearly to disdain her, his face turned away and his hands up before him. The woman is attended by three men: one on horseback (with holding the reins of the lady's horse), two standing behind her and gesturing towards her in a pleading manner. The reader would look in vain to find this scene in Book 5, though the thematic assonance is highly appropriate: Criseyde tries to excuse her actions with Diomede and Troilus rejects her.[15] The woodcut serves to focus the reader's attention on Criseyde's penitence: the woman in the picture is supplicating herself before the gentlemen, and her attendants seem to be beseeching the gentleman on her behalf. The lady of the woodcut appears to be clearly a pitiable figure, making a visual argument for a more lenient reading of Criseyde's character: while Chaucer's Criseyde never sees Troilus again after leaving for the Greek camp, Pynson shows the reader what such a reunion might look like, Criseyde begging forgiveness from a scornful Troilus. How

[15] This scene may, of course, be found in Henrickson's *Testament of Cressida*.

much this surprisingly feminist portrayal reflects directly on Pynson is, of course, debatable: all of the woodcuts in this edition appear to have been chosen based on loose thematic connections rather than direct relations to plot and character. Still, the final woodcut presents a major interpretive question to the reader: how, in the end, is one to judge Criseyde? Is she merely an instance of the inconstancy of women, or is she a more pitiable character? Pynson's edition seems to suggest the latter.

The 1526 Pynson woodcuts thus move the reader to grapple with two major questions in *Troilus and Criseyde*: the applicability of the story to other loves and the judgment of the characters of Chaucer's lovers. The ambiguity and sometimes tenuous connections between the woodcuts and the text leads to the former; the specific choice of the final woodcut—and the absence of clearly misogynistic scenes—to the latter. The Pynson edition focuses readers on broad thematic elements of the story, but leaves open the answers to the questions raised: the edition engages readers and challenges them, but does not offer easy answers.

The final Chaucerian edition to be printed by Wykyn de Worde's press is his 1530 *The assemble of foules* (though the running title at the bottom of B1r is "The p[ar] of fou") (STC 5092). The edition is clearly attributed to de Worde on the final page: "Imprynted in London in flete street at the sygne of the Soune agaynste the condyte by me Wynkyn de Worde. The xxiiij.day of January in the yere of our lorde M.CCCCC.[and].xxx" (fol. B6v). Two of the most significant additions to this edition, however, are a prologue and epilogue attributed to Robert Copland, de Worde's assistant;

given this fact, it is possible that Copland was the printer behind this edition.[16] Furthermore, paraphs are employed in this edition to guide readers' attention actively. In these respects, this last Chaucerian edition to come from the de Worde press harkens back to the overt shaping of the text found in the 1517 *Troilus and Criseyde*, but without the subtlety of the former.

The title-page for this edition presents the title in a scroll—"The assemble of foules"—followed by an incipit: "Here foloweth the assemble of foules veray pleasaunt and compendious to rede or here compiled by the preclared and famous clerke Geffray Chaucer" (fol. A1r). This incipit makes an explicit claim for literary value: this work is "pleasaunt and compendious": although short, the work contains literary enjoyment as well as sound teaching: the latter adjective particularly makes the claim that Chaucer compresses many things into a short space. While this adjective is apt for a work that displays such generic variety, it also hints at the educational value of the work: a reader will receive high profit from so brief a work. As to "preclared", the *Oxford English Dictionary* lists this title-page as the sole example of this word in English; through it, Chaucer is said to be brightly shining, an appropriate companion for "famous".[17] The literary value of both the work and the author is thus heralded from the start. The woodcut below this incipit is fitting in a typical de Wordian manner: it shows a scholar at

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[16]See Duff: "The real fact seems to be that [Copland's] press was largely employed by W. de Worde, and just as in the case of John Skot, he printed many books which appeared with De Worde's imprint and mark" (Duff, *Printers*, 32-33).

[17] *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Online edition, accessed through WRLC: http://dictionary.oed.com.proxycu.wrlc.org/cgi/entry/50186562?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=preclared&first=1&max_to_show=10 (last accessed April 5, 2010).

his reading-desk, turned away from his book with his head resting on his hand. The scholar's study is littered with books, and his ink-horn and quill are clearly resting on his desk. His melancholic turn away from books is an excellent depiction of the narrator of *The Parliament of Fowles*, a man powerfully affected by love, but who has gained all of his knowledge of love from books: "For all be that I knowe not loue in dede / Ne wote how he quyteth folke theyr hyre / Yet happeth me in bokes ofte to rede / Of his miracles and of his cruell yre" (fol. A2r). From the very beginning, then, de Worde's edition actively engages the reader, heralding the literary value of the work, the excellence of the author, and the character of the narrator.

Before launching into Chaucer's poem, however, we find the poem of someone else: "Roberte Coplande boke printer to new fanglers" (fol. A1v). This poem advertises Chaucer's poem on explicitly moral grounds, with the implication that the state of English letters is precarious without Chaucer's continued influence. The poem opens like a town crier, proclaiming the work the reader will find on the successive pages:

> Newes/newes/newes/haue ye ony newes
> Myn eers ake / to here. you call and crye
> Ben bokes made with whystelynge and whewes
> Ben there not yet ynow to your fantasye
> In fayth nay I trow and yet haue ye dayly
> Of maters sadde / and eke of apes and oules
> But yet for your pleasure/ thus moch do wyll I
> As to lette you here the parlament of foules (fol. A2v)

Beginning with the language of the marketplace, Copland announces that this work will be presented to readers for their listening pleasure—they have had too much of sad stories—to fulfill their imaginations, left bare by works made of pointless air,

"whystelynge and whewe". Copland continues with an elegy for Chaucer and his successors:

> Chaucer is deed the whiche this pamphlete wrate
> So ben his heyres in all suche besynesse
> And gone is also the famous clerke Lydgate
> And so is yonge Hawes / god theyr soules adresse
> Many were the volumes [tha]t they made more [and] lesse
> Theyr bokes ye lay vp / tyll that the lether moules
> But yet for your myndes this boke I wyll impresse
> That is in tytule the parlyament of foules (fol. A2v)

Not only does Copland canonize the late Stephen Hawes beside Lydgate as an "heir" of Chaucer, he gives a rather ambiguous take on the value of their products: readers are to "lay up" these books until their leather covers are consumed by mold, but the current *Parliament of Fowles* has been printed for the good of their minds. On the one hand, this gesture is clearly a sales ploy: rather than buying the works of Hawes and Lydgate, the savvy reader would do well to purchase the current book; on the other, it does make a claim about the superiority of Chaucer to two of his most prominent imitators heretofore. That a master would be superior to his students is not an unusual claim: what is unusual is the implication of the severity of the difference in value between Chaucer and his pupils.

Copland continues by suggesting that the difference between Chaucer on the one hand and Lydgate and Hawes on the other rests in the question of the moral value of the works:

> So many lerned at leest they say they be
> Was neuer sene / doynge so fewe good werkes
> Where is the tyme that they do spende trowe ye

> In prayers? Ye / where? in feldes and parkes
> Ye but where be bycomen all the clerkes?
> In slouthe and ydlenesse theyr tyme defoules
> For lacke of wrytynge / conteynynge morall sperkes
> I must imprynt the parlament of foules (fol. A2v)

Copland states a moral imperative for printing *The Parliament of Fowles*: the fact that so many clerics have stopped writing morally valuable works, no doubt the result of their slothful, idle lives bereft of prayer. This rhetorical move is highly significant: by the time of this printing, Henry VIII was already seeking an annulment from Catherine of Aragon and the so-called "Reformation Parliament" of the prior year had already set into motion legal reforms against religious orders in England. Chaucer is thus not merely presented as an author whose works are personally valuable: in this prologue, we find the first printed suggestion of Chaucer as a Reformation poet, with his works presented as an antidote to corruptions in the clergy. The fact that this version of Chaucer should be first found in a work like *The Parliament of Fowles* is rather surprising: as we shall see, his critiques of corrupt clergy in *The Canterbury Tales* are much fitter evidence for this use of his poetry. By linking *The Parliament of Fowles* with social and ecclesiastical Reformation, the 1530 de Worde edition thus moralizes and politicizes what is perhaps one of Chaucer's *least* moralistic and political works.

Copland finishes his introductory poem with a rather alarmist call to buy this particular Chaucerian work:

> Dytees / and letters them can I make my selfe
> Of suche ynowe ben dayly to me brought
> Olde morall bokes stonde styll vpon the shelfe
> I am in fere they wyll neuer be bought

> Tryfles and toyes they ben the thynges so sought
> Theyr wyttes tryndle lyke these flemyshe boules
> Yet gentyll clerkes folowe hym ye ought
> That dyd endyte the parlyament of foules. (fol. A2v)

Proving that people of letters complain of the decline of taste in every age, Copland notes that even a printer like Copland can copy the "ditties" that are now popular, "trifles and toys" that tumble the wits of audiences like balls in a bowling game ("flemyshe boules"). The only way to save the state of English letters is to follow Chaucer—"hym . . . that dyd endyte the parlyament of foules"—by buying and reading this book. As a marketing ploy, Copland's poem serves its purpose of scaring readers concerned with the state of English morals to buy the books; as a statement of literary value, it unequivocally focuses the reader's attention on the moral lessons to be gleaned in this work; true, Copland presents the poem as an example of reading pleasure, but the point is clear: Chaucer is the road to moral reformation of the individual and society.

In the actual text of *The Parliament of Fowles*, paraphs serve to divide the text for readers, suggesting which portions of the text are most significant. The lone ornamental capital comes at the very beginning of the poem, but it is aptly chosen, depicting a man's head on the right side of the letter "T" and a bird on the left. The choice of opening the work with a portrait of the narrator on the title page becomes all the more striking with this capital letter: in this capital the reader sees the avian inhabitant of *The Parliament of*

Fowles, and presumably birds—as in the case of Rastell's edition—would have been a more appropriate opening image for this poem.[18]

The edition focuses the reader relentlessly on the more sage and serious aspects of this poem, as seen in the paraphs deployed to mark textual divisions. These divisions are perhaps subtle: paraphs simply proceed the first line of 20 different stanzas; no glosses or stronger breaks divide the poem. These paraphs, however, appear in clusters that call the reader's attention to specific parts of the poem. The first cluster appears on fol. A2v-A3r, marking stanzas that recount Macrobius' *Somnium Scipionis*:

> ¶Than tolde he hym that fro a sterry place
> ¶Than shewed he hym the lytell erthe that here is
> ¶Than bade he hym se the erthe that is so lyte
> ¶Than prayed he Cypyon to tell hym all
> ¶But brekers of ehe [sic] lawe sothe for to sayne

In these stanzas (there is one unparaphed stanza between the first paraphed stanza and the second, the last stanza on fol. A2v), the reader is told to mark the stoic vision of human life: affairs on the earth are trifling when seen from a heavenly perspective, and virtue is the only action worth pursuing.

The second cluster of stanzas is found on fol. A4v and fol. A5r, when the dreamer enters the *locus amoenus* through the gates and takes stock of his surroundings:

> ¶These verses of golde and blacke ywryten were

[18] Gillespie also mentions that this woodcut depicts the narrator, but quickly suggests a different reading: "[The picture] appears to be a visual realization of Chaucer's clerkly self-representation within his text. However, given the scholar's gloomy and rather disengaged pose, the woodcut may also be meant to depict the sixteenth-century book producer whose verses of complaint open the book. Author and book producer will *together* give value to a work by sorting the 'olde . . . book', a 'preclared and famous' one, from new-fangled 'tryfles and toyes'" (Gillespie, 123). Given the fact that the narrator of this poem is a clerkly lover distraught in melancholy, I find the latter suggestion rather unnecessary.

¶Ryght as bytwene Adamantes two
¶And sayd it standeth wryten in thy face
¶But nethles all though thou be dull (fol. A4v)
¶And with that my hande in his he toke anone
¶The bylder oke and eke the hardy asshe
¶A garden sawe I full of blosomed bowis
¶On euery bough the byrdes herde I synge (fol. A5r)

This section seems clearly worthy of note: Scipio takes the dreamer through the gate and into the place in which the main action of the poem will occur. One particular feature of this dreamscape receives particular note through paraphs a few pages later: the contents of the Temple of Brass:

¶The god Pryapus sawe I as I wente
¶And in preuy corner in dysporte
¶Her gylte heers with a golde threed
¶The place gaue a thousande sauoures swote (fol. A6v)

One need only recall Caxton's *Temple of Brass* anthology to see the moral implications of this editorial highlight: the Temple of Brass shows clearly the many hazards of love. Though the remainder of the poem is concerned with the choice of the formel and the happy mating of the birds, at this point the dreamer encounters the unhappy consequences of love poorly chosen. This highlight fits the overtly moral character of the edition announced from the beginning.

Significantly, only two other paraphs are used in the remainder of this edition: a paraph introduces the catalogue of birds: "¶The crane the geaunte with his trompes sewne" (fol. A8r), and the French motto at the very end is paraphed: "¶Que bien ayme atard oblye" (fol. B6r). The reader is nudged when the story shifts to the parliament itself, but the debate of the birds, the action of the parliament itself, is presented without

any paraphed sections. The paraphs thus function as reminders to readers (and by extension auditors) that the *Parliament* does contain serious moral passages, amidst the more delightful avian argument at the center of the poem.

The edition ends with a Latin flourish and a final envoy from Copland, further suggesting both prestige and moral interpretation. De Worde is savvy enough to give the explicit in both Latin and English for those readers who are illiterate in Latin: "¶Explicit tractatus de congregatione volucrum die sancte Ualentini. / ¶Thus endeth the congregacyon of foules on saynt Ualentynes day" (fol. B6r). The explicit ennobles Chaucer in Latin by calling the poem a "treatise" ("tractatus"); as seen in other Tudor editions, this move is not unusual. What is unusual is the insertion of yet another title for this work: the edition begins by calling the piece "The assemble of fowles"; a running title shows it to be "the parliament of fowles", and now at the end it is entitled "the congregacyon of foules". Though these titles may have small semantic difference—"assembly", "parliament", and "congregation" convey similar meanings—the shift may serve to illustrate how the character of this edition is focused firmly on moral *sentence*: so long as the moral value of the poem is made clear to the reader, the actual words used are of secondary importance. While *res* do stand behind *verba*, it would seem odd to give little attention to the words of a poem: although Chaucer may be "preclared" in the

introduction of this edition, any consideration for the actual title of the work is secondary.[19]

As this edition began with Copland so it ends with him in an envoy that reiterates the importance of moral sentence in the work and overtly tells the reader how to interpret the work. The first stanza lays out the plight of Chaucerian letters in no uncertain terms:

> LAyde vpon a shelfe / in leues all totorne
> With letters dymme / almost defaced clene
> Thy hyllynge rotte / with wormes all to worne
> Thou lay / that pyte it was to sene
> Bounde with olde quayres / for aege all hoore [and] grene
> Thy mater endormed /for lacke of thy presence
> But nowe thou arte losed / go shewe forth thy sente[n]ce (fol. B6v)

Though twenty-first-century textual critics may deny the claim, Copland's account of Chaucer in manuscript form is a sorry tale indeed: in manuscript, Chaucer's works are trapped, rotting, and decaying; it is only now that they are printed that their "sentence" shows forth. This stanza clearly casts Chaucerian printing as a process of recovering sound principles from the glorious past; no mention of pleasure or playfulness is found in these lines. Copland does continue with a note on Chaucer's language, but one that reflects more on the printer than the poet:

> And where thou become so ordre thy language
> That in excuse thy prynter loke thou haue
> Whiche hathe the kepte frome ruynous domage
> In snowes wyte paper / thy mater for to saue
> With thylke same langage that Chaucer to the gaue

[19] Insofar as the work is titled by Chaucer himself—"the Parlement of Foules" in *The Legend of Good Women* (F 419) and *the book of Seint Valentynes day of the Parlement of Briddes* in his "Retraction" (Ret. X.1086)—this inconsistency seem inexcusable. *The Legend of Good Women* and the "Retraction" may not, of course, have been consulted by Copland. Even simply for the purposes of presenting a work to the public, however, this switching of titles appears to be a rather overt inconsistency.

> In termes olde / of sentence clered newe
> Tha[n] methe moche sweter / who ca[n] his my[n]de auewe (fol. B6v)

The printer is the savior of Chaucer's poetry: it was he who kept Chaucer's language from death and, furthermore, clarified the sentence found in those "termes olde" for the benefit of Tudor audiences. This last claim may be rather hyperbolic: this edition has no textual apparatus for disambiguating obsolete terms. As we have seen, however, the edition *does* focus the reader on the "sentence" of the poem: even if the language remains murky for audiences in 1530, the "moral" of the story has at least been uncovered.

The final stanza of Copland's envoy makes direct reference to what readers should take from the story, and reiterates the main theme of the work, love:

> And yf a louer happen on the to rede
> Let be the goos with his lewde sentence
> Unto the turtle and not to her to take hede
> For who so chaungeth / true loue dothe offence
> Loue as I rede is floure of excellence
> And loue also is rote of wretchednesse
> Thus be two loues / scryture bereth wytnesse. (fol. B6v)

As though it were not clear from the text of the poem itself, Copland reminds the reader not to love like the lecherous goose, but to remain faithful in love like the turtledove. The ambiguous nature of love—"floure of excellence" on the one hand, "rote of wretchednesse" on the other—has already been highlighted in this edition through paraphs highlighting Scipio's dream, the Gates of the dreamscape, and the Temple of Brass. Finally, Copland gives Chaucer additional *auctoritas* by noting, rather unnecessarily, that Scripture itself reveals the nature of these two kinds of love.

Chaucer's *Parliament* thus begins and ends with the frame of Copland, who relentlessly drives the reader to focus on the moral sensibilities of the poem.

De Worde and Copland's *Assemble of Fowles* is the last authentic work of Chaucer to be published during the English Renaissance in its own edition: the *Complete Works* came two years after its printing. The editorial apparatus surrounding the work is strongly present, shaping the character of the text and how said text is presented to be read. One kind of Chaucerian work continued to circulate in single-work editions even after the advent of the Thynne folio: the apocryphal, Protestant "Canterbury Tale". Both *The Ploughman's Tale* and *Jack Upland* survive in single-work editions, and as such it is fitting that they be treated here as remnants of the incunabular printing tradition of Chaucerian works in the early Tudor era.

Thomas Godfray's edition of *The Ploughman's Tale* from around 1535 (STC 5099.5) survives in a unique copy: the first four leaves are missing, and hand-written leaves (in italic script; thus most likely after the mid-seventeenth century) has been provided to give the poem's opening.[20] The poem itself is a faux *Canterbury Tale*, giving the Plowman's account of the Griffon vs. the Pelican, which is clearly a debate between Papists and Lollards.[21] Godfray's text is printed in blackletter, single-columned, with fairly consistent editorial insertions. Not only are speakers noted with marginal glosses—"Narratio", "Gryffon", "Pellycan", and "Plowman"—but Latin glosses appear

[20] Godfray also printed Thynne's 1532 edition of the *Complete Works*.
[21] See Andrew N. Wawn, "The Genesis of the Plowman's Tale," *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol. 2 (1972): 21-40. Wawn argues that the tale itself is contemporaneous to Chaucer's authentic poems, but acquires sixteenth-century Protestant interpolations.

throughout noting Biblical support for anticlerical complaints. Take, for example, the marginal gloss on the following stanza:

> Who sayth that some of hem may synne
> He shalbe done to be deed
> Some of hem woll gladly wynne
> All ayenst that / whiche god forbade
> All holyest they clepen her heed
> That of her rule is regall
> Alas that euer they eten breed
> For all such flashed woll foule fall
> [Gloss: In vestimentis ouium intri[n]secus autem sunt lupi rapaces]
> (fol. A4r)

If the clerical hypocrisy criticized in this stanza is not clear enough, Godfray has taken the liberty of including Matthew 7:15 from the Biblia Sacra Vulgata as support.[22] Biblical citations appear regularly in this edition, and all of them presume learning on the part of the reader: none of the scriptural passages are cited by book, chapter, or verse, and all are given in the Vulgate, rather than in English paraphrase. The work is clearly a learned polemic against the Church of Rome, and while a direct Chaucerian attribution does not survive in the current book-copy, the closing stanzas display characteristically Chaucerian dissembling over the meaning of this debate between a Gryphon, Pelican, and Plowman over the Church and her corrupt clergy:

> Wyteth the Pellycane and nat me
> For herof I nyll nat auowe
> In hye ne in lowe / ne in do degre
> But as a fable take it ye mowe
> To holy churche I wyll me bowe
> Eche man to amend him Christ sende space

[22]" [Beware of false prophets, who come to you] in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves," Douay-Rheims translation.

> And for my writynge me alowe
> He that is almighty for his grace (fol. D4v)

The narrator notes that this tale is merely a "fable" and readers are to take it as such. Still, the criticism of the corrupt clergy is persistent and serious, supported as it is by editorially-provided Biblical glosses, glosses that could only be read and interpreted by a learned reader. The reader who could read and understand this edition could not miss the Chaucerian form and tone of the piece, even if the attribution were ambiguous in the original printing.

Chaucerian attribution in Nicolson and Gough's *Jack Upland* from around 1536 (STC 5098) is rather more overt; the title-page for the work reads: "Jack vp Lande Compyled by the famous Geoffrey Chaucer. Ezechielis. xiii. Wo be vnto you [. . .] that dishonor me to me people for an handful of barley [and] for a pece of bread. Cum priuilegio Regali" (fol. A1r).[23] Not only is Chaucer named overtly as the "complier" of the work, but Biblical justification for such a project is given in Tyndale's 1527 English translation: the Protestant character of this work is unmistakable. Though unnamed, the English reformer joins Chaucer on the title-page, making an argument for the continuity between the two. The title-page border is given in a neoclassical manner, with satyrs and cherubs encircling the title. Unmistakable at the bottom of the page are the arms of King Henry VIII: the Protestant polemical work is overtly linked to Chaucer, Tyndale, and Henry, giving an unequivocal reading of Chaucer's religious *sentence*.

[23] The book-copy consulted further includes an engraving of Chaucer on the page facing the title-page, though it is from the eighteenth century.

The actual text of *Jack Upland* is fairly tedious reading: it is a prose tract posing a series of rhetorical question attacking the practices of mendicant religious orders.[24] To the curious reader, the argument of the piece is given by a gloss before the prologue: "These be[n] the lewed questions of Freres rytes and obseruaunces the which they chargen more than Goddes lawe, and therefore men shulden not gyue hem what so they beggen, tyll they hadden answered and clerely assoyled these questions" (fol. A1v). In point of fact, *Jack Upland* is an apologetics tract to be used by conscientious Protestants against the claims of friars. The late 1530's saw the beginnings of the dissolution of the monasteries in England; *Jack Upland* provided "Chaucerian" reasons for such a shift to occur.

Although the Chaucerian attribution and rhetorical purpose are clear, the work itself strikes an alert reader as being clearly un-Chaucerian. The narrator of the work begins with a prologue in which he establishes Jack Upland as his narrative persona: "Jack vplande make my mone to very god and to all true beleuynge in Chryst [tha]t Antichryst and his disciples by colour of holines walkyn and deceauen Chrystes church by many fals figures, where through by Antichrist [and] his, many vertues bene transposed to vyces" (fol. A1v). The narrative "I"—presumably, in the rhetoric of this edition, Chaucer himself—does not dissemble as in *The Ploughman's Tale*; here the reader is told clearly that Upland is a mere mouthpiece for the *sentence* of the author, a move readers of Chaucer do not find anywhere else. Hot Protestant readers persistent

[24] P.L. Heyworth demonstrates that the printing of *Jack Upland* coincided specifically with a campaign to print anti-Catholic works, such as Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*. P.L. Heyworth, "The Earliest Black-Letter Editions of 'Jack Upland'," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 30.4 (1967): 307-314.

enough to read through all of the charges leveled at friars would find an overt exhortation to use the material in this book for religious controversies:

> Go now forth [and] fraye[n] youre clerkes, and ground ye in goddess lawe and geue Jack answere, and when ye han assoiled me that I haue sayde sadly in treuth I shall soyll the of thyne order, and saue the to heauen. If freres cunne not or mow not excuse him of these questions asked of hem, it semeth that they be horrible gylty against god, and her euen christen, for which gyltes and defautes it were worthy that the order [tha]t they calle her order were fordone. And it is wonder [tha]t men susteyne he[m] or suffre he[m] lyue in suche maner. For holy wryte biddeth [tha]t thou do well to the meke, and geue not to [th]e wicked but forbid to geue hem bread leste they be made therby mightier through you. (fol. B8r-B8v)

Chaucer did send forth his "little boke" in *Troilus and Criseyde*, but he never before sent the *reader* forth to do battle with corrupt friars in order to turn them from their corrupt orders and save their souls! The Nicolson / Gough *Jack Upland* claims Chaucer for the English Protestant fold in clear terms: even if the work itself were left aside, the Chaucerian *ethos* presented in this work—Chaucer as a fiery, indignant critic of the institution of mendicant orders—would do much to color readings of Chaucer's other works, particularly those *Canterbury Tales* that complain against clerical corruption.

As it survives, Godfray's edition of *The Plowman's Tale* from the mid-1530's lacks a clear attribution to Chaucer; Hyll's edition from around 1548 (STC 5100) makes up for Godfray's lack in magnificently overt terms, crying out on the title-page: "The Plouumans tale compylled by syr Geffray Chaucer knyght" (fol. A1r). As in the *Jack Upland* title-page, Chaucer is named as the compiler of this tale, and is further dubbed a knight by the studious printer. Textually speaking, the Hyll *Plowman's Tale* lacks the persistent Latin glosses found in Godfray, but preserves the single-columned, blackletter

format. Where Godfray, however, left the relationship between this work and Chaucer's canon ambiguous, Hyll makes the tie overt. Compare the editorial link between the Prologue and the main body of the poem:

> Godfray: Thus endeth the prologue and here foloweth the first parte of this present worke (fol. A2r)
> Hyll: Thus endeth the prologue [and] here foloweth the first parte of the tale (fol. A3r)

The shift from "present work" to "tale", in the context of Chaucerian attribution, is no small matter. More significantly, the explicit of this edition tells the reader exactly where this work fits into Chaucer's canon: "Thus endeth the boke of Chaunterburye Tales" (fol. D8r). The editorial rhetoric behind this move is clear: readers are to take *this* tale, with its overt critique of religious orders, Romish practices, and Papal power as the final word in *The Canterbury Tales*, supplanting the tract on the Sacrament of Penance that has stood as the final tale in every *Canterbury Tales* from Caxton until 1542. The Protestant *sentence* of Chaucer, suggested by Godfray and trumpeted by Nicolson, is finally ratified by Hyll in his version of the close of *The Canterbury Tales*, a close that will have profound effects on the textual character of *The Canterbury Tales* found in the *Complete Works* folios.

The final example of a Protestant Chaucerian tale printed on its own is Macham and Cooke's 1606 reprinting of *The Plough-Man's Tale* (STC 5101). Between the Hyll *Plowman's Tale* and this edition stand Speght's monumental *Complete Works* of 1598 and 1602; as such, it should not be surprising that the textual apparatus surrounding the 1606 *Plough-Man's Tale* is rather overwhelming. The title-page gives the reader any and

all information he might care to know about the contents of the work, stating clear arguments about Chaucer's beliefs: "The Plough-mans Tale. *Shewing by the doctrine and liues of* the Romish Clergie, that the Pope is Antichrist *and they his Ministers*. Written by Sir *Geffrey Chaucer*, Knight, amongst his *Canterburie* tales: and now *set out apart from the rest, with a short exposition* of the words and matters, for the capacitie *and vnderstanding of the simpler* sort of Readers" (fol. A1r). The Macham / Cooke edition directs itself overtly towards readers who lack the background necessary to understand Chaucer's English and recognize Chaucer's references, which by 1606 was an increasingly large number of readers. Both the text and the glosses are printed in Italic type; this breaks markedly with the convention of printing Chaucer's text in blackletter. The layout of the page recalls rigorously glossed Bibles from the late middle ages: the stanzas of the poem are often swallowed up by commentaries that circle around them. These persistent glosses often serve simply to translate Chaucerian language, but also give unequivocal interpretations of the text. Consider this particularly telling example from A4v: the line "Icleped lollers and londlese" is glossed:

> *Icleped*: cleped, called, *Lollers*: the true Christians which either seuered themselues from popish idolatry and abhomination, or were knowne to mislike of them, were called *Lollers*: as if they had been but weeds of the Church. If that be the deriuation of the word, it should be written with one L. *Lolers*, for *lo*, in *lolium*, is short, as appears by that verse of Virgil: *Infelix lolium & steriles dominantur auenae*. See mister *Spights* notes (fol. A4v)

This gloss, almost chosen at random, gives a good sense of the character of this work: its editorial apparatus is hyper-literate, referring the reader to etymologies, synonyms,

Classical authors, and modern editors, but with the overt interpretive claim that Lollards are "the true Christians". Chaucer's Lollard reputation is cemented and the ending explained by a particularly clever and clear gloss. For "But as a fable take it ye mowe", the editor has explained: "*As a fable*: But yee must take it as a tale. *Chaucer* declineth the enuie, and auoydeth the rage of the Popish Cleargie, for his writing thus plainly and boldly" (fol. H3v). The editor understands the playfulness and usefulness of Chaucerian narrative personae, even if this particular persona has proven not to have been invented by Chaucer. The end of this persona, however, is clear: to preach the truth of Lollard Christianity in the face of Popish Rome. But for the overtly Protestant rhetoric, the 1606 editorial apparatus resembles modern editorial notes more closely than it does the scant editorial insertions of the early Tudor era.

We have seen in these chapters how the history of Chaucer's works after Caxton is in many ways a history of ever-increasing intervention by editors, with the tendency to focus on Chaucerian moral lessons rather than Chaucerian comedy. This shift will be completed by the folio editions found in the next chapter, a shift whose fallout is seen clearly in the 1606 *Ploughman's Tale*: Chaucer's text has become dead on the page, strangled by editorial insertions that seem more calculated to demonstrate erudition than to render Chaucer accessible to the average reader. In the shaping of Chaucer by Renaissance editors, Horatian utility and Protestant polemics win out as the two most overt means of interpreting Chaucer and his works used by Chaucerian editors and printers.

Chapter 5

The Complete Works: Thynne and Stow

Having examined the editions of Chaucer before the era of *Complete Works*, and the often drastic variations that could occur in editorial presentation, it is not surprising that once editions shift to an attempt to collect complete works, that the folio *Works* editions of Chaucer should appear to be a more coherent rhetorical whole. Scholars have agreed. Thynne, Stow, and Speght are considered major editors of Chaucer; all of these editors tinkered with the text itself, making them worthy of note (or notorious) in the history of Chaucerian textual criticism.[1] In addition to garnering the notice of textual critics, historical and literary scholars have also turned their attention to the folios, often engaging in semiotic or rhetorical analysis. Kathleen Forni's work with the folios in *Chaucerian Apocrypha* stands as a major contribution to this set of editions: her conclusions—the courtly Thynne, the antifeminist Stow, the Classicist Speght—cannot so much be contradicted as furthered and refined.[2] The folios have also garnered the attention of Dane, Gillespie, and Miskimin.[3]

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[1] For treatments of the textual preparation found in Thynne, Stow, and Speght, see James E. Blodgett, "William Thynne (d. 1546)," Anne Hudson, "John Stow (1525?-1605)," and Derek Pearsall, "Thomas Speght (ca. 1550-?), " all found in *Editing Chaucer: The Great Tradition*, ed. Paul G. Ruggiers (Norman, OK: Pilgrim Books, 1984), 35-52, 53-70, 71-92.

[2] Kathleen Forni, *The Chaucerian Apocrypha: A Counterfeit Canon* (Gainsesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2001).

[3] Joseph A. Dane, *Who is Buried in Chaucer's Tomb? Studies in the Reception of Chaucer's Book* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1998); Alexandra Gillespie, *Print Culture and the Medieval Author: Chaucer, Lydgate, and Their Books, 1473-1557* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Alice Miskimin, *The Renaissance Chaucer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975). None of these scholars gives the folios as thorough a treatment as Forni: Dane examines the entire history of

There are, however, gaps in this impressive body of work. Textual, historical, and cultural critics alike have often overlooked sometimes significant variants in different prints of the same edition. These variants do not, of course, have the same rhetorical weight as the features that are preserved in all impressions and issues of a given edition, but they do add to the overall portrait of Chaucer presented; as we shall see, while remaining substantially unchanged, the Thynne edition would undergo several rhetorical shifts from 1532 to 1550. The Stow edition's two imprints show rhetorical differences whose significance have heretofore been left unnoticed. Although they are substantially the same in terms of their texts, Speght's 1598 and 1602 present sufficient differences to arouse critical interest. Insofar as Stow relied heavily on Thynne's edition both textually and rhetorically (although not exclusively so), the Thynne and Stow editions will be treated in this chapter. Due to their revolutionary nature—and debt to Spenser—the Speght editions will be treated in the next chapter. While the overall character of Chaucer in print becomes more homogenous in the folio *Complete Works* (perhaps naturally, since Stow and Speght merely added to Thynne's edition), the process of Classicization and the diminution of comedic lightness through editorial interpretation grows with each edition, reaching its zenith in the early seventeenth century.

Chaucerian reception; Gillespie ends her study with Thynne; and Miskimin interests lie primarily in the Renaissance view of the author, leading to a fairly short treatment of the editions.

Thynne's Editions

William Thynne's edition of *The workes of Geffray Chaucer newly printed, with dyuers workes neuer in print before* was first printed in 1532 by Thomas Godfray, a printer of modest output who dealt primarily with works of religious controversy (STC 5068).[4] It begins with a title-page that overtly "classicizes" Chaucer: while the title is printed in Blackletter / Textura, its border is made up of erotes on parade, with two sphinxes and a Roman bust on the top border. The reader is immediately presented with a work that is visually linked back to classical antiquity.

This initial visual resonance is developed and supported by the first item one finds in this book: Thynne's preface.[5] Thynne's preface bears close study, insofar as it ties Chaucer both to the mythological and historical origins of language and culture and to the English throne. Heretofore, we have seen introductions (Caxton's and Copeland's) that have praised Chaucer for his moral sentence and style, and it is no surprise that Thynne continues these praises. After his salutation to King Henry VIII, however, he begins his preface with a fairly weighty treatment of language and human nature:

> AMonges all other excellencyes / most gratious souerayn lord / wher w[i]t[h] almightye god hath endowed ma[n]kynde / aboue ye residue of erthly creatures / as an outward declaration of reason or resonablenesse / wherin consysteth the symylitude of man vnto aungels / and the

[4] E. Gordon Duff, *Hand-Lists of English Printers 1501-1556* (London: Printed by Blades for the Bibliographic Society, 1895), 56.

[5] Blodgett treats this preface briefly, noting that, "Thynne was prepared to accord the works of Chaucer the same respectful treatment that humanist scholars had been according to classical Greek and Latin writings since the fourteenth century, when Petrarch established the practice of collecting and collating as many manuscripts of classical works as possible" (Blodgett, 36). He does not, however, give a detailed reading of the preface. Forni gives a more detailed treatment, but focuses primarily on its tie to Henrican nationalism (Forni, 45-50).

> differe[n]ce between the same [and] brute beestes / I verayly suppose / that speche or langage is nat to be reputed amonges the smallest or inferiours. For therby is exp[re]ssed the conceit of one to another in open and playne sentence / whiche in the residue of lyuely creatures / lacketh and is nat shewed amonges them / but by certain couert and derke signes / and that in fewe thing[es] hauyng course and operation onely of nature. (fol. A2r)[6]

From the outset, Thynne meditates on "speche or langage" as that quality of human beings that positions them between angels and beasts: this faculty is tied fundamentally to human nature and human beings' place in the great chain of being.[7] From this anthropological, theological beginning, Thynne then turns to the degradation of language in Babel and the formation of a diversity of tongues:

> This speche or langage / after the confusion of tonges / sente by goddess punysshment for pride and arrogance of people / hath ben by a certayne instyncte [and] dysposytion naturall diuysed and inuented in sundry partes of the worlde / as fellowshippes or companyenges of folks one with another chaunced / moche to the outward expressing of the thing in worde or sou[n]de / according to that wherof it had meaning or signification. (fol. A2r)

Thynne's history of language recognizes the conventional quality of human speech, but does not allow this speech to be perfected until language exists in written form:

> But in processe of tyme / by diligence or policy of people / after dyuers fourmes / figures/ and impressions in metal / barkes of trees / and other mater vsed for memorie and knowledge of thyng[es] than present or passed / sondry letters or carectes were first amo[n]ges the Phenices diuysed and founde / with suche knyttynges and ioynynges of one to

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[6] This text, as usual, is taken from an electronic facsimile of the edition; for printed facsimiles, see W.W. Skeat, ed., *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and Others . . . from the copy in the British Museum* (London: Alexander Morning and Oxford University Press, 1905), and Derek S. Brewer, ed., *The Works, 1532, with Supplementary Material from the Editions of 1542, 1561, 1598, and 1602* by Geoffrey Chaucer (Menston, Yorkshire: Scolar Press, 1969).

[7] See Hebrews 2:7, "minuisti eum paulo minus ab angelis." For Renaissance and Modern considerations see Pico della Mirandola, "Oration on the Dignity of Man," *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, ed. Cassirer, Kristeller, and Randall (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1948), and Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960, original, 1930).

> another by a marueylous subtylte and crafte / as counterueyled was and is equiualent to the same languages. So as the conceite of ma[n]nes mynd / which at ye begynnyng was vsed to be declared by mouthe onely / came to such point / that it was as sensibly and viuely expressed in writynge. Hervpon ensewed a great occasion [and] corage vnto them that shulde write / to compone and adorne the rudenesse and barbariete of speche / and to forme it to an eloquent and ordinate p[er]fectyon / whervnto many and many great poet[es] and oratours haue highly employed their studies and corages / leauyng therby notable renoume of themselues / and example perpetuell to their posterite. (fol. A2r)

There are several items to note in this treatment of writing. In the first place, eloquence, the beautiful use of language, only comes into being with the advent of writing; Thynne considers poetry to be a written, rather than a spoken, endeavor. Perhaps more significantly, the purpose of poetry and rhetoric—the arts practiced by "poet[es] and oratours"—is an aesthetic and moral one: "to compone and adorne the rudenesse and barbariete of speche" that followed the confusion of tongues in Genesis 11. Eloquence—the fruit of written language—seeks to repair what was sundered by God.

Thynne inserts Chaucer into this lofty poetic project by first recounting the Renaissance project of enriching the vernacular on Greek and Latin models:

> Amonges other /the Grekes in all kyndes of scie[n]ces / semed so to preuayle and so to ornate their tonge / as yet by other of right noble languages can nat be perfitely ymitated or followed. The Latyns by example of the grekes / haue gotten or wonne to the[m] no small glorie / in the fourmynge /order/ and vttrynge of that tonge. Out of the whiche two/ if it be well sertched / that is to saye Greke and Latyn (though by corruption of speche it shulde seme moche otherwise) haue ben deryued the residue of the languages that be written with the letters or caractes of either of them bothe: But of all speeches / those whiche most approche to the latinite / be the Italyan and Spaynysshe tonges / of whom the one by corruption of the Gothes and Longobardes had her begynnynge / as latyn spoken by straungers of barbare vndersta[n]dyng / The other being also latyn was by Uandales / Gothes / Moores / Sarracenes / and other so many

> tymes blemysshed / as marueyle it is to se now vnto what p[er]fection these two formed out of the latyn and barbare speeches be reduced. Next vnto them / in symilytude to the latyn is the Frenche tonge / whiche by diligence of people of the same / is in fewe yeres passed so amended /as well in pronunciation as in writynge / that an Englysshman by a small tyme exercised in that to[n]ge hath nat lacked grou[n]d to make a gra[m]mer or rule ordinary therof. Though of trouth (whiche some shall scarsely beleue) the Germayns haue so fourmed the order of their langage / that in the same / is bothe as moche plentie and as nere concordaunce to the phrase of the latyn / as the French tong hath. And verayly / lyke as all these and the rest haue ben thus vigilant [and] studious to meliorate or amende their languages: so hath there nat lacked amo[n]ges vs Englissh men / whiche haue right well and notably endeuoyred and employed them selues / to the beautifying and bettryng of thenglysh tong (fol. A2r-A2v).

The standard by which a vernacular poet is to be judged is a Classical one: to what extent his poetry approximates Greek and Latin verse. Vernacular poetry is an act of piety towards one's own nation, but piety that is constantly compared to antiquity for its value. While romance languages have an obvious place of privilege in their proximity to Latin, even lowly Gothic languages such as German and English may be enriched (as surprising as that may be to Thynne's readers).

Thynne then inserts himself into this lofty narrative of human nature set aright by recounting his project to Henry VIII:

> ¶ Amonges whom moost excellent prynce / my moost redoubted and gracious soueraygne lorde / I your most humble vassal / subiecte and seruaunt Wylliam Thynne / chefe clerke of your kechyn / moued by a certayne inclynacion [and] zele / whiche I haue to here of any thing soundyng to the laude and honour of this your noble realme / haue taken great delectacyon / as the tymes and laysers might suffre / to rede and here the bokes of that noble [and] famous clerke Geffray Chaucer / in whose works is so manyfest comprobacion of his excellent lernyng i[n] all kyndes of doctrynes and sciences/ suche frutefulnesse in words / wel accordynge to the mater and purpose / so swete and plesaunt sentences / suche perfection in metre/ the co[m]posycion so adapted / suche

> fresshnesse of inuencion / compendyousnesse in narration / suche sensible and open style / lackyng neither maieste ne mediocrite couenable i[n] disposycion /and suche sharpnesse or quycknesse in co[n]clusyon / that it is moche to be marueyled / howe in his tyme / wha[n] doutlesse all good letters were layde a slepe throughout ye worlde / as the thynge which either by the disposycion [and] influe[n]ce of the bodies aboue / or by other ordynaunce of god / semed lyke and was in daunger to haue vtterly perysshed / suche an excellent poete in our tonge / shulde as it were (nature repugnyng) spryng and aryse (fol. A2v).

Here we find an explicit catalogue of what is to be admired in Chaucer's writing: "lernyng", "frutefulnesse in words", "sentences", "metre", "inuencion", "narration", and "style". Thynne's list leans heavily on the stylistic elements of Chaucer's works, which is only natural if Chaucer's use is argued to be primarily one of "improving" the English language. While his poetry's formal qualities may be pleasant, however, Chaucer's matter is unabashedly serious: "lernyng i[n] all kyndes of doctrynes and sciences," and his invention is to be admired for its freshness. Like Notary's *Mars and Venus* anthology, the works of Chaucer are gentlemanly reading for instruction on serious matters; Thynne's Chaucer is not allowed to treat more trifling matters when the fate of the English language and human nature is at stake.

Furthermore, Thynne goes beyond a standard Petrarchan deprecation of the middle ages to suggesting that Chaucer's perfection—and by extension the perfection of English—can only be brought to completion by the printed works of the sixteenth century:

> For though it had ben in Demosthenes or Homerus tymes / whan all lernyng and excellency of sciences florisshed amonges the Grekes / or in the season yt Cicero prince of eloque[n]ce amonges lateens lyued / yet had it ben a thing right rare [and] strau[n]ge and worthy perpetuall laude / yt

> any clerke by lernyng or wytte coulde than haue framed a tonge before so rude and imperfite / to suche a swete ornature and co[m]posycion / likely if he had lyued in these days / bei[n]g good letters so restored [and] reuyued as they be / if he were nat empeched by the enuy of suche as may tolerate nothing / whiche to vndersto[n]de their capacite doth nat exte[n]d / to haue brought it vnto a full and fynall perfection (fol. A2v).

In a single sentence, Chaucer joins the company of Demosthenes, Homer, and Cicero, with the imputation that "had he lyued in these days", in the reign of Henry VIII, when language and literature have been "so restored [and] reuyued", Chaucer would have been brought "vnto a full and fynall perfection." Thynne frames his project of printing *The Complete Works* as the project of perfecting Chaucer, and thus the English language. Like a contemporary textual critic, Thynne asserts that he has used only "very trewe copies of those works of Geffray Chaucer" (fol. A2v), and calls his work "the restauracion and bringing agayne to light of the said works / after trewe copies and exe[m]plaries aforesaid" (fol. A3r). Thynne's work is the work of the Renaissance, bringing to light what had before been lost in the dark ages of the past.[8] Just as Renaissance humanists had rediscovered masterpieces in Latin and Greek lost to Western Europe, so Thynne has "rediscovered" the "trewe" Chaucer, a Chaucer who, of course, has been read continuously since his death around 1400.[9]

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[8] See Leicester Bradner, "From Petrarch to Shakespeare," *The Renaissance* (New York: Harper, 1953), as well as William Kerrigan and Gordon Braden, *The Idea of the Renaissance* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

[9] A solid overview of the fifteenth-century poetic reception of Chaucer, see H.S. Bennet, *Chaucer and the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1947); a more recent interpretation of the fifteenth-century Chaucer in terms of the reception of readers is given by Seth Lerer, *Chaucer and His Readers: Imagining the Author in Late-Medieval England* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993).

This shift in editorial rhetoric should not be underestimated. While Caxton's 1483 *Canterbury Tales* spent time and energy asserting its veracity in using sound witnesses to produce its printed text, Caxton did not talk of his project as if he were reviving works of antiquity: after all, Chaucer died a mere twenty years or so before Caxton was born. As we have seen, Copland's preface to the 1530 de Worde *The assemble of foules* characterizes the poem's printing as a revival, but this revival is a very physical one: replacing old, moldy manuscripts with new, fresh printed books.[10] Thynne is the first printer of Chaucer to treat the poet as a fully "classical" author, a poet whose works once were lost and now, thanks to Thynne, are now restored. While Chaucer himself suggested his place among classical authors,[11] this shift in editorial rhetoric moves the reader away from estimating Chaucer primarily on the merits of his own poetry to estimating Chaucer primarily on the merits of his poetry's relations to Greek and Latin Literature. As we shall see, this shift will have a seismic impact on how Chaucer is read and imitated in the later English Renaissance: if Chaucer is an "English Homer," the necessity of imitating his works becomes less important as poets are increasingly able to imitate Homer himself.[12] The "anxiety of influence" felt by 15th-

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[10] This literal, physical level of reading does not diminish the *implication* in Copland of reviving Chaucer on a non-literal level, but Thynne makes this implication explicit.

[11] Consider *Troilus and Criseyde*, 1786-1792: "Go, litel book, go litel myn tregedie, / Ther god thy maker yet, er that he dye, / So sende might to make in som comedie! / But litel book, no making thou n'envye, / But subgit be to alle poesye; / And kis the steppes, wher-as thou seest pace / Virgile, Ovyde, Omer, Lucan, and Stace." All Chaucerian quotations taken from *The Riverside Chaucer*, Anthony Burgess, ed. (Oxford, New York, et al: Oxford University Press, 1987).

[12] Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* is a fascinating case of this confluence of "Homers", its primary sources being Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and Chapman's translation of *The Iliad*; see the preface to *Troilus and Cressida* in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, G. Blakemore Evans and J.J.M. Tobin, eds. (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1996).

century writers in the presence of Chaucer is diminished when Chaucer becomes mere a native, vernacular classical author rather than a living native English poet in the tradition of Dante and Boccaccio.[13]

Thynne closes his preface with a plea to Henry VIII that is conventional in its genre but unconventional in its rhetorical effects. Thynne pleads that Henry give his "authorite" to this most vital project of protecting English letters:

> For this cause most excellent and i[n] all vertues most prestant prince / I as humbly p[ro]strate before your kingly estate / lowly supply and beseche the same / that it wol vouchsafe to take in good parte my poore studye and desirous mynde / in reducynge vnto light this so precious and necessary an ornament of the tonge of this your realme / ouer pytous to haue ben in any point lost / falsified / or neglected: So that vnder the shylde of your most royall protection and defence it may go forthe in publyke / [and] preuayle ouer those that wolde blemysshe / deface / and in many thynges clerely abolyssh the laude / renoume / and glorie heretofore compared / and meritoriously adquired by dyuers princes / and other of this said most noble yle / whervnto nat onely straungers vnder pretext of highe lernyng [and] knowledge of their malycious and peruers myndes / but also some of your owne subiectes / blynded in foly [and] ignorance / do with great study contende. (fol. A3r)

Dedicating books to noble patrons is not, of course, anything new; the salient characteristic of this plea is the overtly military characteristic of royal patronage and the aim it takes at prior printers of Chaucer. Thynne makes Henry's belletristic patronage bellicose in its nature: Thynne's *Complete Works* are under the "shylde" of Henry and

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[13] Bennett mentions this fifteenth-century anxiety in no uncertain terms: "The two leaders of poetry in the early decades of the [fifteenth] century were Lydgate and Hoccleve, who untiringly acknowledged their indebtedness to Chaucer and their determination to follow in his footsteps. But who can draw the bow of Ulysses? Both these writers could only take over the verse-forms, the diction, and the conventions of Chaucer, and in their turn hand them on to their successors and pupils. The degradation of verse which was brought about by this progressive in-breeding can be estimated by reflecting on the implications of Hawes's profession that tries: 'To folowe the trace, and all the peerfitnes / Of my master Lydgate'" (Bennett, 125).

will "preuayle ouer those that wolde blemysshe / deface / and in many thynges clerely abolyssh the laude / renoume / and glorie heretofore compared / and meritoriously adquired by dyuers princes / and other of this said most noble yle." Who exactly, however, are these people over whom this new edition will "preuayle"? The terms "blemysshe" and "deface" are telling, as well as the fact that many of these traitors are "straungers" with supposed "highe lernyng". Thynne takes criticism of past editions to a new xenophobic high (or low) by suggesting that prior printings of Chaucer—many printed by foreign-born men like de Worde and Pynson—are flawed to the point of treason, insofar as they have caused Chaucer's fame to be diminished; a diminution of Chaucer is, according to Thynne, a diminution of England and her king. Thynne has raised the stakes of a correct edition of Chaucer to such a height that the errors of prior printers amount to sins against the king, the English language, and perhaps—following Thynne's suggestions—human nature itself.

Thynne's overt link between Chaucer and the crown—a link that will prevail throughout all of the *Complete Works* of the sixteenth century—is further solidified by the closing of his preface. Traditionally, as we have seen, printers end their Chaucerian prefaces on a note of piety, praying for Chaucer's soul or canonizing him. Thynne ends piously, but his piety is directed not at Chaucer but to the new head of the Church of England:

> Most gracious / victorious / and of god most electe and worthy prince / my most dradde soueraygne lorde / in whom of very merite / dewtie / and successyon / is renewed the glorious tytell of Defensor of the christen faithe / whiche by your noble progenytour / the great Co[n]stantyne /

> somtyme kyng of this realm / [and] emperor of Rome was nexte god and his apostels / chefely maynteyned / corroborate [sic] / and defended / almighty Jesu sende to yo[ur] highnesse the contynuall and euerlastynge habundaunce of his infinite grace. Amen. (fol. A3r)

Royal power and prerogative are writ large in Thynne's preface: Henry is a successor of Constantine, next to God and the apostles in dignity. The "Protestant Chaucer" of later *Complete Works* is already being constructed in 1532, with religious devotion transferred from the dead soul of Chaucer to the living State Church and king.

Thynne's preface therefore announces a new era of Chaucerian works: an era that will read Chaucer as a Classical author whose authority is inextricably linked to the English crown. This Chaucer is valued primarily as another Homer or Cicero: a poet who ennobles a fallen language and by so doing ennobles fallen human nature. Chaucer's value is primarily as a formal model, and the value of his poetry is primarily found in its serious sections: "excellent lernyng i[n] all kyndes of doctrynes and sciences." All of the *Complete Works* reprint this preface, meaning that for the rest of the English Renaissance (and for the seventeenth century), this is the frame found around Chaucer, the ethos that colors how he is to be read and interpreted.

Thynne follows his preface with his table of contents and table of foliation (fol. A3r-A5r). While the title-page and preface have been printed in Blackletter / Textura, this table—and most of the rest of the book—are printed in Batarde. While the subsequent shift to a Blackletter Chaucer relates to availability of continental fonts,[14] this

[14] In *Who is Buried in Chaucer's Tomb?* Dane gives two particularly helpful chapters: "Who Wrote Chaucer's Works? The Authority of [William Thynne]," 33-50 and "Toward a Typographical History of Chaucer: the Blackletter Chaucer," 51-74.

choice of Batarde links Thynne's Chaucer with the very first editions of Chaucer produced by the Caxton press: Chaucer's words are thus distinguished: the early modern English of Thynne's preface, the running titles, the incipits and explicits, and the Latin found throughout are printed in Blackletter. Even as Chaucer has been recast as a "classical" author, his words—for the present edition—still bear the *ethos* of a late medieval vernacular author.

Thynne arranges the contents of this edition to begin with works that have already been published and are popular, and lead up to the "new" works never before printed:

The Preface
The Caunterbury tales i
The Romant of the Rose ii
Troylus and Creseyde iii
The testament of Creseyde iiii
The lege[n]de of good women / wt a balade v
Boetius de Consolatione philosophie vi
The dreame of Chaucer / with a balade vii
The assemble of foules viii
The flour of Curtesy / with a balade ix
Howe pyte is deed [and] beryed in a ge[n]tyl hert x
La bele dame sauns mercy xi
Annelyda and false Arcyte xii
The assemble of Ladyes xiii
The conclusion of the Astrolabye xiiii
The complaint of the blacke knight xv
A preyse of women xvi
The house of fame xvii
The testament of Loue xviii
The lame[n]tacion of Mary Magdaleyn xix
The Remedy of loue xx
The co[m]playnt of Mars and Venus xxi
The complaynt of Mars alone xxii
The complaynt of Venus alone xxiii
The letter of Cupyde xxiiii
A balade of our Lady xxv

A balade to kyng Henry the fourth xxvi
Of the Cuckowe [and] the Nightyngale xxvii
Scogan vnto the yonge lords and gentylmen of the kynges house xxviii
A balade of good cou[n]saile by Chaucer xxiv
Dyuers other goodly balades. [et]c. xxx (fol. A3r-A5r)

This arrangement ensures that the Chaucerian works already recognized lead the reader to shorter or newer Chaucerian works. This editorial tactic is striking insofar as it appears that in the arrangement for his works Thynne simply took anthologies of minor works (produced by Caxton, de Worde, Pynson, Notary, and several manuscript copies) and appended them to the major works: *The Canterbury Tales, The Romant of the Rose, Troilus and Criseyde*, and *Boece.* Though not marked in the table, the final piece in this edition is Surgio's epitaph to Chaucer with Caxton's post obit effectively marking the finality of Thynne's collection: Chaucer is dead and gone, and this edition stands as a monument to him with the same solidity as his tomb in Westminster. Examined semiotically, this first *Complete Works* requires the reader to consider any given work of Chaucer in light of the rest of his canon (as understood to this point). As we shall see, particularly with Stow and Speght, this increasingly means reading works that a 21st-century reader would understand as "central" in the context of an increasing number of sententious works and love ballads. As the reader is presented with the whole of Chaucer, the picture of this whole colors how one reads an individual work. Indeed,

Thynne's table of foliation ensures that the interested reader may quickly navigate the sea of Chaucerian poetry, reading one work of Chaucer against the others.[15]

After the table of contents, before Thynne presents *The Canterbury Tales*, he gives the reader three dedicatory poems: *Eight goodly Questions with their Aunswers*, *To the kynges most noble grace and to the lords and knyghtes of the garter*, and *Chaucer's prophecy*. These poems corroborate the preface by giving Chaucerian verses that are sententious, patriotic, and vatic, respectively. *Eight goodly Questions* is written in a Chaucerian stanza and gives the wise answers of Greek clerks to the following questions: "what erthly thyng is best (mannes soule)"; "what thing is moost odious (a double man)"; "what is the best dower (a clene lyfe)"; "what mayde[n] may be called clene in chastyte (whiche always euery creature is shamed to lye)"; "who is a poore man (a couetouse man)"; "whiche is a ryche man (he that can to hys good suffyse)"; "who is a foole (he that wolde hurte, and hath no powere)"; and, "who is a wyse man (he that might noye and dothe no noyau[n]ce)." The poem is not explicitly attributed to Chaucer here, but the style and language clearly present the poem to the reader as a Chaucerian preface.[16] Whether or not the reader takes the poem to be an authentic work of Chaucer, the implication for the reader is clear: the following contents are to be read in order to gain wisdom and be instructed in virtue. Thynne thus reinforces the moral stature of

[15] Perhaps most striking in the table of foliation is the way in which certain *prologues* of *The Canterbury Tales* are given for easy access. The General Prologue and the prologues of the Wife of Bath, the Canon Yeoman, the Pardoner, the Prioress, the Monk, and the Parson are noted in this table; no other prologues are. This tabular feature both calls attention to the prologues of these tales as valuable, separate works, and indicates something of the popularity of these tales for Thynne and his intended reading public.
[16] Forni notes that this poem is anonymous, but apocryphal: Forni, 171.

Chaucer's canon by this explicit gesture towards an authorial manner of reading and interpreting the *Workes*.

Thynne's link between Chaucer and King Henry VIII is further bolstered by *To the kynges most noble grace and to the lords and knyghtes of the garter*.[17] In this poem, the king is referred to as "the heire and successour / Vnto Justinians deuout tendernesse," "our Christian Emperour," who "haue eke the lykenesse / Of Constantine." The political implications of this fawning poem are clear: Thynne is solidifying Henry's claim to be both temporal and spiritual head of England by recasting Henry as an early Christian emperor. The aesthetic implication, however, is more striking. Insofar as it is addressed to the King and the Order of the Garter, it presents itself as a contemporary poem written in the style of Chaucer: Chaucerian imitation is presented in a collection of Chaucer's canon, suggesting that poetic imitation of Chaucerian themes and styles is to be commended. At the same time, the poem does not mention Henry explicitly: the exhortation to kingly virtue could apply to any English king in any period, and, considering its continued presence in Chaucerian editions through the reign of Charles II, it did. I think it unlikely, however, that the sixteenth-century reader of this poem would fail to see the links between it and Thynne's Preface; the poem is clearly a commendation to the sitting king of England. At the same time, its universal application guides readers to interpret the work in light of its temporally transcendent wisdom: like the works of Chaucer that will follow, the moral instruction of this piece will weather the ages. The

[17] Actually written by Hoccleve; see Forni, 171.

poem thus serves both to situate this edition in its own moment in time—linking Henry to Chaucer fairly explicitly—and to suggest to readers the timeless quality of the instruction found in this edition.[18]

The last of the prefatory poems is *Chaucer's prophecy*, although it is not given a title in this edition.[19] The poem is presented as evidence of Chaucer's long-reaching vision and patriotism. The poem begins gnomically, foretelling a time of coming woe in England:

> Whan faythe fayleth in preestes sawes
> And lords hestes are holden for laws
> And robbery is holden purchase
> And lechery is holden solace
> Than shall the londe of Albyon
> Be brought to great confusyon (fol. A4v)

While these problems may be found in any (or every) age, the explicit mention of religious and civil strife would have resonated strongly for the Tudor reader, with the Wars of the Roses having ended merely a generation prior, and the Reformation underway on the Continent and in England herself. In these sordid times, the only sure remedy is virtue:

> It faileth for euery gentylman
> To saye the best that he can
> In mannes absence

[18] This link is also found by Thynne's inclusion of "Johan Gower / vnto the worthy and noble kynge henry the fourth" (CCC.lxxvi). Even though Gower's authorship is acknowledged in the title—though not in the table of contents—it effectively serves as a link between Chaucerian poetry and the English crown. This link will be most fully developed once Speght begins printing his biography of Chaucer with the Workes, effectively solidifying Chaucer's link with John of Gaunt and the House of Lancaster. Shakespeare's *2 Henry IV* may also owe something to the canonization of this poem as part of England's Chaucerian patrimony: "Good is to eschew warre, and nathelees / A kynge may make warre vpon hys right / For of batayle the fynall ende is pees" (ccclxvi.r); compare to *2 Henry IV* IV.5.

[19] Forni, 171-72.

> And the soothe in hys presence
> It cometh by kynde of gentyll blood
> To caste away all heuynesse
> And gader togyder wordes good
> The werke of wysedome beareth wytnesse. (fol. A4v)

Regardless of the problems of one's age, the individual gentleman may still behave well by "gader[ing] togyder wordes good": salvation in turbulent times comes precisely from reading the kind of book the reader has immediately in front of him. In this way *Chaucer's prophecy* completes Thynne's prefatory material by suggesting that Chaucer was both a prophet, able to see into the woes of the near future, and a moral teacher, able to provide his readers with the ability to meet these woes effectively.

After the reader has been thoroughly prepared to read and understand the value of Chaucer's works, the very first work presented is *The Canterbury Tales*. Thynne highlights its status by giving it a title-page with the same border as the title-page at the beginning of the edition: it is clearly set off from the introductory material and announces itself to be a new beginning. Thynne's *Canterbury Tales* retains much of the same character of Caxton's 1483 edition, and the subsequent editions of de Worde: the text is given in Batarde, double columned, with woodcuts preceding each Tale. Thynne's edition reuses the woodcuts and the layout from the 1526 de Worde *Canterbury Tales*, which in turn were used in the de Worde 1498 and Caxton 1483 editions: the reader of Thynne acquainted with recent *Canterbury Tales* would have immediately recognized the visual continuity between the editions. Rhetorically speaking, Thynne's *Canterbury Tales* is nearly identical to de Worde's edition printed a mere six years prior; there are,

though, a few striking differences.[20] In the first place, Thynne's General Prologue lacks woodcuts, though he does provide titles and numbers to note the shifts from one character to the other. When one gets to the woodcuts that precede the tales, one finds that Thynne uses a woodcut hitherto unused for his Squire: the woodcut depicts a young man in sixteenth-century garb atop a horse, holding a scepter, armed with a sword, and sporting a rather jaunty, feathered hat. While this is a fairly small change, it does serve to differentiate Thynne's edition from de Worde's 1526: de Worde not only used the Caxtonian Squire before the *Squiers Tale*, he used it for the title-page of the edition. This small shift presents Thynne's edition as something new: though linked clearly to recent *Canterbury Tales*, it nevertheless represents a move forward in the printing of Chaucer.

More significant is the fact that Thynne's *Canterbury Tales* omits both a woodcut of Chaucer before *Chaucer's Tale* and Chaucer's *Retraction* at the end of the work. Regardless of why Thynne chose to omit these details, they effectively diminish Chaucer's poetic humility. No longer is Chaucer pictured visually as a pilgrim in his own story: *Melibee* still bears his name, but his visual presence has been erased. Furthermore, by not reprinting the *Retraction* from the 1526 edition, Thynne removes both Chaucer's own tally of his canon and the poet's self-deprecation of his own work. This omission speaks loudly: Chaucer's canon is now set by Thynne, not Chaucer: these *Complete Works* are the authoritative list of Chaucer's writings. The Parson's sententious penitential manual is now the last work heard by readers: Chaucer's stature is

[20] For Thynne's probable textual sources, see Blodgett, 39-47.

undiminished by the humility of the *Retraction*. Thynne's edition thus continues to solidify Chaucer's status as a Classical auctor by downplaying his fictional persona and poetic humility.

No other work in Thynne's edition contains woodcuts; six other works, however, are accorded the honor of their own title-pages: *The Romaunt of the Rose* (fol. C.xxviii.r), *Troilus and Creseyde* (fol. C.lxx.r), *Boetius de consolation philosophie* (fol. CC.xxxvi.r), *The Dreame of Chaucer* (fol. CC.lxxi.v), *How pite is ded and beried in a gentyll hert* (fol. CC.lxxxvi.r), and *The conclusions of the Astolabie* (fol. CC.xcix.v).[21] These title-pages all share the Classical border that the reader first encountered on the title-page of the *Works*. The other works are given titles, but not title-pages, and the *Balades* (*Good counsayle, Vyllage without payntyng, Purse, King, Consider every circumstance*) are not even accorded titles. In this manner, Thynne subtly differentiates between "major" and "minor" Chaucerian works: longer, more serious works are set in higher relief, while shorter, lighter works are presented as ancillary. *The House of Fame* does show editorial markings (a combination of colons and parentheses) on fol. CCC.xvi.r, indexing the following lines: "Moueth thyder for to go"; "Than is this the conclusyoun"; and "Of figures of Poetrie"; even a "minor" work in Thynne's edition may point the reader to lines of enlightening *sentence*. On the whole, however, the reader is moved to give priority to Chaucer's more sententious works through the very structure of the edition.

[21] Comparing the Thynne *Troilus and Criseyde* with the editions of the early sixteenth century, particularly de Worde's 1526 edition, however, one does find that Thynne's is a more "open" work, to use Eco's terminology: gone are the woodcuts and editorial prefaces that so directly shaped the reader's understanding of the work.

While substantially identical to his 1532 edition, the 1542 reprint of Thynne's *Complete Works* presents the reader with rhetorical variations significant enough to warrant separate analysis.[22] Thynne's 1542 edition now has a different title-page, with neoclassical variations on Corinthian columns framing the title rather than the erotes of his 1532 edition. This rhetorical shift is relatively slight: in terms of framing Chaucer as an author of antiquity, either frame serves its purpose. The 1542 Thynne, however, displays a visual preoccupation with columns: in *The Canterbury Tales*, columns frame the woodcuts of the Knight (C1r; fol. i.r), the Miller (D6v; fol. xii.v), the Cook (F1r; fol. xix.r), the Man of Law (F2r; fol. xx.r), the Squire (G2v; fol.xxvi.v), and the Merchant (I6v; fol xxx v).[23] Lest these columns not suffice to point out the woodcuts beginning these tales, small pointing hands (indices) accompany the borders of the Knight, the Cook, the Squire, and the Merchant; the Wife of Bath's woodcut (H6v; fol. xxxvi v) and the Nun's Priest's Tale (S4r; fol.xciiii.r) are both noted solely with indices. Without reading too much into these columns, they do indicate a "classicizing" presence throughout the *Canterbury Tales*: Caxton's 1483 woodcuts are now framed by classical architecture, much in the same way as Chaucer's works are now framed by Thynne's classicizing preface.

One important shift in woodcuts from the 1532 to 1542 versions is the treatment of the Knight and his son, the Squire. The 1542 edition substitutes some woodcuts for

[22] STC 5069 and 5070; STC 5070 is a variant imprint of STC 5069; rhetorically speaking, it bears all of the features noted in STC 5069.

[23] In the following citations, both the quire letters and Thynne's folio numbers are given to avoid ambiguity; Thynne's quire letters begin in the prefatory materials, while his folios—given in Roman numerals—begin with the text proper.

others: the Pardoner, Clerk, and Miller woodcuts from 1532 are used for the Franklin, Canon Yeoman, and Plowman, respectively, in the 1542 printing. As we have seen since Caxton, however, these woodcuts function more to mark the beginnings of different characters' speeches than to provide completely accurate portraits of the pilgrims, based on their textual descriptions; the change need not be seen as a radical departure. What is more radical is the choice use the same woodcut for the Knight (C1r; fol. i.r) and the Squire (G2v; fol. xxvi.v). The woodcut depicts a knight in armor, mounted on his horse, wearing a peer's hat; behind the knight is a mounted squire. This Knight-Squire woodcut highlights the familial connection between these two characters: the reader is presented with both of them together before each of their tales. This woodcut not only highlights the knightly romance found in both, but also suggests that the reader link these two tales in his reading of the works.

More significant for the character of Chaucer during the remainder of the English Renaissance is the fact that the 1542 Thynne is printed in Blackletter instead of Batarde type font. Up until this point, Batarde—the type associated with vernacular literature[24]—had been a trademark choice for Chaucerian works, although, as we have seen in the previous chapter, Blackletter Chaucer was not unknown by the early sixteenth century. Dane has argued persuasively for a purely political explanation for this shift: Batarde type became unavailable in England by the 1540's due to Continental turmoil.[25] Regardless of *why* the type changed, the aesthetic effect this change would have is

[24] See M.B. Parkes, *English Cursive Book Hands, 1250-1500* (Clarendon: Oxford University Press, 1969).
[25] Dane, 51-74.

profound: for the remainder of the Renaissance (and for centuries hence), Blackletter was the conventional font through which Chaucer's works were encountered.[26] Particularly by the end of the sixteenth century, this editorial choice would serve to mark Chaucer's works as "antique", as contemporary English authors such as Spenser printed their works in italic. The 1542 Thynne, then, is the beginning of the depiction of historical distance between Chaucer and his readers through the very type face used.

The most dramatic difference textually between the 1532 and 1542 Thynne is the inclusion of the apocryphal *Plowman's Tale*. As we have seen in the previous chapter, editions of this "Protestant Chaucerian" tale were printed surrounding Henry VIII's break with Rome. By 1542, this tale is now canonized in the *Complete Works*. The choice to reuse the woodcut of the Miller before *The Plowman's Tale* may appear an odd one, but the emphasis put on the Plowman as a rustic character—albeit a very different one than the bawdy Miller—makes the choice rather appropriate. Even more striking than its inclusion, however, is its placement: the *Plowman's Tale* is the final tale of *The Canterbury Tales* in this edition. Every prior printed edition of *The Canterbury Tales* ends on a decidedly religious note: either with the Parson preaching on penitence or Chaucer giving his pious retraction. The 1542 Thynne continues this religious tradition, but now with a decidedly Protestant focus; Thynne's explicit, "Thus endeth the boke of Caunterbury tales" (fol. cxxvi.v), authoritatively closes the case on the authenticity of the Protestant Chaucer.

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[26] Skeat's *Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* from 1912 returns somewhat to the original convention of Thynne by printing the running titles in a Batarde font.

After *The Canterbury Tales*, the reader is presented with the title-page of *The Romau[n]t of the Rose*, as in the 1532 edition, with the same Corinthian border that began the edition. *Boethius* retains its title page, but *Troilus and Criseyde*, *The Dreame of Chaucer, How pite is ded and beried in a gentyll hert, The conclusions of the Astrolabie*, and *The Testament of Love* have lost their title-pages by 1542. This shift may appear subtle, but its rhetorical effect is profound: in this edition, only three works are singled out as worthy of special note. Even more than in 1532, Chaucer's canon is to be understood on the basis of *The Canterbury Tales* and translations from French, one of the languages Thynne singled out for its similarity to Latin, and Latin itself.

The final major variation in the 1542 Thynne is the proliferation of editorial markings noting lines in *The House of Fame*. This edition gives marginal hands for: "In mo ryche tabernacles"; "where that it was, but well wyst I"; "And with hys chere and hys lesynges" (HH6r; fol. cccvi.r); "Of good or misgouernment"; "That lefe me were, or that I went"; "But syth that I Ioues of his grace" (KK3r; fol. cccxv.r); "And stampe as men done after eles"; and "Of that the god of thunder" (KK4r; fol. ccxvi.r). A parenthetical tilde (~) is used to mark: "And kysse it, for it is thy tree"; "It was, I nyst redely" (II5r; fol.cccxi.r). Most significantly, this edition uses "(:)(:)" to mark the lines: "Than is thys

the conclusyoun"; and "without any subtylte" (II3v; fol. cccix.v). These markings demonstrate a continuity between 1532 and 1542: though the lines marked are different, this section—the Eagle's philosophical conclusions on the nature of sound and speech—is the one noted in the first Thynne edition. Although its full fruition will come with Speght's marginal indices, the 1542 Thynne expands the process of presenting *The House of Fame* in terms of its philosophical content, giving the reader a method by which to understand the poem. Caxton's ending is marked with an indentation, but no attribution is given, making Thynne's *House of Fame* end neatly.

The last printing of the Thynne edition is Hill's 1550.[27] Like the 1542, the text is now given in Blackletter, and the title-page is presented with a different, though still classical, border: the Corinthian columns remain, but now the heads of a man and woman face one another on the top border, and a cupid is found on the bottom border. While these features are generic enough, they do provide a subtle focus on love-poetry from the very beginning: Chaucer is still classicized in the 1550 printing, but his treatment of love comes further to the forefront.[28] This amatory border becomes all the more significant

[27] STC 5071, 5072, 5073, and 5074; as with the 1542 variant, all of these printings are rhetorically identical.
[28] These subtle shifts in editorial rhetoric support Forni's reading of Thynne as highlighting Chaucer's courtly love lyrics; Forni, 66.

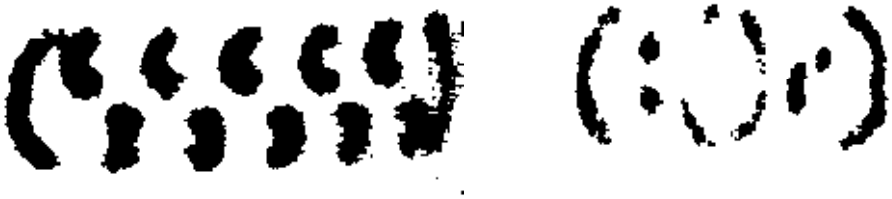
when it is repeated as the title-page border of *The Romaunt of the Rose*. After observing the reuse of the border from the general title-page for the borders of single works in 1532 and 1542, this feature is not surprising. What is surprising is the fact that *The Romaunt of the Rose* is the *only* work in this printing to receive its own title-page; even the venerable *Canterbury Tales* shares page space in 1550. While considerations of efficient page use may certainly explain the wasting away of Thynne's title-pages, the rhetorical effect is strong: *The Romaunt of the Rose* is given a place of prominence in 1550, calling attention to Chaucer the translator and Chaucer the love-allegorist, an interpretation only solidified by the new border.

Woodcuts are also sparse in the 1550 Thynne; the only two woodcuts in this edition are in *The Canterbury Tales*, marking the Knight and the Squire. The Knight's woodcut (fol.i.r) is different from both the 1532 and 1542: it depicts a knight in tilting armor riding outside of a castle. The Squire's woodcut (fol. xxiv.v) is that of 1532. This shift from prior editions singles out the Knight and the Squire as the two most important characters in *The Canterbury Tales*: the link seen in 1542 through the reuse of woodcuts is now intensified by the fact that only these characters are depicted in the edition. As a corollary, their tales of knightly romance are emphasized as tales central to the work as a

whole. Furthermore, *The Knight's Tale* is afforded the distinction of having its first line—"Whylam, as olde stories tellen vs—in Italic, not Blackletter. By shifting from the type of "antique" Chaucer to the type of sixteenth-century English, *The Knight's Tale* stands out as the real starting-point of *The Canterbury Tales*.

While title-pages and woodcuts have decreased in the 1550 Thynne, editorial indexes have increased dramatically. *The Merchant's Tale* now has paraphs pointing to particularly sententious lines. Paraphs also highlight certain lines of *The Tale of Sir Topas*.[29] The most overwhelming increase in editorial marking, however, is found in *The House of Fame*; no fewer than eighty-two lines are printed with a marginal signal to note them. Furthermore, these editorial markers are more elaborate than those found in pervious printings; though made up of punctuation marks, these signs can be quite elaborate:

[29] The lines indexed in *Sir Topas* are as follow: "Sir Thopas fyl in loue longyng"; "Sir Thopas eke so wery was"; "Oh, saynt Mary, benedicite"; "An Elfe queen wol I loue ywys"; "Into his sadel he clombe anone"; "Here is the quene of Fayrye"; and "Yet lysteneth lordynges to my tale." These paraphs are magnificently suggestive. In the first place, they point out lines that could come out of a serious courtly romance; reading *Sir Topas* simply for the editorially-marked lines, the parodic quality of the poem is not present. Furthermore, while Hudson contends that the 1561 Stow is the Chaucer of Spenser (Hudson, 53), the fact that the 1550 Thynne sets these lines apart—lines significant to Spenser's description of the Faerie Queen—provides tantalizing evidence that Spenser read the 1550 Thynne. The way in which these paraphs diminish the comedic elements of *Sir Topas* may help explain why Spenser appears to have taken this poem so seriously in his own construction of *The Faerie Queene*.



Each of these markings points out a single line; confronted with such typographical arabesques, the reader is encouraged to read *The House of Fame* even more as a collection of choice saws, to be understood by its value for solid, sententious content, rather than its puzzling, playful form.[30] On the whole, then, the 1550 Thynne characterizes itself as an even more "scholarly" version of the *Complete Works*, replacing pictures with editorial indexes.

Textually, the most significant shift in the 1550 Thynne is a kind of compromise over the status of *The Plowman's Tale*. While the tale is still included in this edition, it no longer is given the last word in *The Canterbury Tales*; the words of the Parson are returned to their place of prominence. In order to accommodate this shift, however, the 1550 Thynne tampers with the beginning of *The Parson's Prologue* to preserve textual continuity. The 1526 de Worde, the 1532 Thynne, and the 1542 Thynne all have slightly

[30] For a study of the ultimate editorial shaping of *The House of Fame* in Speght's edition, see Carol A.N. Martin, "Authority and the Defense of Fiction: Renaissance Poetics and Chaucer's *House of Fame*," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, Theresa M. Krier, ed. (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 40-65.

corrupted versions of the most bibliographically sound line: "By that the maunciple hadde his tale al ended, / The sonne fro the south lyne was descended (I.1-2).[31] The 1550 Thynne, however, places *The Plowman's Tale* between *The Manciple's Tale* and *The Parson's Tale*. To accommodate this poetic shift, the 1550 *Parson's Prologue* begins thus: "By that the plowman had his tale ended / The sonne from the southe side is discended." This rationalization is repeated in every subsequent edition of Chaucer printed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[32] Thynne's 1550 printing thus stabilizes the canonical status of *The Plowman's Tale* while diminishing its rhetorical impact on the *Tales* as a whole. The fact that this edition takes poetic liberties with *The Parson's Prologue*, however, shows the extent to which Renaissance editions could tamper with Chaucer's text to suit the needs of the edition.

Although the 1532, 1542, and 1550 printings all present significant variations, the overall impression of the character of Thynne's edition is one that highlights the "major" works while including the "minor"—a culmination of the previous 60 years of Chaucerian publication. The inclusion of woodcuts only for *The Canterbury Tales* makes them the most prominent textually. As such, Chaucerian *narrative* comes more naturally

[31] 1526 de Worde: "BI that the Mancyple had his tale ended / The sonne fro ye south side is discended"; 1532 Thynne: "By that ye Manciple had his tale ended / The so[n]ne fro ye southe side is discended"; 1542 Thynne: "By that the Manciple had hys tale ended / The sonne from the south side is dyscended"

[32] 1561 Stow: "By that the Ploweman had his tale ended / The sunne fro the southe side is discended"; 1598 Speght: "By that the Plowman had his tale ended / The sunne fro the south side is discended"; 1602 Speght: "By that the Plowman had his tale ended, / The sonne fro the south side is discended"; 1687 Speght: "By that the Plowman had his tale ended, / The sonne fro the south side is discended."

to the forefront, one of the major qualities praised by Thynne in his preface: the shorter ballads are shunted to the back, having to compete for space with the longer, graver works. Most significant, however, is the Renaissance ethos of the introduction, seen in the title-page borders and Preface, coupled with the easy reference and cross references enabled by the foliation and tables of contents. Chaucer is now approached not in a single work, but with the baggage—for good or ill—of all of the other works attributed to him. Chaucer has become a classicized, "Renaissance" author through this edition.

Stow's Editions

No editions or printings of Chaucer were produced during the reign of Mary Tudor (1553-1558); given the "Protestant" Chaucer created by apocryphal works and solidified by Thynne's 1542 and 1550 versions, this fact may not be surprising. The next edition of Chaucer to be produced is Stow's in 1561: *The workes of Geffrey Chaucer, newlie printed, with diuers addicions, whiche were neuer in print before: With the siege and destruccion of the worthy Citee of Thebes, compiled by Iohn Lidgate, Monke of Berie.*[33] Stow's edition is most often treated in relation to Edmund Spenser; both Miskimin and Hudson give the 1561 as Spenser's Chaucer.[34] Hudson is particularly insistent on this point, noting that textually Stow simply used Thynne's edition and

[33] STC 5075 and 5076.
[34] Miskimin, 289; Hudson, 53.

expanded it with more ballads and Lydgate. While Stow may earn the scorn of textual critics, from a rhetorical perspective his edition is a fascinating middle point between Thynne and Speght. Since Stow used Thynne's text, his edition carries forward much of the same rhetorical character as the former. Stow's choice of additional texts, however, frames Chaucer solidly in the courtly love—and antifeminist—tradition.[35] Furthermore, his use of italics further distinguishes Chaucer's language from French, Latin, and Early Modern English, further historicizing Chaucer and his works.

Stow's edition exists in two variant issues, STC 5075 and STC 5076. Beginning with the first foliated page, these issues are rhetorically identical; even before folio 1, both issues include the prefatory materials found in Thynne: his Preface, the table of contents, the table of folios, and the three poems: *Eight Goodly Questions*, *To the King's Noble Grace*, and *Chaucer's Prophecy*. These issues differ drastically, however, in their title-pages and treatment of woodcuts. The first issue (STC 5075) opens with a title-page bordered in the style of Thynne: Doric columns flank the title. The top border depicts what appears to be a royal court or parliament: gentlemen sit on rows of benches, facing the king on his throne. The bottom border shows two winged cupids flanking a tree and barrel. Visually, this choice of border brings together many of Thynne's Chaucerian frames: Chaucer's connection to the English Crown, his status as a love-poet, and his classical dignity.

[35] For more on Stow as an antifeminist reader of Chaucer, see Forni, 67-76.

The second issue, by contrast, favors a central image rather than a neoclassical frame. In STC 5076, the reader finds the title of the work printed without a border. Beneath the title, the reader encounters Chaucer's coat of arms; the arms are knightly, surmounted by a helm which is crested with a unicorn. Beneath the shield, one finds a motto: "Vertue florisheth in Chaucer still, / Though death of hym, hath wrought his will." Such a title-page highlights Chaucer's status as a medieval author: chivalry is found on the title-page, not neoclassical art. The motto focuses the reader directly on the "vertue" to be found in Chaucer's writing—both a marketing tool and a now-traditional commendation of Chaucer for his moral usefulness. More significantly, though, the motto highlights the historical difference between the reader and Chaucer: even though Chaucer is a dead chivalric knight, the reader will still profit from reading his works.[36] The title-page of the second issue—which will survive in Speght's edition—somewhat de-classicizes Chaucer while simultaneously signaling a temporal barrier between him and the present day.

Both issues begin *The Canterbury Tales* with a title-page border worthy of the most blatant Tudor propagandist. Instead of a Neoclassical border, Stow's *Canterbury Tales* are flanked by King Henry VIII's family tree: John, Duke of Lancaster sleeps at the bottom left corner, while Edmund Duke of York sleeps at the bottom right. From both of them spring trees of royals: the houses of Lancaster and York that so disrupted the fifteenth century with their wars. At the top of the page, the two trees are joined through

[36] It is fascinating to speculate that Spenser was familiar with this imprint of the 1561 Stow: Chaucer as dead chivalric knight would fit in well with Spenser's use of Chaucer in *The Faerie Queene*.

the marriage of King Henry VII and Queen Elizabeth, producing the illustrious Kynge Henry the VIII who presides over the top of the page. If Thynne's preface to King Henry VIII was too subtle a link between Chaucer and the Tudors, Stow's *Canterbury Tales* title-page removes all doubts from the reader regarding the joined fates of Chaucer and the crown. Furthermore, the first issue includes a portrait of Chaucer immediately before the title page. This portrait claims to be "The true portraiture of Geffrey Chaucer the famous English poet, as by Thomas Occleue is described who liued in his time, and was his Scholar," and it does appear to accord with the manuscript portraits found in Hoccleve's manuscripts. Chaucer holds a quill in one hand and beads in the other: worthy props for the poet of pilgrimages. What is most striking about this portrait, however, is that it is entitled "The Progenie of Geffrey Chaucer", and indeed is bordered by an elaborate heraldic tree that connects Chaucer to the houses of Lancaster and Tudor: the tomb of Geoffrey Chaucer's son Thomas is printed at the bottom of the page as the physical evidence of these connections. Even a mildly critical reader sees at once that Chaucer's connection to royalty is tenuous at best: Chaucer's own background is absent from the tree, and the extent of his connection is that his sister-in-law is John of Gaunt's wife. Still, the Chaucer family is ennobled by extension, and the proof of Chaucer's link to the English crown put front and center in Stow's edition.

After the Tudor title-page to *The Canterbury Tales*, the two issues differ drastically in their treatment of the *General Prologue*. While both keep Thynne's titles and numbering for the Canterbury pilgrims, the first issue includes woodcuts before the

descriptions of the Canterbury pilgrims. Most of these woodcuts are from Pynson's 1492 edition. They are not, however, simply copied from Pynson's *General Prologue*: the woodcuts of the Merchant, the Sergeante of Lawe, the Cook the Shipman, and the Doctor of Physik are those found in Pynson's edition before their respective tales, not those found in the *General Prologue*—the first issue of the 1561 Stow, then, looks to the woodcuts of the pilgrims found in the tales themselves, not in the *General Prologue*. The Knight, the Squire, the Yeoman, the Prioress, the Monk, the Friar, the Clerk, the Parson, the Plowman, the Miller, the Reve, and the Pardoner are all identical in the *General Prologues* of both Pynson and Stow. Stow's Franklin is Pynson's Chaucer, while Stow's Haberdasher is that of the 1483 Caxton. Stow's Wife of Bath is clearly Pynson's Prioress, while Stow's Manciple is de Wordes 1498 Franklin. Stow's Sompnour is not found in any previous edition, but has the same look as the 1492 woodcuts. The first issue of Stow goes to great lengths to look like the *General Prologues* prior to Thynne; while Thynne's 1532 included woodcuts of multiple pilgrims, it did not do so in the *General Prologue*. The first issue of 1561 ransacks multiple early printed editions of *The Canterbury Tales* to present woodcuts for each character. The second issue of 1561, in stark contrast, keeps with the later Thynne presentation of excluding woodcuts from the *General Prologue*. In this way, the first issue puts more visual emphasis on *The Canterbury Tales* and links it to the early Tudor editions of the same. As a result, Stow's edition displays a Janus-like degree of rhetorical variance: the first issue looks back to an earlier tradition of Chaucerian works, while the second issue looks ahead to Speght.

Beginning with folio 1, the two issues of the 1561 Stow are rhetorically identical: from *The Knight's Tale* to the end of the collection, the two are the rhetorically interchangeable. Both reuse the 1550 woodcut of the Knight before his tale, although decline to print the first line of the tale in italic. Neither issue uses any more woodcuts. For the majority of the edition Stow's editorial rhetoric becomes primarily a matter of selection and typography, not of the interplay of pictures and text; the rhetorical distance between the heading materials of the two issues is great, but the rhetorical features that the issues share—the features that all of Stow's readers would encounter—present a unified move towards a solidly medieval Chaucer preoccupied with love and love-debate poetry.

The contents of Stow's edition build on Thynne's *Complete Works*. Stow departs from Thynne in using *The Book of the Duchess* as the title of Thynne's *The dreame of Chaucer*: "The dreame of Chaucer, otherwise called the boke of the Duches, or Seis and Alcione, with a balade to his master Bucton," for which Francis Thynne—William's son—complains loudly in his *Animadversions*.[37] Otherwise, Stow's contents are identical until one arrives at the end. While Thynne ends with Lydgate's "Consider well every circumstance", Stow appends the following works:

> A balade in the Praise and commendacion of master Geffray Chauser for his golden
> eloquence
> A balade, teaching what is gentilnes.
> A balade against vnconstant women.
> How all thing in this worlde is variable, saue women onely

[37] For a scathing—and accurate—appraisal of Francis Thynne and his *Animadversions*, see Pearsall, 83-85.

The crafte of Louers.
A pleasaunt balade of women.
The x. commaundements of loue.
The ix. Ladies worthie.
"Alone walking"
"In the season of Feuere"
How Mercurie with Pallas, Venus and Minarua, appered to Paris of Troie
A balade pleaseante ("discriuyng of a faire Ladie")
An other balade ("O Mollie Quince")
A balade, warnyng men to beware of deceiptfull women
A balade declaring that wemens chastite doeth much excel all treasure worldly
The court of Loue, compiled by Chaucer.
Chaucers words vnto his owne Scriuner
The siege and destruccion, of the worthie Citee of Thebes, compiled by Ihon Lidgate of Burie.

These "never before printed" works clearly frame Chaucer as a love poet; Forni also is warranted in her reading of Stow as an antifeminist edition: many of these ballads do not present a very flattering portrait of women.[38] *The Siege of Thebes* adds further gravity to this already weighty collection of texts, and the clear attribution to Lydgate does not appear to worry Stow or his readers, who find it printed after the explicit end of Chaucer's works: "Thus endeth the workes of Geffray Chaucer" is followed by Surgio's epitaph and the incipit to Lydgate's *Siege*: "Here beginneth the Prologue, of the Storie of Thebes."[39] What is perhaps most prominent about the Stow additions is the manner in which Stow clearly indicates that he, the editor, is responsible for their inclusion: "Here

[38] "Whereas Thynne seems to have considered the *Legend of Good Women* a critical touchstone, Stow's view of Chaucer's sexual politics is more informed by the clerical rather than the courtly view of women," Forni, 73.
[39] The connection between Lydgate and Chaucer is the precise focus of Gillespie's work: *Print Culture and the Medieval Author: Chaucer, Lydgate, and Their Books, 1473-1557*, and as such should be consulted for further reference. For a reading of Stow's inclusion of Lydgate's *Siege* as evidence of an antiquarian and civic bent in his editorial practice, see Robert R. Edwards, "Translating Thebes: Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* and Stow's Chaucer," *ELH*, Vol. 70, no. 2 (Summer, 2003): 319-341.

foloweth certain woor*kes of Geffray Chauser, whiche hath not here tofore been* printed, and are gathered and added to his booke by Ihon Stowe" (fol. cccxl.r). Now that the canon has been established in Thynne's *Complete Works*, Stow is compelled to differentiate his edition merely by canon inflation without any textual criticism. Stow continues the practice found in the 1550 Thynne edition of omitting all title-pages after that of *The Romaunt of the Rose* (with the Henrican border that accompanies *The Canterbury Tales*) and of printing editorial indices in *The House of Fame*, a practice that will be perfected (or abused) by Speght.

Stow's most significant contribution to the character of Chaucer in the English Renaissance is found in his use of typography to differentiate language. Consistently throughout Stow's edition Latin and French are printed in Italic: Chaucer's words are visually distinguished from the words he translates from classical and continental authors. This difference is particularly prominent in *Boece*, with all of the Latin presented in thin, elegant Italic, in contrast to the thick, dark Blackletter of Chaucer's English. Whenever textual divisions are given in Latin or French, Stow uses Italic; English textual divisions are still often printed in Blackletter: the Blackletter English for the headings of *Astrolabie* is clear indication that the Stow edition presents linguistic divisions in typographical terms. Stow begins, however, to print Modern English headings in italic, particularly in the "never before printed" works. This practice serves to distance Chaucer's language from the languages of his readers through type: Latin, French, and Modern English are

grouped together by Italic, while Chaucer's English is firmly distinguished as a Blackletter language.

In the end, the 1561 Stow, the edition likely read by young Spenser (born 1550) and Shakespeare (born 1564), embodies contrasting perspectives on Chaucer and his works. While the issues differ in their numbers of woodcuts, both have heading materials that clearly situate Chaucer within his time: in Stow's edition, Chaucer is clearly a medieval, knightly poet, as well as an antique, classical one (particularly depending on the issue). Both issues stress Chaucer's ties to the Tudors and his status as a poet of amatory matters. Both issues clearly mark his English as typographically alienated from contemporary languages. Even as Stow copies features of Thynne's edition, the Chaucer found in Stow is a Chaucer who is in many ways fossilized: not a living classic, but a medieval author cut off from the contemporary world.

Chapter 6

The Complete Works: Speght

In 1598, Thomas Speght produced his monumental edition of Chaucer's *Complete Works*. The hurried quality of this edition—admitted by Speght and vilified by William Thynne's son Francis—led to a significantly revised edition in 1602.[1] Speght is present in his edition in a way that no other editor or printer of Chaucer had ever been: the scholarly editorial apparatus frames and interprets the works of Chaucer to an extent never before encountered. In Speght's edition, Chaucer becomes fully an object of Renaissance scholarship, a dubious honor that gives him the dignity of an ancient but solidly fixes him in the middle ages, firmly set apart from his readers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. With Speght's editorial intrusions, the sententious nature of Chaucer comes into full flowering: Speght's *Complete Works* can be read as a commonplace book of proverbial Chaucerian wisdom.[2] For the readers of Speght's Chaucer, it is hard to see how Chaucer's works could be anything but literary relics. The status of Chaucer as a relic—an item to be venerated, even if dead—owes much to the poetic imitation of Edmund Spenser, and Spenser plays a major role in the appearance of Speght's edition, a rhetorical move that serves to link Chaucer and Spenser inextricably in the editorial imagination of the seventeenth century.

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[1] See Pearsall, 71-92.

[2] For an analysis of the effects of Speght's editorial practice on one specific work, see Clare R. Kinney, "Thomas Speght's Renaissance Chaucer and the *solaas* of *sentence* in *Troilus and Criseyde*," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998), 66-86.

Speght's 1598 edition presents the reader with a veritable overload of classical rhetorical flourishes and scholarly apparatus surrounding Chaucer's works; this process begins on the very title-page.[3] The title is framed by twisting Baroque columns topped with Corinthian capitals that support an architecturally impressive entablature. Grape vines grow from an urn at the bottom of the page, and entwine around the columns; weeds grow on top of the edifice. The monumental border to this title-page is neoclassical, but neoclassical in the manner of ruins: this Chaucerian monument is ancient and overgrown with verdure. The fact that it grows grapes, however, suggests that sweet distillations may still be derived from it, perhaps a visual nod to Spenser's "infusion of Chaucers owne sweet spirite" mentioned by Speght in his *Life* of Chaucer a few pages hence. The monument is topped with a flaming orb and a scroll with the motto: "Possidete animas vestras," from Luke 21:19: "Per tolerantiam possidete animas vestras" (Vulgate) / "In patience possess ye your souls" (Authorised Version). Insofar as title-page borders are fairly generic—applied by printers to a variety of different works—this Gospel line should not be read as carefully selected to pair with Chaucer's works: self-possession of the soul is an exhortation that may be found in hundreds of literary works (particularly in the sixteenth century). Given that it is, however, placed on a Chaucerian title-page, it does serve to link the Works of Chaucer to the Holy Bible: presumably the instruction found in the pages of Chaucer is not at odds with the Gospel, and may, in fact, move readers to the ghostly self-possession enjoined by Luke.

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[3] STC 5077, 5078, and 5079.

Inside this magnificently potent border is the title itself, which speaks volumes about the character of this edition:

> The Workes of our Antient and lerned English Poet, Geffrey Chaucer, newly Printed. *In this Impression you shall find these Addisions:* 1. His Portraiture and Progenie shewed. 2. His Life collected. 3. Arguments to euery Booke gathered. 4. Old and obscure Words explaned. 5. Authors by him cited, declared. 6. Difficulties opened. 7. Two Books of his neuer before printed. LONDINI. *Impens Geor. Bishop. Anno.* 1598

Unlike every other Chaucerian title-page heretofore, Speght's title-page is printed exclusively in Italic; Blackletter in this edition is relegated solely to the words of Chaucer and his contemporaries, Hoccleve, Gower, and Lydgate. The title tells the reader immediately the ways in which this edition surpasses those of Thynne and Stow; while Stow's first impression *did* give some of the portraiture and progenie promised, Speght will guide the reader to a degree never before found in Chaucerian editions. The reader now has at his fingertips Chaucer's biography and Speght's interpretations of the longer works (not "euery Booke" as promised) as means by which to read the works of Chaucer. Furthermore, Speght gives his readers elaborate scholarly apparatus: his edition is the first to provide a glossary and a list of authors used by Chaucer, working to overcome the strangeness of Chaucer's language to late Elizabethan readers and to ensure that these readers appreciate the erudition of Chaucer's sources. "Difficulties opened" is rather a broad claim to make, but the apparatus may justly make this claim. Finally, like Stow before him, Speght increases the Chaucerian canon with the additions of *Chaucer's*

Dreame and *The Floure and the Leafe*.[4] As we shall see, readers of Speght are not only encouraged to read any work of Chaucer against every work of Chaucer; they are encouraged to read Chaucer as modern scholarly readers, with every work read in light of its commentary and scholarship.

The variant imprints of 1598—STC 5078 and STC 5079—are rhetorically identical to the first imprint, with the exception of the title-page; as such it is apt to treat the variant title-page here, since the remainder of the analysis will be identical. Both variant imprints show the exact same title as the first; instead of columns, vines, and weeds, however, the reader encounters a different kind of classical monument. Ionic columns hold up a pediment on which sit cherubs (though their wings appear rather like those of fairies). Between them, in a round frame, is a quotation clearly attributed to Chaucer and taken from *The Parliament of Fowles*:

> Out of the old fields, as men sayth,
> Commeth all this new corn, fro yere to yere:
> And out of old books, in good faith,
> Cometh al this new science that men lere (*PF* 22-25).

This quotation is aptly chosen: although Chaucer uses it in reference to the works of others (in the poem specifically, Cicero's account of the dream of Scipio Africanus), by 1598 it may justly be applied to the works of Chaucer himself. In front of the columns, serving as supporters to the title, are a man and a woman, stressing perhaps the position of love-poetry in the Chaucerian canon. The bottom border blends Classical and Biblical

[4] For more on *Chaucer's Dreame*, see Kathleen Forni, " 'Chaucer's Dreame': A Bibliographer's Nightmare," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. ½ (2001): 139-150.

allusion: there are portraits of King David (left) and Abraham sacrificing a ram (right), while in the center is a line from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: "Seris venit usus ab annis" (6.29). Golding gives this line in his 1567 translation as: "Experience doth of long continuance spring"; a more modern translation might be "Experience comes from lengthy years". In any case, the quotation is apt; it comes from the goddess Minerva speaking to the proud Arachne—just as Arachne was foolish to mock the disguised Minerva for her age, so those who would mock Chaucer for his antiquity would do well to reconsider. Chaucer's age recommends his works. The variant title-page thus stresses Chaucer's antiquity and authority through even more overt means than those found on the first imprint: Chaucer's words are corroborated by Ovid to recommend him to readers, framed by classical architecture.

Immediately following the title-page is Speght's dedication of his edition to Sir Robert Cecil, one of Queen Elizabeth's most powerful ministers. The dedication to a wealthy and noble patron is to be expected, and the flattery and praise is fairly generic. Two aspects of this dedication, however, warrant attention. The first is the overt manner in which Speght continues to link true Chaucerian works to King Henry VIII: "THis book when it was first published in print (right Honorable) was dedicated to the Kings most excellent Maiestie *Henry* the eight [sic], who fauourably entertained the same, as a work deseruing a worthy patrone." The most significant phrase in this sentence is "this book"—the book of Chaucer, Speght asserts, was first printed during the reign of Henry VIII; insofar as Speght builds on Stow who builds on Thynne, this assertion is correct—

these "Complete Works" were, in fact, published first under Henry. Speght's focus, however, betrays a narrative of Chaucerian publishing that erases completely the editions of single works and anthologies produced before 1532; Chaucerian publishing begins for Speght in 1532. This attitude may still be found among Chaucerian scholarship, but, as we have seen, is a stance that seeks to diminish the continuity between manuscript and print books of Chaucer's works, and thus the vital contributions of Caxton and other early printers to establishing the nature of Chaucer in print.[5] For Speght and his readers, Chaucer's poetry only truly begins when it is "restored" by Thynne's project of collecting and printing the Complete Works.

The second noteworthy detail in this patronal plea is Speght's insistence that his edition provides the hope of finally perfecting Chaucer and that Chaucer is fundamentally a poet for the learned. Speght will go into greater detail regarding the circumstances of this edition's productions on the very next page, but immediately apologizes for imperfections while suggesting that perfection may now finally be within his reach:

> These collections and corrections vpon Chaucer as they earnestly desire, so might they better haue deserued acceptance at your honors hands, had they ben as fully perfeted, as they haue beene painefully gathered. But what is now wanting through lacke of time, may happily hereafter be supplied.[6]

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[5] Miskimin and Forni, for example, treat only the folio editions of Chaucer, without reference to the anthologies and single-work editions that predate Thynne's. *Editing Chaucer: The Great Tradition* jumps from Caxton to Thynne, with no mention of de Worde, Pynson, Notary or Rastell except in passing. Gillespie's work seeks to return this chapter of Chaucerian print history to its rightful place, displaced as it was since the end of the sixteenth century.

[6] Speght does not number, letter, or otherwise foliate his prefatory materials; all of these quotations may be found in Brewer's facsimile of the sixteenth-century folios. This quotation is taken from heading material 2r.

Even though this edition is not "fully perfeted", full perfection of Chaucer may be possible by the second edition (if, of course, it is patronized as Henry patronized Thynne). Speght follows this hope of perfection with a construction of the implied audience for this new, perfected edition:

> I trust your Honor, for the Poets sake, so much always liked of the learned, and commended by the best, will receiue withal this already done in the Poets behalf, till longer time and further search giue me better instructions.[7]

Such a characterization of Chaucer as a poet for the learned is, of course, at least partially a marketing ploy, giving this book a kind of snob appeal for potential readers (and buyers). It is also, however, a testament to the gravity with which Chaucer has become regarded by 1598: rather than a "popular" author, a teller of vernacular tales, Chaucer has become an auctor worthy of learned study. As we have seen, this elevation of the status of Chaucer and his works to that of classics has a long and gradual history; with Speght, however, Chaucer's status as an author little accessible to common people is taken for granted.

After addressing his purported patron, Speght turns to address the readers directly in his "To the Readers," in which, like Caxton and Thynne before him, he gives his audience the mythos behind the creation of the present book. Speght opens as most scholars do, with a lament about the current scholarship surrounding their subject:

> Some few years past, I was requested by certain Gentlemen my neere friends, who loued Chaucer, as he well deserueth; to take a little pains in reuiuing the memorie of so rare a man, as also in doing some reparations

[7] Heading material, 2r.

> on his works, which they iudged to be much decaied by iniurie of time, ignorance of writers, and negligence of Printers.[8]

What one finds here is now something like a genre of Chaucerian printing: the editor explaining how gentleman friends exhorted him to produce the current work, a genre that traces its origins back to Caxton's 1483 *Canterbury Tales*. Significantly, however, Speght lists the "ignorance of writers" among the traditional foes of the true Chaucer, time and former printers. What is one to make of this inclusion? In the absence of specific writers named, it is natural to assume that Speght refers to those writers who write about Chaucer unflatteringly: by 1598 we have several witnesses to condemnations of Chaucerian bawdry and of medieval diction.[9] In addition to these outright foes of Chaucer, however, one should also see writers who, in Speght's estimation, do not understand Chaucer as they should; they are "ignorant", not malicious. Speght's edition will thus instruct these ignorant writers on how Chaucer is to be read and understood; Speght claims overtly that, "For whose sakes much was then by me vndertaken, although neuer as yet fully finished," he has included all of the ancillary materials mentioned on the title-page. Editorial involvement is front and center in this epistle to readers: Speght all but tells them that he will be their teacher in the ways of understanding truly the works

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[8] Heading material, 2v.

[9] For various period condemnations of Chaucerian bawdry, see Caroline Spurgeon, *Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Allusion, 1357-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), vol. i. xix.-xxi.. On the condemnation of Chaucerian style, one need look no further than Sidney's 1595 *The Defense of Poesie*: "*Chawcer* vndoubtedly did excellently in his *Troilus* and *Creseid*: of whome truly I knowe not whether to meruaile more, either that hee in his mistie time could see so clearly, or that wee in this cleare age, goe so stumblingly after him. Yet had hee great wants, fit to be forgiuen in so reuerent an Antiquitie . . . The Shepheards Kalender, hath much *Poetrie* in his Egloges, indeed woorthie the reading, if I be not deceiued. That same framing of his style to an olde rusticke language, I dare not allow: since neither *Theocritus* in Greeke, *Virgill* in Latine, nor *Sanazara* in Italian, did affect it" (fol. H3v) (Taken from the facsimile *The Noel Douglas Replicas*: *Phillip Sidney, Defence of Poesie* [London: Noel Douglas, 1928]).

of Chaucer. Speght continues by apologizing again for the haste with which this edition was printed, and gives the excuse that these genteel friends exhorted him to rush his edition to the press. As we shall see in the 1602 edition, the faults he finds this rush caused—the imperfections in the contents and their arrangement—will be addressed, and he promises as much in this preface.

Following Speght's promise of a better edition is a sentence packed with rhetorical significance; Speght recounts for the reader the state of Chaucer's poetry and the stakes behind this edition:

> But howsoeuer it [the new edition] happen either in mine or their [his friends'] determination, I earnestly entreat al to accept these my endeuours in best part, as wel in regard of mine owne well meaning, as for the desert of our English Poet himself: who in most vnlearned times and greatest ignorance, being much esteemed, cannot in these our daies, wherein Learning and riper iudgement so much flourisheth, but be had in great reuerence, vnlesse it bee of such as for want of wit and learning, were neuer yet able to iudge what wit or Learning meaneth.[10]

Speght constructs the now-commonplace notion of the darkness of Chaucer's fourteenth century, contrasted in high relief with the golden age of Elizabeth through an *a fortiori* argument: if Chaucer was esteemed even in ignorant times, then he should be esteemed in enlightened eras. Leaving aside the obvious logical problem (are *ignorant* readers good judges of literary merit?), Speght reinforces Thynne's stance on the perfection of Chaucer arriving in the Tudor era. Furthermore, Speght gives Chaucer a kind of snob appeal by implying that sixteenth-century readers who do *not* revere Chaucer, "want . . . wit and learning, [and] were neuer yet able to iudge what wit or Learning meaneth." Not only are

[10] Heading material, 3r.

Chaucer detractors stupid and uneducated, their ignorance is so great that they do not even know the *meanings* of wit or Learning. This short invective is perhaps among the most vituperative ever offered in defense of Chaucer, and ensures that Chaucer's works will continue to have value as indicators of personal intelligence and learning.

Speght follows his address to the reader with a letter from his friend, Francis Beaumont: "F.B. to his very louing friend, T.S.." This Beaumont is not the Francis Beaumont of Jacobean dramatic fame,[11] but he does provide an eloquent defense of Chaucer against the two most common objections against Chaucer:

> For as for the obiections, that in our priuate talke you are wont to say are commonly alledged against him, as first that many of his wordes (as it were with ouerlong lying) are growne too hard and vnpleasant, and next that hee is somewhat too broad in some of his speeches, and that the worke therefore should be the lesse gratious: these are no causes, or no sufficient causes to withholden from *Chaucer* such desert of glorie, as at your pleasure you may bestow vpon him.[12]

The difficulty of Chaucer's language and the bawdy material in some of his tales may well still serve to provide resistance to his works from students for the former flaw and from their parents for the latter; Beaumont assures the reader, though, that these are not sufficient reasons not to read and esteem Chaucer. Beaumont answers both charges, quite tellingly, by appealing to the practices of classical authors.

Beaumont begins his defense of Chaucer's language by admitting the frangibility of human tongues, even while distinguishing between written and spoken, ancient and modern, languages:

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[11] On this Beaumontian conundrum, see T.W. Baldwin, "The Three Francis Beaumonts," *MLN* 39 (1924): 505-507; Ernest Kuhl, "Francis Beaumont and Speght," *TLS*, September 23, 1926, 632.
[12] Heading material, 3v.

> It is well knowne to wise and learned men, that all languages be either such as are contained in learning, or such as be vsed amongst men in daily practice: and for the learned tongues, they hauing *Iure testamentario*, their legacies set downe by them that be dead, wordes must bee kept and continued in them in sort as they were left without alteration of the Testators wils in any thing. But for vsuall languages of common practise, which in choise of wordes are, and euer will bee subiect vnto change, neuer standing at one stay, but sometimes casting away old wordes, sometimes renewing of them, and always framing of new, no man can so write in them, as that all his wordes may remaine currant many years.[13]

The "learned tongues"—the Greek and Latin of classical authors—are unchanging, a property of dead, written languages: when a language ceases to be spoken, it becomes perfect and unchanging. Since Chaucer writes in the living vernacular, he cannot be blamed for the distance between his language and the language of his readers; Beaumont cites examples of Latin authors criticized by "Latinists" for their "imperfect" diction:

> And this hath happened amongst the Latin writers themselues, when the Latine tongue was a spoken tongue, as ours now is: for diuers of *Statius*, *Ennius*, and *Plautus* wordes haue beene long since by later Latinists reiected.[14]

This statement is rather surprising for an educated Elizabethan, for whom Latin was still a language used for conversation; his point, however, is clear: Chaucer's works are to be regarded as similar to the works of antique Latin authors. Beaumont thus confers on Chaucer's language the curious honor of being both a living and a dead language: insofar as it is not a "learned tongue", Chaucer's speech is to be considered "living"; insofar as it carries similar attributes to that used by Statius, Ennius, and Plautus, and survives only in

[13] Heading material, 3v.
[14] Heading material, 3v.

the dead stability of print, it is "dead", the plight of the medieval author in the modern world.

Beaumont then deftly carves out a place for Chaucer's English in the realm of poetry; it is here that Spenser's influence on the ways in which Chaucer was read and understood becomes clear:

> But yet so pure were *Chaucers* wordes in his owne daies, as *Lidgate* that learned man calleth him *The Loadstarre of the English language*: and so good they are in our daies, as Maister *Spencer*, following the counsaile of *Tullie in de Oratore*, for reuiuing of antient wordes, hath adorned his owne stile with that beauty and grauitie, which *Tully* speakes of: and his much frequenting of *Chaucers* antient speeches causeth many to allow farre better of him, then otherwise they would.[15]

Lydgate is used as contemporary testimony to vouch for the quality of Chaucer's language, a surprisingly sophisticated historicizing move indicating that modern readers may not be the best judges of Chaucer's style: if Chaucer's contemporaries found his language elegant, then we should believe them. Furthermore, the use of words that have lost their ability to be appreciated in common speech is proper to poetry; just as Cicero used ancient Latin, so Spenser uses Chaucerian English. Here is proof positive that the character of Chaucer has become overwhelmingly "classical" through Spenser's influence: Chaucer is to the English what Ennius was to the Romans.[16]

Speght's great accomplishment, according to Beaumont, is an act of resurrection parallel to Spenser's revival of Chaucerian language:

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[15] Heading material, 3v.

[16] As we shall see, Spenser's self-consciously Vergilian poetic project provides evidence for this comparison; see A. C. Hamilton, "The Argument of Spenser's *Shepheardes Calendar*," *Spenser*, ed. Harry Berger, Jr (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice, 1968), 30-39.

> And furthermore by your interpretation of the most vnusuall words, that hardnesse and difficultie is made most cleare and easie: and in the paines and diligence you haue vsed in collecting his life, mee thinks you haue bestowed vpon him more fauourable graces then *Medea* did vpon *Pelias*: for you haue restored vs *Chaucer* both aliue again and yong again, and deliuered many of the doubtfull coniectures they conceiued of him. And therefore though you haue not made euery thing perfect to your owne mind (for nothing at one time is both begun and perfected) yet since you haue opened the way to others, and attempted that which neuer was begun before you, your endeauours herein cannot bee but very well accepted, vnlesse of such as are more readie to find fault, then willing to amend.[17]

Just as Spenser restored Chaucer's language to the realm of poetry, so Speght has restored Chaucer's own poetry to the realm of readership through his editorial materials, as Medea restored Pelias. Now that the reader has glossaries, arguments, and other editorial explanations, he can appreciate Chaucer in a manner worthy of his works—as close to a medieval appreciation as a modern reader could hope to achieve. Fascinatingly, this act of making Chaucer "aliue again and yong again"—miraculous as it is—is not enough for Speght, who seeks further "perfection": "nothing at one time is both begun and perfected." The irony of this formulation, as we have seen, lies in the fact that once a thing has become "perfected", it ceases to be alive. The term "perfection" itself has something of the smell of the grave about it: to be "perfect" is to be "completely performed" ("perficere"), incapable of further growth or change. Once a language survives only in its written form, it is dead, and therefore perfect; Speght's perfection of Chaucer, his revival and rejuvenation, will end, paradoxically, in death: Chaucer's language firmly fixed and relegated to the perfection of dead letters.

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[17] Heading material, 3v-4r.

Beaumont then turns to objections regarding Chaucer's "inciuilities", answering the charges, unsurprisingly, with Classical standards of decorum, coupled with the commonplace understanding of comedy as a vehicle for criticizing vice.[18] He opens with an *a fortiori* argument that presupposes the greater dignity of Classical authors:

> Touching the inciuilities *Chaucer* is charged withal; What Romane Poet hath lesse offended this way then hee? *Virgil* in his *Priapus* is worse by a thousand degrees, and *Ouid* in *de Arte amandi*, and *Horace* in manie places as deepe as the rest: but *Catullus* and *Tibullus* in vncleane wantonnesse beyond measure passe them all. Neither is *Plautus* nor *Terence* free in this behalf:[19]

If authors more universally recognized as noble—Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Catullus, Tibullus, Plautus, and Terence—contain matter that is more offensive than that found in Chaucer, then Chaucer must be esteemed as well. Beaumont continues his Classicized defense of Chaucer by appealing to decorum, ethopoiesis, and its use in mocking vice:

> But these two last [Plautus and Terence] are excused aboue the rest, by their due obseruation of *Decorum*, in giuing to their comicall persons such manner of speeches as did best fit their dispositions. And may not the same bee said for *Chaucer*? How much had hee swarued from Decorum, if hee had made his Miller, his Cooke, and his Carpenter, to haue told such honest and good tales, as hee made his Knight, his Squire, his Lawyer, and his Scholler tell? But shewing the disposition of these meaner sort of men, hee declareth in their prologues and tales, that their chiefe delight was in vndecent speeches of their owne, and in their false defamations of others, as in these verses appeareth:[20]

[18] For the development of this understanding of comedy, see Marvin T. Herrick, *Comic Theory in the Sixteenth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1950).
[19] Heading material, 4r.
[20] Heading material, 4r.

Beaumont follows this reading with lines—printed in Blackletter to mark them as Chaucer's words—from *The Miller's Prologue* to prove his point.[21] Chaucer's vindication comes from Beaumont's assertion that bawdy language and themes only appear to indicate the base nature of some of his characters, according to proper Classical decorum.[22] Such a reading of Chaucerian bawdry—with the Wife of Bath notably absent from this list of "meaner" character—is not completely misguided: Chaucer does present his readers with a variety of characters in his *Canterbury Tales*. At the same time, Beaumont reduces Chaucerian comedy to the function of moral instruction: the only function of Chaucer's comic works is to describe the lower people of his day and censure their behavior: "So that no man can imagine in that large compasse of his, purposing to describe all men liuing in those daies, how it had beene possible for him to haue left vntouched these filthie delights of the baser sort of people." As a recorder of his times, Chaucer *had* to include these base people for verisimilitude and to provide his readers with a model of how *not* to behave.

Beaumont continues his defense by comparing Chaucer to other poets; strikingly—and not surprisingly—all of the poets mentioned are Classical; Beaumont is defining Chaucer not in terms of his relations to other medieval authors.[23] *The*

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[21] "Let be thy leud drunken harlotry, / It is a sinne and eke a great folly / To apairen any man, or him defame / And eke to bring wiues in such blame.And a little after in excuse of himself for vttering those broad speeches of theirs, he vseth these words: Demeth not for Gods loue, that I say / Of ciuill entent, but that I mote reherce / Her tales all, ben they better or werce,/ Or els falsen some of my matere" The former passage is uttered by the Reve; the latter by the narrator of the *Tales*, and both are taken as authorial statements sheltering Chaucer from blame.

[22] For the traditional link between the comic and the base, see Herrick, 36-88.

[23] Skelton does define Chaucer in relation to medieval authors in *The Garlande or Chapelet of Laurel* by presenting the common trio of Chaucer, Lydgate, and Gower.

Canterbury Tales, "containe in them almost the same kind of Argument, that is handled in Comedies," and thus Chaucer bears comparison to Menander, Statius, Plautus, and Terence. At the very beginning of Chaucer's *Works*, Beaumont gives the reader a handy list of Classical comic conventions:

> The ring they beate is this, and farther they goe not: to shewe the wantonnesse of some young women: the loosenesse of many young men: the crafitie schoole-poynts of olde bawds: the fawning flatterie of clawing Parasites: the miserie of diuers fonde fathers, who for sauing their money keepe their sonnes so long vnmarried, till in the ende they prouide some vnfortunate matches for themselues: and their notable fallie in committing these children of theirs, to the attendance of their leudest and worst disposed seruing men.[24]

While not all of these conventions fit easily into Chaucer's works, they are broad enough to fit into some: *The Miller's Tale*, *The Merchant's Tale*, and *The Pardoner's Prologue* come to mind immediately. Beaumont thus links Chaucer to the decorous comedies of ancient Greece and Rome.

What Beaumont then does, however, is rather striking: even while comparing Chaucer to Classical authors, giving Chaucer authority by applying decorous criteria to his works, Beaumont singles out Chaucer for his originality:

> *Chaucers* deuise of his Canterburie Pilgrimage is merely his owne, without following the example of any that euer writ before him. His drift is to touch all sortes of men, and to discouer all vices of that Age, and that he doth in such sort, as he neuer failes to hit euery marke he leuels at.[25]

Beaumont's reading is still overtly moralistic: Chaucer's comedy deals with condemning vice through unflattering portraits of base characters. At the same time, praise that

[24] Heading material, 4v.
[25] Heading material, 4v.

Chaucer's "deuise . . . is merely his owne" serves to elevate Chaucer's achievement to a kind of miracle: in his vice-ridden age, without recourse to classical models, Chaucer was able to make a comedy that surpassed the comedies of Greek and Roman poets. Many panegyrics to Chaucer have been printed before now, but Beaumont's is the first to apply simultaneously the criteria of Classicism and novelty in the same breath; Chaucer is both similar to the Classics and superior to them by virtue of his *lack* of Classical models.[26]

The fact that Beaumont must defend Chaucer's comic sensibility is a good indication that the popular estimation of Chaucer was still as a poet of Comic bawdry;[27] having set Comedy aside, Beaumont then very tellingly praises Chaucer even more highly as a sententious *Tragic* poet:

> In his fiue Bookes of *Troylus* and *Creside*, and the Booke of the praise of good women, and of the merciless Ladie, and that of Blaunch, and of his Dreame (which is in your hands and was neuer yet imprinted) hee soareth much higher then he did in the other before: and in his *Troylus* is so sententious, as there bee few staues in that Booke, which are not concluded with some principall sentence: most excellently imitating *Homer* and *Virgil*, and borrowing often of them, and of *Horace* also, and other the rarest both Oratours and Poets that haue written.[28]

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[26] One almost hears echoes of Sidney's *Defense of Poesie* in stressing the poet's originality as a virtue: "Only the *P*oet disdaining to be tied to any such subiectio[n], lifted vp with the vigor of his won inuention, doth grow in effect into an other nature: in making things either better then nature bringeth foorth, or quite anew, forms such as neuer were in nature: as the *Heroes, Demigods, Cyclops, Chymeras, Furies*, and such like; so as he goeth hand in hand with nature, not enclosed within the narrow warrant of her gifts, but freely raunging within the Zodiack of his owne wit" (fol. B4v-C1r, 1595 edition).

[27] Consider Bishop John Earle's observation from his 1628 *Micro-cosmographie. Or, a peece of the world discovered; in essayes and characters. Newly composed for the northerne parts of this kingdome.* W. Stansby for E. Blount (STC 7439): "*A vulgar-spirited Man* [is one] […] That is taken only with broad and obscene wit, and hisses anything too deepe for him. That cryes *Chaucer* for his money aboue all our English poets, because the voice ha's gone so, and he ha's read none." (fol. I8r-I9r).

[28] Heading material, 4v.

Comparing Beaumont's treatment of Chaucerian tragedy to his treatment of Chaucerian comedy, one is struck immediately by a key distinction: whereas Chaucer resembled Classical comic poets without imitating them, Chaucer's tragic excellence is based on the fact that he "most excellently imitate[ed] . . . and borrow[ed]" from Homer, Vergil, Horace, and other "rarest" orators and poets. This shift in Beaumont's criteria ensures that the reader will approach Chaucer's more "sententious" works with more reverence and interest: Chaucer's *real* poetic virtues lie in his tragic works, primarily because they imitate the sententiousness of Greek and Latin poets.

Chaucer's tragic style, accordingly, must be seen as a Classical style, even though Beaumont continues to inflate Chaucer's value by stressing his originality. Chaucer is again compared to early Latin writers, but with the further claim that he surpasses them all in one vital aspect:

> Of whome, for the sweetnesse of this Poetrie may be saide, that which is reported of *Stesichorus*: and as *Cethegus* was termed *Suadae medulla*, so may *Chaucer* be rightly called, The pith and sinews of eloquence, and the verie life it selfe of all mirth and pleasant writing: besides, one gifte hee hath aboue other Authours, and that is, by the excellencie of his descriptions to possesse his Readers with a stronger imagination of seeing that done before their eyes, which they reade, than any other that euer writ in any tongue.[29]

Chaucer's virtues are again given as resting on his use of language; his role as "the pith an sinews of eloquence", the "*suadae medulla*" fits well with Thynne's construction of Chaucer's usefulness in the reformation of the English language. Beaumont stresses, however, Chaucer's *energeia*, his ability to paint vivid pictures through words that his

[29] Heading material, 4v.

readers may "see" in their imaginations. Although an Horatian understanding of poetry lurks behind these lines,[30] Beaumont's stress on the uniqueness of Chaucer's gifts continues the balancing act of praising Chaucer on his own terms, even while making him into a Classical author through comparison.

After further raising Chaucer's "snob appeal" through a mention of admirers of Chaucer at Oxford and Cambridge, Beaumont returns to his direct address of Speght, setting Speght as the foremost authority on Chaucer. Beaumont begins with a rather lengthy rhetorical question, addressed directly to Speght, aimed at linking Chaucer to great poets of the vernacular languages:

> Now (M. *Speght*) tell mee, seeing not only all Greeke and Latine Poets haue had their interpretours, and the most of them translated into our tonge, but the French also and Italian, as *Guillaume de Saluste seigneur du Bartas*, that most diuine French poet, *Petrarke*, and *Ariosto*, of whome this last instructed by M. *Harrington* doeth now speake as good English as he did Italian before, and is withal increased with many good notes, shall onely *Chaucer* our Poet, no lesse worthy than the best of them amongst all the Poets of the world like always neglected and neuer be so well vnderstood of his owne countriemen as strangers are?[31]

The nationalistic interest in Chaucer is palpable in these words: foreign poets have been raised to the level of Classical authors through great interpreters, and the English recognize the greatness of Italian and French literature. Speght partakes in the project of aureating English by canonizing Chaucer through this authoritative edition. Given the editions of Chaucer printed before 1598, it seems safe to say that Chaucer's reputation was solidified long before this collection; the conceit of Chaucer as a Classical author of

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[30] Consider Horace's famous passage on poetry as painting: "ut pictura poiesis" (*Art of Poetry*, 347-365).
[31] Heading material, 4v-5r.

the vernacular, however, has never been as pronounced as it is here. Beaumont is confident that through Speght's authoritative commentaries, Chaucer will at long last gain the fame he truly deserves:

> Well set your heart at rest, forseeing I was one of them which first set you in hand with this worke, and since you haue giuen me of your Copies to vse priuatly for mine owne pleasure, if you will not put them abroad your selfe, they shall abroad whether you will or no. Yet least many inconueniences might happen by this attempt of mine, and diuers things be set foorth contrarie vnto your owne liking, let mee once againe entreat you (as I haue done often heretofore) to yeeld to my iust and reasonable suit. Wherein you shall not only satisfie that conceit which I haue many years carried of your vnfained loue towards me: but pleasure many who daylie expect your paines herein, and perforume vnto *Chaucer* great part of that honour that he most worthily deserueth.[32]

The poetic trope of humility is strong here, as Speght is all but *forced* to give England this authoritative edition at the entreaties of his friend. Speght's version of Chaucer becomes synonymous with Chaucer himself; Speght's approach to Chaucer the only compelling one.

It is vital to note that Beaumont's dedication goes a long way to clarifying the influence of Spenser on Chaucer in the Late Renaissance: Spenser's poetic project is praised, and Chaucer is classicized: any poet responding to Chaucer now has to respond to him through Spenser. And given the aesthetic turn indicated by Beaumont's praise of Chaucer's "originality", it is easy to see why Chaucer gets comparably little imitation in the seventeenth century on the poetic page. In terms of *stagecraft*, however, Chaucer has been turned into an author on par with *Plautus* or *Terence*: and hence fair game for

[32] Heading material, 5r.

drama. Furthermore, Beaumont praises Chaucer's *comic* aspects—this may help explain the climate that produced Chaucerian dramas in the late Elizabethan and Jacobean eras: Chapman, Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher. While Chaucer had become dead and perfected by Spenser, almost unapproachable by contemporary poets—and really, how many poets have imitated Chaucer since?—he was still fair game for plundering plots and characters in the new medium of drama.

Beaumont's Classicizing letter is followed by a poetic dialogue between the reader and Chaucer; before the reader comes to Chaucer's own poetry, he is presented with a poetic imitation of Chaucer. The verse is printed in Italic, clearly differentiating it from the Blackletter that bears Chaucer's words throughout this edition. What is most striking about this short poem is the way in which it puts into Chaucer's own mouth words to praise Speght. The poem begins with Chaucer, somewhat unsurprisingly, condemning the quality of his editions up to this point:

> Rea. VV*Here hast thou dwelt, good Geffrey al this while,*
> *Unknowne to vs, saue only by thy bookes?*
>
> Chau. *In haulks, and hernes, God wot, and in exile,*
> *Where none vouchsaft to yield me words or looks:*
> *Till one which saw me there, and knew my friends,*
> *Did bring me forth: such grace sometime God sends:*[33]

By now, the hyperbole of this formulation is clear: Chaucer was far from banished and exiled before Speght. But through these words, Speght is cast as Chaucer's best friend,

[33] Heading material, 5v.

adding interpretive weight to whatever Speght says about him. Speght's greatest act, according to "Chaucer" is his scholarship as a translator of Middle English:

> Rea. *But who is he that hath thy books repar'd,*
> *And added moe, whereby thou art more graced?*
>
> Chauc. *The selfe same man who hath no labor spar'd,*
> *To helpe what time and writers had defaced:*
> *And made old wordes, which were vnknown of many,*
> *So plaine, that now they may be known of any.*[34]

The reputed accessibility of Speght's edition is where its virtue lies: Speght has provided a glossary to disambiguate older English terms. Whether Speght's additions "grace" this edition and whether his work has corrected the damage done by time and writes strikes the twenty-first century reader as a dubious question, but the pretensions of scholarship stand rhetorically in framing this edition as the culmination of the Renaissance project of publishing Chaucer's works. The poem closes with the reader linking love of Chaucer to love of Speght:

> Rea. *Well fare his heart: I loue him for thy sake,*
> *Who for thy sake hath taken all this pains.*
>
> Chauc. *Would God I knew some means amends to make,*
> *That for his toile he might receiue some gains.*
> *But wot ye what? I know his kindnesse such,*
> *That for my good he thinks no pains too much:*
> *And more than that; if he had knowne in time,*
> *He would haue left no fault in prose nor rime*.[35]

The fusion of Speght's apparatus with Chaucer's poetry is blatant here: the reader only loves Chaucer by virtue of the work of Speght. Chaucer himself owes Speght a debt of

[34] Heading material, 5v.
[35] Heading material, 5v.

gratitude; but for time, Speght might have ensured that "no fault" be found in Chaucer's poetry whatsoever. This poem adds yet another layer of authority to this edition, asserting the identity of Speght's work with Chaucer's.

Speght then reprints the portrait and genealogy from Stow's 1561 edition, followed by perhaps his most prominent contribution to this edition, his biography of Chaucer: *The Life of Our Learned English Poet, Geffrey Chaucer.* Although the details of Chaucer's life have already been presented in print,[36] this is the first time the reader of Chaucer is given the biography alongside the works. The *Life* provides the overt suggestion of reading Chaucer's works biographically, linking individual works to specific times and purposes in the poet's life. Speght begins by giving Chaucer's familial background, asserting against fact the gentility of Chaucer's family:

> I can by no means consent with them [who think the Chaucers were French in origin]; but rather must think, that their name and familie was of farre more auncient antiquitie, although by time decayed, as many moe haue been of much greater estate: and that the parents of Geffrey Chaucer were meere English, and he himselfe an Englishman borne. For els how could he haue come to that perfection in our language, as to be called, The first illumine of the English tongue, had not both he, and his parents before him, been born & bred among vs. (fol. bii v)[37]

National pride is overt in these lines, and the reasoning behind Speght's assertion of Chaucer's Englishness is telling: only someone whose family is of "auncient antiquitie" could possibly perfect the English language.

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[36] See particularly Stow's notes on Chaucer's life in his Histories, such as his 1598 *A suruay of London. Contayning the originall, antiquity, increase, modern estate, and description of that citie. With an appendix, containing in Latine, Libellum de situ Londini: written by W. Fitzstephen, in the raigne of Henry the second*. J. Widnet for J. Wolfe. (STC 23341).

[37] Beginning with Chaucer's biography, the Speght edition begins lettering the folios; following citations will reflect this shift.

Speght also makes Chaucer into a scholar of the first degree in this treatment of his early years; not only did Chaucer attend *both* Oxford and Cambridge (conveniently preventing Oxbridge rivalries over Chaucer's academic pedigree), he studied with John Wycliffe at Canterbury or Merton in Oxford. Chaucer's proto-Protestant credentials are thus secured, and the breadth of his knowledge extolled; according to Speght, Chaucer is a Dialectician, Rhetor, Poet, Philosopher, Theologian, and Mathematician. This last attribution is not only confirmed by Chaucer's *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, but by Chaucer's coat of arms; Chaucer's arms are, according to Speght, derived from Euclid: "It may be that it were no absurditie to thinke (nay it seemeth likely, Chaucers skill in Geometry considered) that hee tooke the groundes and reasons of these Armes out of Euclyde, the 27. And 28. Proposition of first book" (fol. bii v). As if this education were not enough to make him one of the most brilliant men in England, Speght has Chaucer finish his education at the Inns of Court in London (fol. biii r). Speght thus casts Chaucer as a gentlemanly, erudite poet of the ilk of Spenser, Sidney, Lyly, or Greene; Speght's Chaucer is not a popular, uneducated Shakespeare.

Not surprisingly, Speght takes a cue from Stow in stressing Chaucer's ties to John of Gaunt through marriage: "by this marriage he became brother in law of Iohn of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster, as hereafter appeareth" (fol. biii v).[38] Following this item is *Stemma peculiar Gaufredi Chauceri Poetae celeberrimi*, Chaucer's family tree given in Latin (fol. biv r). Speght's choice to use Latin further marks this edition as "scholarly",

[38] This portrait fits with Forni's estimation of the Speght edition as creating a "royal" Chaucer: Forni, 76.

assuming that the intended reader can read Latin. The accomplishments of Chaucer's children and descendants are also given with long Latin glosses, heightening the status of the Chaucer family.

The narrative feel of Speght's *Life* becomes apparent when Speght finishes his digression on the fates of Chaucer's descendants, and turns to a list of Chaucer's personal wealth and accomplishments: "BVt now to returne to Geffrey Chaucer, although he had lands and reuenues in diuers places, and that to the yearely value, as some say, almost of a thousand pounds, yet the place of his most abode was at Woodstocke in a faire house of stone next to the Kings place" (fol. bvi r). Despite the tidbit of trivia that Chaucer enjoyed the park near Woodstock, what follows is almost exclusively an account of Chaucer's success: wealthy, tied to royalty, an exemplar of a gentleman. Not only did he render good service and reap high rewards, he knew how to navigate the dangers of courtly politics: "For liuing in such troublesome times, wherein few knew what parts to take, no maruell if he came into some danger, nay great maruell that hee fell not into greater danger. But as hee was learned, so was he wise, and kept himself much out of the way in Holland, Zeland, and France, where he wrote most of his bookes" (fol. bvi v). Like the persecuted sixteenth-century English Protestant printing on the Continent, Chaucer must write from afar for security's sake. For over one hundred years now Chaucer and his works have been linked to gentlemanly success, but here in Speght's *Life* the reader is given tangible proof of it: his Revenues, his Service, his Rewards, and his

Friends. The wisdom contained in Chaucer's works is thus implied as a means to courtly success.

Perhaps the most central portion of Speght's *Life* is his treatment of Chaucer's Books; they serve to strengthen the suggestion to read Chaucer's works in light of his biography (fol. bvi v-ci v). According to Speght, John of Gaunt was the direct inspiration of two major Chaucerian poems: "Iohn of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster, at whose commandement he made the Treatise *of the alliance betwixt Mars and Venus*: and also the booke of the Duchesse" (bvi v). Personal background is also given for *The Canterbury Tales* and *Fly from the prees*:

> The Canterbury Tales for the most part were of his owne inuention, yet some of them translated, and penned in King Richards daies the second, and after the insurrection of Iacke Strawe, which was in the 4. Yeere of the same King: for in the Tale of the Nunnes priest, he maketh mention thereof . . .
> The balad, *Fly from the prease*: made by Chaucer on his death bed.
> (fol. ci r)

The historical, biographical dimension added to these poems directly affects the ways in which they are read: *The Canterbury Tales* becomes (probably justly) Chaucer's life's work, and *Fly from the prease* his dying exhortation to virtue. Given this biographical focus, and Chaucer's solidly Protestant *ethos*, it is a testament to good judgment that Speght casts doubt on *Jack Vpland* while upholding the disturbingly Catholic "An ABC: "*Iack Vpland is supposed to be his. But the A.B.C. called* Priere de nostre Dame*, is certainly Chaucers doing*" (fol. ci r). The reader of Speght's Chaucer has one eye ever

turned to the life of the author as a means of interpreting his works, products of his successful courtly life.

The final portion of Speght's *Life* deals with Chaucer's afterlife, giving epitaphs and testimonials to Chaucer's poetic virtue (fol. ci v-ciii v).[39] The epitaphs are taken from Brigham, Hoccleve, Lydgate, Stow, and Surgione. While this posthumous praise demonstrates continued love for Chaucer, the testimonies are more telling as suggestions for reading Chaucer. Thynne's Epistle is noted—and will be provided by Speght in a few pages. More striking is the range of genres implied in Ascham's praise of Chaucer:

> Master *Ascham* in one place calleth him *English Homer*, and makes no doubt to say, that hee valueth his authoritie of as high estimation, as euer he did either Sophocles or Euripides in Greeke. And in another place, where he delcareth his opinion of English versifying, he vseth these wordes: *Chaucer and Petrarke, those two worthy wittes, deserue iust praise*. And last of all, in his discourse of Germanie, hee putteth him nothing behind either *Thucicides* or *Homer* for his liuely descriptions of site of places and nature of persons both in outward shape of bodies, and inward disposition of minde; adding this withal, that not the proudest, that hath written in any tongue whatsoeuer, in these pointes can carrie away the praise from him. (fol. ciii r)

Chaucer is compared to Homer, the father of Greek (and indeed Western) literature, and thus put among the pantheon of epic national poets. While Chaucer's status as the father of English letters may make him Homeric, his own works are probably more akin to the other genres in Ascham's praise: drama (Sophocles and Euripides), lyric (Petrarch), and history (Thucicides). Again, Chaucer is compared to Classical antiquity and classicized vernacular authors, while stressing his links to classical genres of writing.

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[39] This is a detail that this edition shares, as we shall see, with editions of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* printed before 1598.

Spenser's presence in the testimonies, however, stresses his self-constructed link to Chaucer. Speght opens with what is perhaps Spenser's most obvious tribute to Chaucer: "Master *Spenser* in his first Eglogue of his Shepheardes Kalender, calleth him *Titirus,* the god of Shepheards, comparing him to the worthinesse of the Romane Titirus Virgil." Speght's classicization of Chaucer is shown clearly to be the descendant of Spenser's classicization: it was Spenser who put Chaucer in a Greco-Roman eclogue, the English equivalent to the Latin Vergil. Furthermore, Speght marks Spenser out as having a special affinity with Chaucer:

> In his Faerie Queene in his discourse of friendship, as thinking himself most worthy to be Chaucers friend, for his like naturall disposition that Chaucer had, hee sheweth that none that liued with him, nor none that came after him, durst presume to reuiue Chaucers lost labours in that vnperfite tale of the Squire, but only himself: which he had not done, had he not felt (as he saith) the infusion of Chaucers owne sweete spirite, suruiuing within him. (fol. ciii r)

This statement is as much a canonization of Spenser as it is of Chaucer: Chaucer and Spenser have become fused in the imagination of the reader. Speght is quoting the Fourth book of the *Faerie Queene*, which does indeed treat friendship, and it is a continuation of the *Squire's Tale*: Speght here puts forth the notion that Spenser is the perfection of Chaucer, a present-day friend, with a "like naturall disposition that Chaucer had," Chaucer's true heir. Spenser's influence on the character of Chaucer presented in this edition cannot, then, be underestimated. By asserting that Chaucer and Spenser have a special affinity, the character of Spenser's works—which we shall examine in the next chapter—becomes the character of the works of Chaucer; indeed, Spenser's printed

works copy many features of the Thynne and Stow Chaucers, and Speght's edition, in turn, imitates the editorial *ethos* of *The Shepheardes Kalendar*. Spenser's poetic project becomes Chaucer's poetic project: Spenser completes what Chaucer has begun. Brief testimonials by Camden and Sidney conclude the *Life*, thus firmly linking Chaucer to the poets and poetic theorists of the English Renaissance.

After a single page indicating Speght's editorial virtues (*Faults escaped, and some things omitted in the newe Additions*), the reader is given precise instructions on how to read Chaucer (fol. ciiii r-cvi v).[40] Now that the reader has been assured that Speght is the true reviver and interpreter of Chaucer's works—strengthened by the ethical affinity of this edition with the works of Spenser—Speght gives his *Arguments to euery Tale and Booke*. Speght's instructions on how to interpret *The Canterbury Tales* should not be surprising, given the material above:

> The Author in these Prologues to his Canterbury Tales, doth describe the reporters thereof for two causes: first, that the Reader seeing the qualitie of the person, may iudge of his speech accordingly: wherein Chaucer hath most excellently kept that *decorum*, which Horace requireth in that behalf. Secondly to shew, how that euen in our language, that may be performed for descriptions, which the Greeke and Latine Poets in their tongues haue done at large. And surely this Poet in the iudgement of the best learned, is not inferior to any of them in his descriptions, whether they be of persons, times, or places. (fol. ciiii r)

Speght purports to know Chaucer's intentions in writing the General prologue: Chaucer writes as a follower of classical decorum and as an embellisher of the English tongue. As a means of reading the *Tales*, Speght's observation focuses the reader firmly on *ethos*:

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[40] The *Faults escaped* page—between ciii and ciiii—is not lettered. Following citations reflect the numbers given in the edition.

every tale is to be judged in relation to the character of its teller. Although Speght somewhat limits this approach by asserting that Chaucer's characters follow Horatian *decorum*, his sensitivity to the distance between teller and tales is admirable. Less admirable is Speght's continuation of the argument of the *General Prologue*, which turns the *Canterbury Tales* into a simple satirical portrait of its times:

> Vnder the Pilgrimes, being a certain number, and all of differing trades, he comprehendeth all the people of the land, and the nature and disposition of them in those daies; namely, giuen to deuotion rather of custome then of zeale. In the Tales is shewed the state of the Church, the Court, and Countrey, with such Arte and cunning, that although none could deny himself to be touched, yet none durst complaine that he was wronged. For the man being of greater learning then the most, and backed by the best in the land, was rather admired and feared, then any way disgraced. Who so shall read these his works without preiudice, shall find that he was a man of rare conceit and of great reading. (fol. ciiii r)

Chaucer becomes a satirist of the bad old days of medieval England, with his poetry serving as a screen behind which he could decry the evils of his day. This specifically moral satirical view of *The Canterbury Tales* is sustained through Speght's arguments to the individual tales: most of his "arguments" are simple plot summaries with an implied lesson or decorous notes; *The Knight's Tale* is "A Tale fitting the person of a Knight" (fol. ciiii r); in *The Miller's Tale*, Nicholas is "rewarded accordingly" (fol. ciiii r); the moral of *The Nonnes priests tale* is "to embrace true friends, and to beware of flatterers" (fol. cv r); and *The Plowman's Tale* is, "A complaint against the pride and couetousnesse of the cleargie" (fol. cv r).

Significantly, Speght downplays the link between *The Rime of Sir Topas* and Chaucer, while stressing the authority of *The Plowman's Tale*. In his list of arguments,

Speght gives this rather cryptic description of *The Rime of Sir Topas*: "A Northern tale of an outlandish Knight purposely vttered by Chaucer, in a differing rime and stile from the other tales, as though he himselfe were not the author, but only the reporter of the rest" (fol. cv r). Speght perhaps catches on to the parodic nature of the tale by noticing its metrical and stylistic oddities, but does not characterize it as an outright joke or a sign of Chaucerian self-deprecation: Chaucer writes himself as merely *reporting* this tale before launching into *Chaucer's Tale*, his truly authored behemoth of a moral treatise. The parodic humor of *Sir Topas* is not to be read as originating in Chaucer; Chaucer is a poet of the *sentence* found in *Chaucer's Tale*. The seriousness of Chaucer's poetic enterprise is further bolstered by Speght's avowal to the authority of *The Plowman's Tale*: it is "made no doubt by Chaucer with the rest of the Tales. For I haue seene it in written hand in Iohn Stowes Library in a booke of such antiquity, as seemeth to haue beene written neare to Chaucers time" (fol. cv r). Based on rather flimsy manuscript evidence ("neare to Chaucers time"?) and Stow's scholarly authority, Speght asserts that this proto-Protestant invective is indeed part of the Chaucerian canon, giving further evidence of Chaucer as a poet of moral correction.

Speght's further arguments continue to explain the works to readers in oddly reductive terms. In Speght, the *Romance of the Rose* is a translation in which "the Author hath many glaunces at the hypocrisie of the Clergie," a somewhat bizarre focal point for a love-allegory (fol.cv v). Speght conflates *Troilus and Criseyde* with *The Testament of Cressida*, giving a scholarly *imprimatur* on the Henricksoned antifeminist reading of

Crisedye, whose fate is left unstated by Chaucer's work: "In this excellent booke is shewed the feruent loue of Troylus to Creseid, whome he enioyed for a time: and her great vntruth to him againe in giuing herself to Diomedes, who in the end did so cast her off, that she came to great miserie" (fol. cv v). Some of these reductive arguments seek to gloss over Speght's uncertainties about the works in question. *The Astrolabe* is given this rather lame description: "This booke written to his sonne in the yeere of our Lord 1391. And in the 14. Of K.Richard 2. Standeth so good at this day, especially for the Horizon of Oxford, as in the opinion of the learned, it cannot be amended" (fol. cvi r). This statement tells us less about the actual content of the work than it assures us that it is an erudite work indeed. The complex and rich *Book of Fame* is tersely described: "In this book is shewed how the deeds of all men and women, bee they good or bade, are carried by report to posteritie" (fol. cvi r). This characterization gives a facile key to a work whose central concern is the doubtful nature of fame: some who deserve fame do not have it, and some who do not deserve it are given fame. The epistemological ambiguity and ambivalence of Fame are diminished by Speght's easy answer.[41] Speght's arguments are more apt to give readers simple plot summaries or easy answers than they are to give the readers penetrating interpretations.

Some of Speght's longest arguments, however, *do* suggest interpretations for their respective works; Chaucer's biography is the key to understanding *The Book of the Duchess* (fol. cv v), *The Testament of Loue* (fol. cvi r), and *Chaucers dreame* (fol. cvi v).

[41] See Martin, 61-62.

In the event that readers missed the Chaucer/John of Gaunt connection throughout the prefatory material, Speght subtitles *The Booke of the Duchesse* with *the death of Blanche*, and interprets it as a straightforward allegorical account of historical events: "By the person of a mourning knight sitting vnder an Oke, is ment Iohn of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, greatly lamenting the death of Blaunch the Duchesse, who was his first wife" (fol. cv v). As above, Chaucer's biography is the key by which the reader is to unlock the meaning of his works. Speght's treatment of *The Testament of Loue* is somewhat more involved:

> This booke is an imitation of *Boetius de Consolatione philosophiae*, in the first part wherof, Loue by way of Legacie doeth bequeath to all them which follow her lore, the knowledge of truth from errour, wherby they may rightly iudge of the causes of crosse fortune, and such aduersities as befall them, whether in their suites of loue or otherwise, and so in the end obtaine their wished desires. In the second part shee teacheth the knowledge of one verie God our Creator, as also the state of grace and the state of glory: all the which good things are figured by a Margarite pearle. Chaucer did compile this booke as a comfort to himself after great griefs conceiued for some rash attempts of the commons, with whom he had ioyned, and thereby was in feare to loose the fauour of his best friends. (fol. cvi r)

Chaucer's tie to Boethius and Boethian ideas has been clear throughout his publication history: Caxton printed his translation of *Boece* and his *Parliament of Fowls* anthology stressed Boethian philosophy. Here, however, Speght casts Chaucer *himself* as a second Boethius, having recourse to philosophy as a consolation in life's troubles; Chaucer's supposed political involvement in the Jack Straw insurrection (mentioned a few pages ago in Speght's *Life*) becomes the historical fact around which this work revolves. Lest

Chaucer grow too far from court, though, Speght is sure to stress his Lancastrian connections again in the argument for *Chaucers dreame*:

> This dream deuised by Chaucer, seemeth to be a couert report of the marriage of Iohn of Gaunt the kings sonne with Blanch the daughter of Henry Duke of Lancaster, who after long loue, during the time wherof the Poet fainteth them to be dead, were in the end by consent of friends happily married, figured by a bird bringing in her bill an hearbe, which restored them to life againe. Here also is shewed Chaucers match with a certaine Gentlewoman, who although shee was a stranger, was notwithstanding so well liked and loued of the Lady Blanch, and her Lord, as Chaucer himself also was, that gladly they concluded a marriage between them. (fol. cvi v)

This highly autobiographical reading of this (apocryphal) work paints the portrait of Chaucer as an intimate insider in John of Gaunt's circle, even while giving evidence of Chaucer's own love life. The length of this argument may also be attributed to the fact that it is one of the pieces "newly printed" by Speght; *The Floure and the Leafe* also receives a thorough argument, although it is not overtly biographical—new works are more in need of plot summaries than works well known. Even so, the weight placed on Chaucer's biography as an interpretive key should not be understated: Speght suggests that we read Chaucer's works in light of his life, with an eye to their value for moral instruction. Significantly, no ballads are given arguments—lighter Chaucerian love-lyrics are not afforded the dignity of scholarly examination.

With the conclusion of Speght's *Arguments*, the 1598 edition shows itself to have strong affinities to the character of the 1561 Stow. Speght reprints Thynne's epistle to King Henry VIII (fol. ¶i r-¶ii r), then gives a table of contents and foliation (fol. ¶ii v-Aiii v), followed by the now-traditional *Eight Goodly Questions, To the King's Noble Grace,*

Chaucer's Prophecy, and *The General Prologue* of *The Canterbury Tales* fol. (Aiv r-Aiv v).[42] The three introductory poems and the *General Prologue* share the same running title: "The Prologues." What is most striking about Speght is the now solid typographical distinction between Chaucer and modern English: Chaucer's text is exclusively printed in Blackletter, while the modern English—down to the running titles—is printed in Italic. The historical distance between Chaucer's language and the language of the reader is more overt than it has ever been before. Furthermore, Speght enumerates his folios with Arabic numerals; the Roman numerals that foliated every Thynne and Stow edition are gone in favor of the more modern notation: the Speght Chaucer is to look like a work of modern humanistic scholarship, encapsulating and commenting on the ancient work it frames.

From *The Canterbury Tales* to *The Court of Loue* Speght's 1598 edition is rhetorically identical to the 1561 Speght: the layout is the same, the title-page borders are the same Tudor family tree, the foliation is the same. Speght only changes foliation at fol. 355v to include his "new" works, *Chaucers dreame, The Floure and the Leafe* and, which he significantly places before *Chaucers wordes vnto his owne Scriuener*: Chaucer's warning to copyists still ends the works of Chaucer as it did for Stow, before the reader is turned to Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*. Stow's edition, then, should be seen as the heart of the 1598 Speght: although framed very differently, and subsequently changed

[42] The seemingly random choice of symbols for the folios here illustrates some of the bibliographic difficulties found in Speght.

in 1602, Stow's characterization of Chaucer's Works continued to be the authoritative characterization at the end of the sixteenth century.

Only after *The Siege of Thebes* does the reader again find Speght exerting his guiding influence in approaching Chaucer's works: as he began the edition with scholarly apparatus, so does he end it. The first item given is *A Catalouge of translations and Poetical deuises, in English mitre or verse, done by Iohn Lidgate Monk of Bury* (fol. 394r-394v); having presented his canon of Chaucer, Speght goes on to suggest the canon of one of Chaucer's early imitators. The foliation ends at this point, clearly separating the Lydgate coda from the Chaucerian ending materials. As promised, Speght then gives *The old and obscure words of Chaucer, explaned* (fol. Aaaa1r-Bbbb1v). The running title for this section, significantly is "The hard words of Chaucer, explaned": thanks to Speght, Chaucer's language now need not be "hard." Typographic historical distance continues to be stressed in the glossary: Chaucer's words are printed in Blackletter while their modern equivalents are given in Italic. In terms of function, the 1598 Speght gives a modern English word or phrase after Chaucer's Middle English; the format is straightforward and usable as the reader substitutes the modern term for the medieval.

The next two items betray the rhetorical complexity of Speght's edition: *The French in Chaucer, translated* (fol. Bbbb1v-Bbbb2r) and *Most of the Authors cited by G. Chaucer and his workes, by name declared* (fol. Bbbb2r-Bbbb2v). Throughout this edition, Speght has walked the line between touting his edition as a work of high culture, an edition of Chaucer to be enjoyed by the learned and educated, while at the same time

providing materials to allow less literate readers access to his works. The fact that Speght anticipated readers who could not read simple French phrases is striking: while it may be an example of Speght's intended thoroughness of translation or a nod to English national spirit, the most obvious implication is that Speght foresaw a broader readership than *simply* the learned souls for whom he was supposedly making this edition. The same conclusion can be drawn from Speght's *Authors Cited*, which lists fifty-five authors cited throughout the Works. As usual, Chaucer's word—the name—is printed in Blackletter, while the author's description is printed in Italic. The descriptions of the authors, however, leave much to be desired. Consider this sampling of entries:

> *Dantes Aligerus*, an Italian, and borne in Florence, liued 1341.
> *Franciscus Petrarcha*, an Italian borne, did write when *Chaucer* was a young man. *Floruit* 1374.
> *Galfride Vinesaufe* was a Norman by his parents but borne in England: hee did write a Complaint for the death of Richard the first, who was slain with an arrow as he was in hunting.
> *Hermes*, an Egyptian, disciple to Plato, did write of many strange things.
> *Seneca*, a Spaniard borne in Corduba, a singular Philosopher, did write many things: hee liued in the time of Nero, by whome he was put to death.

The details Speght chooses to include look rather laughable to a twenty-first century reader of Chaucer; what would have been clear even to a reader of Chaucer in 1598, however, is how sparse these descriptions are: they provide tidbits of information without giving any of the more salient details of the authors involved (Dante isn't even identified as a poet!). Herein we find a paradox similar to the effect of the French translations: readers who were aware of these authors would not need Speght's unhelpful identifications; readers who were unaware of these authors would learn precious little

from Speght's glosses. What Speght's *Authors cited* list amounts to is a tool for pedantic name-dropping; the casual reader of Chaucer may refer generally to a grave author with little real knowledge of the man or his works.

The final entry in Speght's 1598 edition is his errata list and annotations: *Corrections of some faults, and Annotations vpon some places* (fol. Bbbb3r-Bbbb4v,*r-*v, O1r-O1v,*r-*v). Here we find the evidence of Speght's noted hastiness in producing this edition: they are a list of afterthoughts, some correcting real errors, some simply giving a reflection on a word or phrase. As usual, Chaucer is in Blackletter, Speght in Italic. The annotations appear to be more of an excuse for Speght to show off his erudition, dropping references to classical authors or historical events, than a help to the reader. Perhaps the most striking of these annotations are the two referring to religious practices in medieval England. "And Palmers to seeken strange stronds," prompts Speght to explain the difference between palmers and pilgrims. "In all the orders fower is none, [et]c." gives Speght the chance to tell the reader what the four orders of friars were; the past tense is telling—though these friars still existed in 1598 (and today), they are cast as remnants of the past, medieval practices that England has given up. A recent loss to the Reformation is found in Speght's explanation of popular practices for the Vigils of feast days. The overwhelming sense of these annotations is that the medieval past of Chaucer's day (and, in reality, only removed by about one hundred years) has the same status as the civilizations of antiquity: they are past and irretrievably gone. This edition

thus ends on a decidedly "scholarly" note, though Speght's last words are those of apology:

> These faults and many mo committed through the negligence of Adam Scriuener, notwithstanding Chaucers great charge to the contrary, might haue ben amended in the text it selfe, if time had serued: Wheras now no more, then the Prologues only, are in that sort corrected: which fell out so, because they were last printed. Sentences also, which are many and excellent in this Poet, might haue ben noted in the margent with some marke, which now must be left to the search of the Reader: of whom we craue in Chaucers behalf that, which Chaucer in the end of one of his books requesteth for himself, *Qui legis, emendes autorem, non reprehendas*. FINIS.

Speght's woes over the edition that might have been would have to be remedied by the grace of the reader until 1602.

In 1602, Speght got his chance to amend the edition whose faults he had lamented four years earlier: A. Islip's printing of *The Works of our antient and lerned English poet, G. Chaucer, newly printed*.[43] Boswell and Holton note that this last Renaissance edition of Chaucer prints "Chaucers A.B.C." for the first time, and Speght himself took pains to mark in several places this new feature of the edition, as well as his inclusion of *Jack Upland*, reversing his previous—and correct—critical judgment in 1598. Indeed, from the very first lines of the title-page, the reader is told how much of a revision this edition has been: "THE WORKES OF OVR Ancient and learned English Poet, Geffrey Chavcer, newly Printed. *To that which was done in the former Impression, thus much is now*

[43]STC 5080 and 5081; STC 5081 uses the same title-page as STC 5077; it is otherwise rhetorically identical to STC 5080.

added."[44] There follows a numbered list of the revision Speght has accomplished in this edition:

1. In the life of Chaucer many things inserted.
2. The whole worke by old Copies reformed.
3. Sentences and Prouerbes noted.
4. The Signification of the old and obscure words prooued: also Caracters shewing from what Tonge or Dialect they be deriued.
5. The Latine and French, not Englished by Chaucer, translated.
6. The Treatise called *Iack Vpland*, against Friers: and Chaucers A.B.C. called *La Priere de nostre Dame*, at this Impression is added.[45]

This list bespeaks an even greater level of editorial shaping than in Speght's previous edition. As we shall see, the insertions into Chaucer's life are not terribly great, but the editorial apparatus of noting sententious parts and the greater degree of translation given indicate an edition whose character insists on leading readers to the "proper" interpretations of Chaucer's works. Even a reader who lacks Latin and French can profitably navigate this edition, learning what is valuable in the Chaucerian canon.

The title-page border differs from that of the previous edition, but retains a decidedly neoclassical character. As in the 1598 edition, the text is placed in an antique monument, with a grapevine-festooned arbor forming the top of the page. Two putti sit atop the pillars on either side of the page; on the left, a putto gazes pensively down while holding a pinwheel; across from him, another putto appears to be spinning. Below them stand allegorical women: on the left, we find a woman leaning on a cross, holding a book and an inkhorn, representing Christian revelation; across from her stands Justice, sword

[44] Heading materials 1r; as in the previous edition, the heading materials are not foliated.
[45] Heading materials, 1r

and scales in her hand. Beneath them are two more putti: on the left, the putto holds an hourglass, marking the passing of time; on the right, the putto wrestles a snake and dandies with apples. The immediate connotation is that of a young Hercules, though the Christian allegory of original sin is also suggested. At the very bottom of the page, ornately framed, is a death's-head over serpent-entwined crossed bones. The most significant aspect of this border is simply the fact that it continues to frame Chaucer in terms of classical antiquity: Chaucer is an antique author, and has been since Thynne began using such borders. More directly, the border recalls the reader to serious matters: learning, faith, justice, time, death. Chaucer's works are to be read and interpreted along these lines: tales valuable for their serious, philosophical content.

The 1602 Speght follows the title-page with Chaucer's portrait and lineage, highlighting from the start Chaucer's pedigree; Speght's rewritten dedication to Robert Cecil, however, contains more noteworthy changes.[46] After a formulaic, flattering introduction, Speght notes that despite its great virtues, there were problems that required his attention: "But as these things then through want of time were not fully perfected, so were there som other things omitted, at the next Impression to be performed."[47] The 1598 was not "perfect", but any reader of that edition would have known as much through Speght's lamentations in that edition. By contrast, the 1602 edition accomplishes a perfect "reformation" of Chaucer:

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[46] STC 5081 places the portrait opposite the verses "Vpon the Picture of Chaucer," a rather appropriate variation.

[47] Heading materials, 3r.

> Now therefore, that both by old written Copies, and by Ma. William Thynns praise-worthy labours, I haue reformed the whole Worke, whereby Chaucer for the most part is restored to his owne Antiquitie, and noted withal most of his Sentences and Prouerbes; hauing also with some Additions reduced into due place those former Notes and Collections; as likewise proued the significations of most of the old and obscure vvords, by the tongues and dialects, from vvhence they are deriued, translated also into English all the Latine and French by him vsed; and lastly, added to his Workes some things of his own doing, as the treatise of Iacke Vpland against Friers, and his A.B.C. commonly called, *La Priere de nostre Dame*.[48]

For a second time, addressed now to Cecil, the reader finds all of the features that make this edition more authoritative than the previous one; what is most striking, however, is Speght's contention that only now has the Chaucerian canon been properly "reformed", and thereby "restored [Chaucer] to his owne Antiquitie." The overt pretension here, of course, is that Speght has worked as a dutiful textual editor and restored Chaucerian texts to their original state, a pretension that is clearly incorrect in light of modern textual scholarship.[49] At the same time, Speght simultaneously asserts a new, reformed Chaucer even while firmly categorizing him as an author of "Antiquitie". Speght's new Chaucer is even more solidly fixed in the past, the temporal distance between him and the reader emphasized.

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[48] Heading materials, 3r.

[49] Pearsall is particularly blunt on this point: "The booksellers' reprints in the sixteenth century of William Thynne's edition of Chaucer's works are not in any sense 'editions.' They are set up, line by line, from their predecessor, diverging from it only insofar as the text undergoes the usual mechanical degeneration at the hands of the compositor . . . The first 'edition' for which Thomas Speght was responsible, that of 1598, is firmly within this tradition of reprint-within-augmentation, though the added matter now includes the beginnings of an editorial apparatus" (Pearsall, 71). What Pearsall overlooks, of course, is the radical rhetorical differences between the Chaucerian books of the sixteenth century, whether or not the texts truly constitute new "editions".

Speght follows his new dedication with a rewritten note "To the Readers"; whereas in 1598 his note spent much time apologizing for the unpolished state of the edition, in 1602 Speght spends most of his time defending Chaucer from criticism by stressing his status as an antique author. After a third litany of the improvements found in this edition, Speght gives his first pronouncement on how to read these works:

> But of some things I must aduertise the Readers; as first, that in Chaucer they shall find the proper names oftentimes much differing from the Latin and Greeke, from whence they are drawne: which they must not condemne in him as a fault. For both he, and other Poets, in translating such words from one language into another, doe vse, as the Latins and Greeks do the sundry Species of Metaplasmus: as Campaneus for Capaneus: Atheon for Acteon: Adriane for Ariadne. Which Chaucer doth in other words also: as gon for begon: leue for beleue: peraunter for peraduenture: loueden for did loue: woneden for did won, & c.[50]

While it may initially seem as though Speght is stating the obvious—Chaucer uses different forms of names and other words—the hortatory tone and the justification are striking: readers "*must not*" condemn this practice because it was used by Latin and Greek authors. Speght tells the readers what to think, and justifies this command with an appeal to antiquity. This appeal to antiquity is repeated, rather unnecessarily, in the very next sentence: "It is his manner likewise, imitating the Greekes, by two negatiues to cause a greater negation: as, I ne said none ill." The modern scholar knows that such double negation was a natural feature of Chaucer's English, as well as, for that matter, the English spoken in Speght's day; Speght, however, cannot bear such an explanation, and instead uses it as an opportunity to make Chaucer a Greek scholar.

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[50] Heading materials, 3v.

Speght's treatment of Chaucer's use of authors predates Foucault's ideas on the "author function" by several centuries, yet arrives at a similar conclusion: in Chaucer, works and authors are interchangeable terms: "And, for the Author, to name some part of his worke: as, Argonauticon for Apollonius Rhodius. And that sometime in the genitiue case a former substantiue being vnderstood: as, read Aeneidos: Metamorphoseos: for the Authors of those workes."[51] This mode of thinking is quite significant. Rather than bringing to a reader's attention the works of antiquity with which Chaucer's works are in dialogue, Speght creates links between Chaucer the author and authors of antiquity. Name-recognition and reflected fame are more important to Speght than the artistry of the works: the reader is to keep in mind the great authors referenced by Chaucer, rather than the works from which he draws; rather than reading a work, such as the *Aeneid*, Speght would have his reader read an author, Virgil. This relatively small detail speaks volumes about how Speght understands his edition and how he is suggesting his edition be understood: as a monument to a great man, rather than a collection of great works.

To overcome contemporary criticism, however, Speght cannot ignore the formal features of Chaucer's works entirely, and thus follows his author-centered note with a justification of Chaucer's meter that is at once powerfully unhelpful and insistently coercive. To the modern reader unaccustomed to Middle English, Chaucer's meter may sound broken; indeed, this lack of recognition most likely accounts for the focus on Chaucer as a poet of *sentence*, since his style is inaccessible to those who read him as

[51] Heading material, 3v.

though he were speaking Modern English. Speght's defense, however, runs along the lines of pure assertion and author-worship:

> And for his verses, although in diuers places they may seeme to vs to stand of vnequall measures: yet a skilfull Reader, that can scan them in their nature, shall find it otherwise. And if a verse here and there fal out of sillable shorter or longer than another, I rather aret it to the negligence and rape of Adam Scriuener, that I may speake as Chaucer doth, than to any vnconning or ouersight in the Author: For how fearfull he was to haue his works miswritten, or his verse mismeasured, may appeare in the end of his fift booke of Troylus and Creseide, where he writeth thus:
>
> And for there is so great diuersitie
> In English, and in writing of our tongue,
> So pray I God, that none miswrite thee,
> Ne thee mismetre for defaut of tongue, &c.[52]

The reader is not told *why* Chaucer's verses are not "unequal", but is assured that if he is "skillful" (another unhelpfully ambiguous term), the verse will not sound unequal. Such a supercilious claim is disappointing even for Speght. As to the corruption of the text by copyists, Speght does give some textual justification—printed in Blackletter no less—from *Troilus and Criseyde*. This anxiety over corruption, however, underscores Speght's contention that Chaucer's writing is perfect: *he* could not have written anything poorly, and what flaws exist are blamed on scribes: Chaucer himself scolds Adam. Speght, the modern printed editor, promises to reform what had been marred in the Middle Ages by careless rapist-scriveners. In this respect, Speght maneuvers rather shiftily to defend Chaucer's verse against complaints: either the reader is simply unskillful or the text has been marred by a copyist; Chaucer's—and Speght's—reputation stands intact.

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[52] Heading material, 4r.

Speght ends his introduction to the reader with a self-commendatory note on etymologies and a final portrait of Chaucer's character. As to the matter of the etymologies of words found in this edition, Speght advertises this addition while again asserting his competence in such matters:

> Moreouer, whereas in the explanation of the old words, sundry of their significations by me giuen, may to some seeme coniectural; yet such as vnderstand the Dialects of our tongue, especially in the North, and haue knowledge in some other languages, will iudge otherwise: and for the satisfying of others, which want such skill, I haue by these Caracters a.g.l.i.f.d.b. notified to them from what tong or Dialect such words are deriued.[53]

Again, Speght fails to provide any hard evidence for his mastery—or even competency—in philological matters: he assures the reader that those "in the know" will naturally see that his etymologies are not mere conjecture. Moreover, Speght asserts his competency not only in English philology by his knowledge of Northern English dialects, but also in the meanings of words in Arabic, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Dutch (the "b" standing for words in various and sundry "British" dialects). Speght thus essentially puts his scholarship beyond critique: what casual reader of Chaucer in 1602 would be such a polyglot as to quibble with Speght's etymologies? Speght has solidified his position as the unquestionably editor and interpreter of Chaucer and his canon.

At the very end of his "To the Reader", however, Speght characteristically dissembles by making a rather odd distinction between a "Commentor" and one who merely "explains" in the context of praising Chaucer's character. Like so many of his

[53] Heading material, 4r.

twenty-first-century heirs, Speght ends his note to the reader with a call for further scholarship:

> It were a labor worth commendation, of some scholler, that hath skil and leisure, would confer Chaucer with those learned Authors, both in Greek and Latin, from whom he hath drawn many excellent things; and at large report such Hystories, as in his workes are very frequent, and many of them hard to be found: which would so grace this auncient Poet, that wheras diuers haue thought him vnlearned, and his writings meerre trifles, it should appeare, that besides the knowledge of sundrie tongues, he was a man of great reading, & deep judgement. This course I began in the former impreßion, but here of purpose haue left it off; as also the description of Persons and Places, except some few of more worthie note; as a labour rather for a Commentor, for that it concerneth matter, than for him, that intendeth only the explaning of words. And thus to conclude, I commit to your wonted fauour this our Poet, and what here is done, for the Poets sake.[54]

While Speght will give an expanded list of authors cited by Chaucer in this edition, it is not his purpose to "confer" Chaucer with the works of these authors: such an intertextual study, in the manner of *Sources and Analogues* is a project for another. Speght asserts, however, that such a study, were it done, would prove the value of Chaucer's character, "a man of great reading & deep judgement". As before, the focus is on the value of the *author* to the reader more than the works themselves. Speght's penultimate statement before his final commendation denies his role as a "commentor" and presents him merely as a scholar who "explains" individual words. Such a distinction is rather disingenuous, given the arguments the reader will find for each work, now printed immediately before Chaucer's text. Speght thus clearly distinguishes himself as an authority on Chaucer, a man whose guidance is to be trusted, even while claiming not to interpret Chaucer's

[54] Heading material, 4r.

works for the reader. This scholarly pose of disinterested objectivity helps wed Speght's presentation of Chaucer's works to the works themselves: if Speght is "merely" explaining obscure matters, the reader is more likely not to question his sententious version of Chaucer.

Speght follows his new "To the Reader" with a reprint of Beaumont's "Preface" and "The Reader to Geffray Chaucer"; after this Preface and poem, the reader finds two rather awful poems in place of the Chaucerian portrait that has been moved to a place immediately after the title-page.[55] The first poem—attributed to William Thynne's son Francis—characterizes Chaucer as a national poet in no uncertain terms:

> VVHat *Pallas* citie owes the heauenly mind
> Of prudent *Socrates*, vvise Greeces glorie;
> What fame *Arpinas* spreadingly doth find
> By *Tullies* eloquence and oratorie;
> What lasting praise sharpe vvitted Italie
> By *Taßo's* and *Petrarkes* penne obtained;
> What fame *Bartas* vnto proud France hath gained,
> By seuen daies vvorld Poetically strained:
>
> Which high renounce is purchas'd vnto Spaine,
> Which fresh *Dianaes* verses do distill,
> What praise our neighbor Scotland doth retaine,
> By *Gawine Douglas*, in his *Virgill* quill;
> Or other motions by sweet Poets skill,
> The same, and more, faire England challenge may,
> By that rare vvit and art thou doest display,
> In verse, vvhich doth *Apolloes* muse bewray.
> Then *Chaucer* liue, for still thy verse shall liue,
> T'unborne Poets, vvich life and light will giue.
> *Fran. Thynn.*

[55] Heading material, 7r.

The junior Thynne inserts Chaucer into a long line of famous men: Socrates, Cicero, Tasso, Petrarch, Du Bartas, Douglas, and Virgil. This catalogue does well to situate Chaucer as a national poet, England's answer to these great men, but a few names on the list stand out. While Chaucer himself mentions Socrates, Cicero, and Virgil, and while the Scottish Chaucerians of the fifteenth century stand as some of Chaucer's first literary heirs, the Italian and French authors do not appear to have any immediate connection to Chaucer.[56] True, Tasso and Petrarch are national Italian poets and Du Bartas is a national French poet, but the comparison suggests more of a parallel with Spenser than with Chaucer: Spenser clearly models works on Tasso, Petrarch, and Du Bartas. As we shall see, Spenser's presence hovers in the background of Speght's edition, but nowhere perhaps as tellingly as here: praise most appropriate for Spenser is applied to his literary forebear, Chaucer. There should be little doubt in the reader's mind which "unborn Poet" to whom Chaucer's verse will give "life and light".

"Of the Animadversions vpon Chaucer", printed immediately below Thynne's poem, defends Speght from the attacks made in Thynne's *Animadversions*, further solidifying Speght's position as Chaucer's one true editor. Attributed to "b.j.", the poem paints a portrait of Speght as Chaucer's own invention:

> IN reading of the learn'd praise-worthie peine,
> The helpful notes explaining *Chaucers* mind,
> The Abstruse skill, the artificiall veine;
> By true Annalogie I rightly find,
> *Speght* is the child of *Chaucers* fruitfull breine,
> Vernishing his workes with life and grace,

[56] For more on the Scottish Chaucerians, see Bennett, 165-176.

Which envious age vvould otherwise deface:
Then be he lov'd and thanked for the same,
Since in his love he hath reviv'd his name.
b. j.

Simply calling Speght "the child of *Chaucers* fruitfull breine" would be enough to mythologize Chaucer's latest editor: Speght becomes one of Chaucer's characters, as much as the Knight, the Miller, or the Wife of Bath. "B.J." goes further, though, by asserting that Speght has actually *improved* Chaucer's works, "varnishing" them through his notes and saving Chaucer's good name from the mistreatment of "envious age". Such a myth is not, of course, new; we have seen Copland's prologue characterize the process of printing in similar terms. What is different here, however, is the stress placed on Speght himself; he has not merely "saved" Chaucer through printing—which would be a rather tenuous term in the era after Thynne's and Stow's editions—but has saved him through editing. Speght's word and Chaucer's words become inextricably entwined for the reader of the 1602 edition.

The last major changes in Speght's heading materials are found in Chaucer's *Life*, though the differences are not as extensive as the title-page would lead one to believe. Speght's section "His Rewardes" initially appears to have been thoroughly rewritten; on closer examination, however, Speght has merely translated and explained the records given in solely Latin in the 1598 edition.[57] This change tells us more about Speght's intended audience—those who are thoroughly un-Latined—than it does about Chaucer. Under "His Books", the reader still finds a list of "diuers others"; in this edition,

[57] Heading material, 12r-12v.

however, Dante and Petrarch—"*Dantem Italum transtulit. / Petrarchae quaedam transtulit*"—are replaced with a modified form of the 1598 gloss found at this point: "Iacke Vpland against Freers novv printed vvith Chaucers vvorkes / His A.B.C. neuer before this time printed."[58] While Dante and Petrarch may have been omitted simply to save space, the sheer length of Speght's prefatory materials would suggest otherwise: Speght surely could have included these references if he so desired. More probable is the desire to emphasize Chaucer's "original" English verses rather than mere translations of famous Italian authors (one of whom—Dante—is not even called an author in Speght's endnotes). The idea of Chaucer as a translator of Latin, however, is not apparently as odious, and Speght here characterizes *Troilus and Criseyde* as a Latin translation:

> Troilus and Creseid called *Throphe* in the Lumbard tongue, was translated out of Latin, as in the Preface to the second booke of Troilus and Creseid he confesseth in these wordes:
>
> To euery louer I me excuse
> That of no sentiment I this endite,
> But out of Latin in my tonge it write.[59]

Printed in Blackletter, these lines from Book II's *Prohemium* are rather taken out of the context of an apostrophe to the Muse Cleo, but serve to elevate Chaucer to the level of a Latin translator at the expense of *Troilus and Criseyde*'s actual Italian source.[60] Speght's changes to "His Books" also include an explanation for his reasons for not including

[58] Heading material, 13r.
[59] Heading material, 13r.
[60] See R.K. Gordon, *The Story of Troilus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978); C.S. Lewis, "What Chaucer Really Did to *Il Filostrato*," *Essays and Studies* , 17 (1932): 56-75.

"The Pilgrim's Tale", while under "His Death" we find a few more laudatory lines.[61] On the whole, however, Speght's 1602 *Life* is substantially unchanged.

After Speght's *Life*, the 1602 edition gives a second title-page, taken from Stow's second issue (STC 5076), a fitting homage to Speght's antiquarian friend. Thynne's Preface follows, with the now-traditional Table of Contents (with headings given in Blackletter in this edition) and prefatory poems ("Eight Goodly Questions", "Henry", and "Prophecy"). Significantly, Speght does not give a title-page to the prologue of *The Canterbury Tales* or any other individual: the second title-page suffices. In doing so, Speght recapitulates the complete works of prepared by Thynne and Stow: Speght's 1602 edition is not merely a collection of Chaucer's complete canon, it is a collection of all prior editions.[62] Furthermore, this treatment sets all of Chaucer's works on equal footing: none receive the honor, descended from the incunabular anthologies, of being presented

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[61] On "The Pilgrim's Tale": Others I haue seene without any Authours name, in the hands of M. Stow that painfull Antiquarie, which for the inuention I would verily iudge to be Chaucers, were it not that words and phrases carry not euery where Chaucers Antiquitie. M. William Thynn in his first printed booke of Chaucers works with one Columbe on a side, had a tale called the Pilgrims tale, which was more odious to the Clergie, than the speech of the Plowman. The tale began thus: **In Lincolneshire fast by a fenn: Standeth a religious house who doth it kenne.** The argument of which tale, as also the occasion thereof, and the cause why it was left out of Chaucers works, shall hereafter be shewed, if God permit, in M. Fran.Thyns coment vpon Chaucer: & the Tale it selfe published if possibly it can be found" (13r); On "His Death": "About the ledge of which tombe were these verses, now clean worne out. *Si rogites quis eram, forsan te fama docebit: Quod si fama negat, mundi quia Gloria transit, Haec monumenta lege.*" [If ye ask who I was, perhaps fame shall teach you: which, if fame speaks not, since the Glory of the world passeth away, speak, this monument] (13v); a gloss on "Gaufride" in Stow's poem: "*That is Geffrey Vinesaufe: of whom read in the recitall of Authors*" (14v); "The excellent and learned Scottish Poet Gawyne Dowglas, Bishop of Dunkeld in the preface of Virgils Eneados, turned into Scottish verse, doth thus speake of Chaucer: Venerable Chaucer, principall poet without pere, / Heauenly trumpet, orloge, and regulere, / In eloquence, baulme conduet, and dyall, / Milkie founteine, cleare strand, and rose ryall / Of fresh endite through Albione Island brayed, / In his legend of notable ladies sayde, [et] c." (14v-15r).

[62] An apt example of this recapitulation may be found in the fact that Speght, like Thynne and Stow before him, begins the foliation with *The Knight's Tale*; unlike Stow's recycling of Thynne, however, Speght's 1602 type has been reset. The 1602 is a completely new edition, but has been constructed to recall the foliation of past editions.

as works on their own. Even more than in other folio editions, Chaucer's canon is to be considered as a whole.

The two most significant changes in Speght's 1602 edition—changes that no doubt brought the text to perfection in his mind—are the treatment of the "arguments" to the works and the phenomenon of editorial indexing. While the 1598 edition presented the reader with all of the arguments in the heading material—a kind of index of the edition with Speght's interpretations—the 1602 edition prints the arguments before the works themselves. The significance of this change should not be underestimated: whereas the reader of the 1598 *Works* could ignore Speght's editorializing if he so chose, in 1602 Speght's summaries and readings of works are inescapable—they must be encountered each time the reader turns to a given work. Additionally, some arguments have been expanded to stress Chaucer's moral qualities. While the 1598 argument to *Chaucers Tale* read simply, "Prudence persuadeth her husband Melibaeus to patience, and to receiue his enemies to mercy and grace," the 1602 edition expands it to: "Prudence the discreet wife of Melibeus persuadeth her husband to patience, and to receiue his enemies to mercie and grace. A tale full of Moralitie, wherein both high and low may learne to gouerne their affections" (fol. 67v).[63] Speght expands his argument to *Troilus and Criseyde* with a sentence on Chaucer's thematic concern: "In which discourse Chaucer liberally treateth of the diuine purueiaunce" (fol. 143r). Speght's argument to

[63] This description sounds tantalizingly similar to the function of Spenser's pastoral tale of Melibee, *Faerie Queene*, Book VI.

Chaucer's Dream has been slightly altered.[64] *The Testament of Loue* receives a final clause that links Chaucer with Gower: "and also therein to set end to all his writing, being commanded by *Venus* (as appeareth by *Gower* in the ende of his eight booke, entituled *Confessio Amantis*) so to doe, as one that was *Venus* clerke; euen as *Gower* had made his *Confessio Amantis*, his last worke, and shrift of his former offences" (fol. 272v). *The Remedy of Loue* receives a small, though significant, change: rather than taking "heed of the deceitfull companie of strange women" (1598), the reader now is to take "heed of the deceitfull companie of women" (1602)—Speght's argument is now decidedly more misogynist.[65] Speght now misattributes "Chaucer to his empty purse" (1598) to Hoccleve: "Occleve vnto the King" (1602), a misattribution no doubt emphasized by Speght's concern to paint a picture of a rich, successful Chaucer in his *Life*. These changes may appear to be slight, but when coupled with their new position—immediately before the works—their influence on moving the reader to a strictly moral, useful reading of Chaucer's works should not be downplayed.

Two new arguments appear in 1602: Speght's arguments to *Chaucer's A.B.C.* and *Jack Upland*; not having been included in the 1598 edition, these works naturally receive Speght's interpretation for the first time, an interpretation that is decidedly within the

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[64] 1598: "*The booke of the Duchesse, or the death of Blanch, mistermed heretofore, Chaucers Dreame.* By the person of a mourning knight sitting vnder an Oke, is ment Iohn of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, greatly lamenting the death of Blaunch the Duchesse, who was his first wife."; 1602: "The Boke commonly enti*tuled*, Chaucers *Dreame*: "By the person of a mourning knight sitting vnder an Oke, is meant Iohn of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, greatly lamenting the death of one whom hee entirely loued, supposed to bee Blanch the Duchesse."

[65] Forni does not record this detail, which would complicate her reading of Speght as a straightforward royal treatment of Chaucer.

Protestant version of Chaucer constructed in the middle of the sixteenth century. On *Chaucer's A.B.C.*, Speght writes: "Chaucers A.B.C. called *La Priere de nostre Dame:* made, as some say, at the request of Blanch, Duchesse of Lancaster, as a praier for her priuat vse, being a woman in her religion very deuout." (Fol.347.r). While recent scholarship argues that this short abecedary poem was a rather late composition, Speght diffuses any potentially troubling Marian devotion by making it an early poem, written only to please Blanch of Lancaster in her private use.[66] This explanation neatly saves Chaucer's own religious opinions for Lollardy, while further stressing Chaucer's relationship with the house of Lancaster. *Jack Upland*'s argument justifies its inclusion by reference to another apocryphal Tale: "In this Treatise is set foorth the blind ignoraunce and variable discord of the Churchmen, how rude and vnskillfull they were in matters & principles of our Christian institution. This is thought to bee that Crede which the Pellican speaketh of in the Plowmans tale in these words: Of freers I haue told before, / In a making of a Crede, / And yet I could tell worse and more, / But men would werrien it to rede" (fol. 348r). The Plowman's words—given in Blackletter—are used as an intertextual justification for *Jack Upland*'s inclusion, and in doing so, Speght appears to be grasping at straws: *Jack Upland* may be a "treatise", but it is hardly a "Creed".[67] In this way, Speght solidifies the Protestant *ethos* of Chaucer by putting these tales in the antepenultimate position in his edition: Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* still ends the edition,

[66] For the poem itself and contemporary scholarship, see *The Riverside Chaucer*, 631-33, 637-40.
[67] A likelier candidate might be found in a Lollard tribute to Langland, the anonymous *Piers the Plowman's Crede*, which may be found in *Six Ecclesiastical Satires*, ed. James Dean (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1991).

preceded by "Chaucers wordes vnto his owne Scriuener." The rhetorical effect of the change is noteworthy: no longer do Chaucer's words to Adam reflect back on a courtly love poem, as they did in 1598: Chaucer's anxiety over correct transmission now relates most directly to his supposed Protestant polemic.

In addition to the edited and expanded arguments, the 1602 Speght also prints tiny hands, indexes, in the margins of the text, pointing out particularly sententious lines for the reader's instructional benefit. Pearsall, Benson, and Windeatt have all noted this phenomenon, while Kinney has examined the specific effects of such indexing on individual works.[68] The indexes vary in frequency; some works receive persistent indexing, while others are barely indexed at all.[69] As far as the character of Speght's edition goes, these indexes mark perhaps the furthest intrusion by the Renaissance editor into Chaucer's text: not trusted to mark his own book, the reader must rely on Speght to tell him which lines are particularly noteworthy. Furthermore, Speght takes great pains in making sure that almost every work has *something* pointed out, further proof of the value of Chaucer's works to the reader. Speght's glosses become tools which readers can use to distill further Chaucer's poetry into quotable tidbits.

Speght's ending materials in his 1602 edition expand on the trends started in 1598. "The old and obscure words in Chaucer explaned, wherof either by nature, or

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[68] Pearsall, "Thomas Speght" (Ruggiers); C. David Benson and Barry Windeatt, "The Manuscript Glosses to Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*," *The Chaucer Review*, Vol. 25, no. 1 (Summer, 1990): 33-53; Kinney, "Thomas Speght's Renaissance Chaucer and the *solaas* of *sentence* in *Troilus and Criseyde*," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: Florida State University Press, 1998), 66-86.

[69] Only one work, *The Balade of our Ladie* shows no indexes, perhaps an indication of its rather Papist flavor.

deriuation" section is overtly joined to "annotations also vpon some words and places, with direction to the Folio and Page," neatly fitting all of Speght's scholarship into a single place (fol. T.t.t.1r). As noted above, the origins of words are now given as Arabic, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Dutch, or British, adding a patina of philology to the list. The definitions themselves are calculated to project a decidedly scholarly ethos, with some being almost comically long. Consider, for example, Speght's entry for "Anelace":

> A falchon or woodknife. Which I gather out of Mathew Paris, page, 535, where hee writeth thus: *Quorum vnius videns occiduam partem dorsi* (of Richard Earle Marshall, then fighting for his life in Ireland) *minus armis communitam, percussit eum in posteriora (loricam sublevando) cum quodam genere cultelli, quod vulgariter Analacitus nuncupatur, & laetaliter vulnerabat eum cutellum vusque ad manubriu immergendo*: which Anelace was worn about the girdlesteed of the bod, as was the pouch or purse: For thus, page, 542. Writeth the same Mathew Paris: *Interquos Petrus de Rivalis primus in causam vocatus apparuit coram rege in habitu clericali, cum tonsure, & lata corona, analaceo tamen alumbali dependete, & c.* (fol. T.t.t.1v)

Speght's attribution of the term to Matthew of Paris is decent scholarship; one wonders, though, if the untranslated Latin quotations were necessary. Speght also takes the opportunity to provide advertisements for devotees of Chaucer in his entry on "Tabard":

> A Iaquet, or sleuelesse coate, worne in times past by Noblemen in the warres, but now onely by Heraults, and is called theyre coate of Armes in seruise. It is the signe of an Inne in Southwarke by London, within the which was the lodging of the Abbot of Hyde by Winchester. This was the Hostelry where *Chaucer* and the other Pilgrims mett together, and with *Henry Baily* their hoste, accorded about the manner of their iourney to Canterbury. And whereas through time it hath bin much decaied, it is now by Master *I. Preston*, with the abbots house thereto adioyned, newly repaired, and with cornuenient rooms much increased, for the receipt of many guests. (fol. U.u.u.4r)

On the whole, however, Speght's list is perfectly usable to supply readers the tools necessary to read Chaucer's English.

Speght's expansion of his translations of Latin and his inclusion of a section on French translations is rather more telling: whereas previous readers could be assumed to read Latin and French, Speght now aims his edition at vernacular readers without such linguistic resources. Furthermore, Speght has expanded his list of "authors cited by G.Chaucer" to include twenty-two new names.[70] On the one hand, such an expanded list may indicate an honest attempt at being absolutely thorough; on the other hand, the explanation of authors whose histories would generally be considered common knowledge may further indicate an attention to an audience interested in using Chaucer as social capital, a means of dropping learned names. Consider, for example, Speght's gloss on "Homerus": "the cheefest of all Poets, wrote in the Greeke tonge two workes, the one called his *Ilias*, and the other his *Odyssea*" (fol. U.u.u.7r). It is hard to believe that any literate person in 1602 would have to be told that Homer wrote in Greek, let alone the titles of his works. Even more surprising is his gloss on "Vergilius", "the most famous Poet of Mantua, whose life *Petrus Crinitus* hath set downe at large in *Lib.3.de Poetis Latinis*." It appears as though knowledge of Vergil's works may still be taken for granted, and even commended to secondary sources; at the same time, the mere inclusion

[70] The authors added are: Albumasar, alias Iaphar, Aesopus, Aristotle, Ambrose, Alcabutius, Alanus, Bocatius, Cato, Corinna, Gregorius magnus, Galfridus Monumethensis, Homerus, Helowis, Maximian, Livian, Aurora, Zansis, Iosephus, Iustinian, Ovidius, Pithagoras, Senior Zadith, Titus Livius, Tullius, Valerius Maximus, and Vergilius.

of Vergil on this list indicates that Speght does not want to take any knowledge for granted; his 1602 edition is presented as an edition accessible to any- and everyone.

In a final estimation, then, Speght's 1602 edition stands as the culmination of a century of Chaucerian editing. This edition goes further than any other in gentrifying Chaucer, in interpreting his poems in terms of his supposed biography, and in setting interpretations of his works through lengthy editorial impositions. Speght is deliberately grafted onto Chaucer, such that the latter cannot be encountered separately from the former. Speght's 1602 is the edition used throughout the seventeenth century; it is reprinted in 1687, but remains unchanged.[71] One may well understand Dryden's motives to "improve" Chaucer given the ossified state in which his text would have been presented: now as a collection of sentences and monuments, rather than as living poetry to be enjoyed without Speght's persistent intrusions

With this group of Chaucerian editions, the great folios of *Complete Works* produced by Thynne, Stow, and Speght, the picture of Chaucer in the English Renaissance is completed, the shifts in his presentation all considered. The reader of Chaucer in the early sixteenth century encountered his poems in a manner most like the manuscript tradition of the fifteenth century, with little overt intrusion by the editor, but with textual features becoming more fixed, standardized, and disseminated. By the end of the sixteenth century, Chaucer's readers encountered the tomes of Thynne, Stow, and Speght, the last one, in particular, sealing Chaucer's fate as a classical author of

[71] Pearsall argues that this reprinting was motivated by a desire to keep the copyright on the edition: Pearsall, 90-91.

monumental stature, whose works may be revered, but have the quality of poetry of a deceased era. As we shall see in the final chapter, this editorial treatment went hand-in-hand with poetic imitation of Chaucer in the sixteenth century: poets imitated Chaucer based, in part, on the means through which they encountered his texts. These imitations, in turn, shaped the editions that came after them, with Edmund Spenser towering over the late Renaissance interpretation and presentation of Chaucer.

Chapter 7

Early Editions and Imitations: Skelton

Through an exhaustive treatment of the editions of the works of Geoffrey Chaucer produced between 1477 and 1602, the process by which English printing houses continued the work of manuscript anthologies in reproducing and disseminating Chaucer's works should now be clear. Along the way, the role played by editorial cues became ever greater, and ever more influential in reproducing and suggesting ways of reading and interpreting Chaucer. While Caxton intervened minimally with the reader's experience of Chaucerian works, Speght presented his readers with a firmly established set of directions for reading. Over the course of the Renaissance in England, then, Chaucer turned from a vernacular master into a Classical author.

This process of editorial shaping aids in the understanding of the use of Chaucer by the Renaissance's most loudly self-proclaimed Chaucerian imitators: John Skelton and Edmund Spenser. Spenser will be treated in the following chapter; Skelton and the status of Chaucerian poetry at the dawn of the English Renaissance will be treated here. While other early Renaissance poets demonstrate Chaucerian influences—Hawes, Wyatt, and Gascoigne being perhaps the most prominent—Skelton shows the clearest and most consistent use of Chaucerian material before Spenser.[1] The differences between the two

[1] Stanley Fish's work on Skelton, *John Skelton's Poetry* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1965) retains its value; for considerations of Skelton's relationship to Chaucer, see A.C. Spearing, *Medieval to Renaissance in English Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Albert S. Cook, "Skelton's *Garland of Laurel* and Chaucer's *House of Fame,*" *The Modern Language Review*, Vol.

poets, of course, are hard to understate; interest in Skelton waned after the sixteenth century, while Spenser was canonized almost immediately.

That two poets could both turn to Chaucer and produce strikingly different imitations of Chaucer is, of course, completely unsurprising. Skelton and Spenser are separated not only by time—Skelton tutored a young Henry VIII; Spenser praised his aging daughter Elizabeth—but religion, canonical state, language, and politics. What unites them, however, is perhaps surprising: both turned consistently to comedic works of Chaucer from which to draw inspiration. Chaucerian comedy seems well suited to Skelton: Skelton's railings and flytings fit well with the bickering of Canterbury pilgrims or the squawking of randy birds. Nevertheless, the editorial focus on Chaucerian seriousness can already be felt in Skelton's use of Chaucerian source-materials: Skelton links himself to the tradition of the great Chaucer, even while distancing himself from him and taking up his own mantle as a master of English comic poetry. Even though Horatian seriousness is promoted even in Caxton's editions, the Chaucer of Skelton may still be approached as a comic, native author. Considering the editions of Chaucer available to Skelton and his immediate audience, this kind of Chaucer is understandable: editorial apparatus had yet to circumscribe the text completely, and allowed readers to encounter Chaucer's works without weighty suggested interpretations. Nevertheless, Skelton's works—and the first editions of them—show a debt to the presentation of

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11, No. 1 (Jan., 1916): 9-14; John Scattergood, "Skelton's *Garlande of Laurell* and the Chaucerian tradition," *Chaucer Traditions: Studies in Honour of Derek Brewer*, ed. Ruth Morse and Barry Windeatt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Chaucerian editions, a debt from which Skelton attempts to downplay as much as possible.

While not all of Skelton's canon shows overt Chaucerian influence, Chaucer is clearly present in several of his poems: *Comely Coystrowne* (composed 1495-1500; first printed in 1527), *The Tunning of Eleanor Rumming* (first printed in 1517), and *The Garlande or Chapelet of Laurel* (composed as early as 1495; first printed in 1517).[2] The Skelton poem most frequently printed in the sixteenth century—*Phyllyp Sparowe* (before 1505-1509; first printed in 1545)—has its narrator, Jane Shore, referring directly to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and *Troilus and Criseyde*. While the Chaucerian content of these poems is evident, the presentation of Chaucerian content in the sixteenth century was not highlighted by sixteenth-century editions of the poems. By examining the earliest printed editions of each of Skelton's Chaucerian works and comparing them to the Chaucerian editions available to Skelton, it becomes evident that for the Skeltonic editions Chaucer was an influence better left in the background.

The Garlande or Chapelet of Laurel was begun as early as 1495, but was not printed for the first time until 1517.[3] Scattergood focuses on the originality of this poem, downplaying the Chaucerian influence; even a cursory glance, however, reveals it to be a substantial reworking of Chaucer's *The House of Fame*.[4] Skelton writes himself as the

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[2] All bibliographic information and line numbers are taken from *John Skelton: The Complete English Poems*, ed. John Scattergood (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983).
[3] The colophon gives the date as 1523: M.CCCCC.xxiij; the Short-Title Catalogue list 1517. There appears to be a misprint on the title-page of this edition: "xxiij" for "xvij".
[4] Scattergood downplays this debt, both in his critical notes and in his argument in "Skelton's *Garlande of Laurell* and the Chaucerian Tradition"; Cook's "Garland" is particularly useful for pointing out textual

protagonist of this dream-vision composed primarily in Chaucerian Rhyme Royal: after musing on the zodiac, planetary influence, and the Boethian dominance of Fortune and the impermanence of all things, Skelton the character falls asleep and awakens in a wood, where he meets the Queen of Fame and Dame Pallas, who proclaim his worthiness to join the English poetic pantheon (211-231). This process is as noisy as it is in Chaucer's *House of Fame*, and includes Aeolus as a herald (233-266). Most strikingly, Gower, Chaucer, and Lydgate approach Skelton and welcome him into their company. While this scene is more reminiscent of Dante meeting the pagan poets in Limbo,[5] it allows Skelton to write dialogue for the poet whose *House of Fame* inspired his own *Garlande or Chapelet of Laurell*. Skelton the poet has Chaucer say to Skelton the dreamer:

> Counterwayng your besy delygence
> Of that we beganne in the supplement
> Enforcid ar we you to recompence
> Of all our hool collage by the agreement
> That we shall brynge you personally present
> Of noble fame before the quenes grace
> In whose court pointed is your place (415-420)

One should note that while this speech is not terribly distinct as Chaucer's voice—its language is generic to the point of boredom—it, like the rest of the poem up to this point, has been written in Rhyme Royal, the most distinctively Chaucerian stanza.[6] Skelton replies to Chaucer:

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parallels between *The Garlande of Laurell* and *The House of Fame*, and Spearing recognizes a clear connection between the two poems (239ff.).

[5] *Inferno* IV.80-105

[6] It is used most impressively for *Troilus and Criseyde*, which was the most highly regarded work of Chaucer in the sixteenth century, if we are to take Sidney as a touchstone of Renaissance literary criticism: "*Chawcer* vndoubtedly did excellently in his *Troilus* and *Creseid*: of whome truly I knowe not whether to

O noble Chaucer whos pullishyd eloquence
Oure englysshe rude so fresshely hath set out
That bound ear we with all deu reuerence
W[ith] all our strength that we can bry[n]ge about
To owe to yow our seruyce [and] more if we mowte
But what sholde I say ye wote what I entende
Whiche glad am to please and loth to offende (421-427)

Skelton's reply repeats fifteenth-century praises of Chaucer and—more significantly—looks ahead to the stock praises of Chaucer that will appear in Thynne's *Complete Works* a mere fifteen years after this first printing. Skelton is conducted to Fame's Palace, where he is questioned by Occupacion and is given an opportunity to show off his poetic skill in a series of verses addressed to fair ladies (836-1085). The Queen of Fame commands that Skelton's canon be preserved in her book, and a list of Skelton's works follows (1170-1260). The poet finally awakes at the end after a vision of Jupiter; the suddenness of Skelton's waking recalls Caxton's ending in his 1483 *House of Fame*.[7] Skelton even includes an envoy whose first line pays tribute to Chaucer's *Troilus and*

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meruaile more, either that hee in his mistie time could see so clearly, or that wee in this cleare age, goe so stumblingly after him. (H3v) (Taken from the facsimile *The Noel Douglas Replicas*: *Phillip Sidney, Defence of Poesie*. [London: Noel Douglas, 1928]).

[7] Compare the endings: Caxton, 1483: "And wyth the noyse of them wo / I Sodeynly awoke anon tho / And remembryd what I had seen / And how hye and ferre I had been / In my ghost and had grete wonder / Of that the god of thunder / Had lete me knowen and began to wryte / Lyke as ye haue herd me endyte / Wherfor to studye and rede always / I purpose to doo day by day / Thus in dremyng and in game / Endeth thys lytyl book of Fame" (D3r); Skelton: "Of trumpettis and clariouns the noyse went to Rome; / The starry hevyn, me thought, shoke with the showte; / The grownde gronid and trembled, the noyse was so stowte. / The Quene of Fame commaundid shett fast the boke, / And therewith, sodenly, out of my dreme I woke. / My mynde of grete din was somdele amasid. / I wypid myne eyne for to make them clere. / Then to the hevyn sperycall upward I gasid, / Where I saw Janus, with his double chere, / Makynge his almanac for the new yere; / He turnyd his tirikkis, his volvell ran fast, /Good luk this new yere, the olde yere is past" (1507-1517). Scattergood admits a parallel with *The House of Fame* in line 1507, but ignores the dramatic similarities between the endings of the two poems.

Criseyde.[8] Such details place *The Garlande or Chapelet of Laurell* squarely within Chaucerian literature: Skelton is claiming his place among English poets by imitating Chaucer's own poetic treatment of Fame, minus Chaucer's sense of ambiguity—Skelton is clearly placed among the stars and preserved in Fame's—now printed?—book.[9]

While Skelton may have encountered Chaucer's *House of Fame* in a manuscript copy, Caxton's *House of Fame* was produced and circulated a full twelve years before Skelton probably began writing his *Garlande*; as such, it is Caxton's textual character that bears most strongly on our understanding of Skelton's poetic revision in terms of the editorial *ethos* of contemporary editions of *The House of Fame*. Pynson's *House of Fame* anthology would be printed nine years after *Garlande*'s first printing, in 1526; early readers of the printed Skelton were able to compare Skelton's account of his own poetic apotheosis to this fame-proclaiming and editorially formed Chaucerian anthology produced on the eve of the folio Complete Works. Skelton himself, however, would most likely have encountered Chaucer's text in the simple, straightforward style of Caxton's 1483 edition: no title-page (de Worde was to invent that in the next decade), wide margins for glossing, and nothing but a brief explicit giving generic praise to Chaucer: "in alle hys werkys he excellyth in my oppynion alle other writers in our Englyssh / For he wrytteth no voyde wordes / but alle hys mater is ful of hye and quyeke sentence / to whom ought to be gyuen laude and preysyng for hye noble making and

[8] Compare Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, V.1786: "Go, litel bok, go, litel myn tragedye" with Skelton: "Go, litill quaire" (1533).
[9] Scattergood stresses the difference between the Skeltonic and Chaucerian conceptions of the status of a poet: Scattergood "Garlande," 134-135.

wrytyng / For of hym alle other haue borrowed syth and taken / in alle theyr wel saying and wrytyng" (fol. D3r). As such, Skelton approached Chaucer's text with little editorial shaping, other than the pointed observation that, "of [Chaucer] alle other haue borrowed syth and taken in all theyr wel saying and wrytyng." *The Garlande or Chapelet of Laurell* seems to be responding poetically to this Caxtonian challenge: to proclaim himself the new poet laureate, Skelton must deal with this Chaucerian legacy, and does so boldly by substantially rewriting one of the master's works.

Skelton's poetic act of simultaneously linking himself to and distancing himself from Chaucer should not seem unusual; Bloom's treatment of the "anxiety of influence" explains thoroughly this poetic gesture as old as Homer's imitators.[10] What *is* unusual is the extent to which the printed editions of *The Garlande or Chapelet of Laurel* actively focus the reader on Skelton while omitting any references to Skelton's Chaucerian debt. In the first printed edition of 1517, the title-page begins this process by drawing the reader's attention firmly to Skelton qua Skelton.[11] The title—printed in Blackletter—is given as, "A right delectable treatyse vpon a goodly Garlande or Chapelet of Laurell by mayster Skelton Poete laureate studiously dyuysed at Sheryfhotton Castell. In ye foreste of galtres where in ar co[m]prysyde many [and] dyuers solacyons [and] right pregnant allectyues of singular pleasure as more at large it doth apere in ye proces folowynge" (fol.

[10] See Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973). A.C. Spearing makes use of Bloom's method in a specifically Chaucerian context to help explain Lydgate's relation to Chaucer; see A.C. Spearing, "Lydgate's Canterbury Tale: *The Siege of Thebes* and Fifteenth Century Chaucerianism," *Fifteenth Century Studies: Recent Essays*, ed. Robert F. Yeager (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1984), 333-64.
[11] STC 22610.

1r). This title gives the reader the location and something of the occasion of the poem's composition, while stressing the singularity of Skelton and his work. The woodcut accompanying the title shows a clerk sitting at his desk reading a well-margined book with two people at his back.[12] Other books are scattered on his desk, and countryside and towers may be seen outside of his window. Given the title above this woodcut, the clerk may easily be taken to be Skelton himself, studiously reading in the castle, with his quill and inkhorn nearby, ready to author more works should the need and inspiration arise.

Such a reading of the initial woodcut is immediately challenged by the overt portrait of Skelton presented on the inside front leaf (fol. A1r). Entitled "Skeltona Poeta", this woodcut depicts a young, dashing man, with long hair and a jaunty cap, dressed in a doublet with broad sleeves, holding a branch in his right hand and a flower in his left. Floral patterns surround him, and an italic Latin inscription is found beneath:

> Eterno mansura dum sidera fulgent
> Equora dumq[ue] tument hec laurea nostra virebit.
> Hinc nostrum celebre et nome[n] referetur ad astra.
> Vndiq[ue] Skeltonis memorabitur alter adonis.[13]

Here is Skelton as Adonis, not Skelton as priest, the deified form of the human poet; the reader encounters not the real priestly poet but the ideal poet laureate. The only other

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[12] The temptation to see the well-margined book read by the woodcut scholar as Caxton's edition of *The House of Fame* is great, but while it may be suggestive, such a reading is not helpful in interpreting what the edition actually presents: no title may be read on the book, and it must be taken iconically, rather than representing a particular work.

[13] "While the stars shine remaining in everlasting day, and while the seas swell, this our laurel shall be green: our famous name shall be echoed to the skies, and everywhere Skelton shall be remembered as another Adonis." The translation is taken from *"Go Thou Forth My Booke": Authorial Self-Assertion and Self-Representation in Printings of Renaissance Poetry* by Ronald Scott Renchler (Doctoral Dissertation: University of Oregon, 1987), accessed from < http://www.luminarium.org/renascence-editions/renchler/ > (February 7, 2011).

woodcuts in this edition are on A2v, depicting the Queen of Fame as a lady holding a rose and Dame Pallas as a lady holding a candle; they are facing one another, aptly illustrating their conversation over Skelton. From these woodcuts, the reader can conclude that this work is to be taken as a serious and elevated work on its own merits: visually, this edition has nothing in it to point to a Chaucerian patrimony.

The text itself in this edition presents the reader with several visual cues to guide interpretation. The English text of *Garlande* is printed in Blackletter, in a single column; the Latin text is often, though not consistently, printed in Italic, differentiating Skelton's Latin poetry from his English poetry. The exceptions to this format occur during Skelton's praise of ladies (863ff), "the gyse now a days with phillipis ennumerante" (1261ff), and the "Enparlament A Paris" (ending material), in which the text is given in double columns. While this shift in format does save space (this function is particularly evident in the last example), its rhetorical effect is to call attention to parts of the poem in which Skelton is showcasing his skill: in his love-lyrics, his (in)famous *Phillip Sparrow*, and in his trilingual treatment of Paris. The editor has also inserted lines to indicate which character is speaking: this technique highlight's Skelton's own voice in the poem, solidly placing him as a character amidst Fame, Pallas, Gower, Lydgate, and Chaucer.

Most striking, however, are the persistent Latin glosses in the margins of the poem. Scattergood's edition notes many of these glosses, but there are some omissions.[14]

[14] While generally helpful, two other points of glossing are ignored by Scattergood: "Oliuia speciosa in ca[m]pis" ("The Olive, most precious of the fields") around lines 670-71: "With braunches and bowghis of the swete olive, / Whos flagraunt flower was chefe preservatyve", and "q[uam] excellentiam virtute in oliuia" ("what excellence in virtue is in the olive") around lines 674-75: "It passid all bawmys that ever

These glosses are generally used to point the reader—in Latin—to the authors mentioned by Skelton: Aristotle and Cato (fol. E1v); Ovid, Horace, Solomon, and the Psalms (fol. E2r); and Virgil (fol. E5r). This method of glossing is reminiscent of the Latin glosses in Caxton's 1485 *Tale of Melibee* and *The Parson's Tale*: it solidifies the authorial gravitas of Skelton by showing him to be a poet worthy of glosses. What the glosses do *not* indicate, however, is Chaucerian influence; Classical and Biblical sources are cited at length, while Chaucer's debt is left for the reader to infer. Given the familiarity of Tudor readers with Chaucer, such an omission could be taken to be insignificant, were it not for a telling gloss around line 1470. This passage is taken from *The Squire's Tale*: "The nacyoun of folys he left not behynde/ Item apollo that whirllid vp his chare / That made sum to surt and snuf in the wynd" (1470-73).[15] Yet it is not glossed as such; the gloss given points the reader to Virgil and the Bible: "Nota. Penuria[m] aq[atque] na[m] canes ibi. Hauriunt ex puteo altissio. Stulto[rum] infinit[us] est numerus. Ect. Eccl[esi]a[stes]; Factu[m] est cu[m] Apollo esset corinthi. Acc. Apostolorum; Stimules sub pectore [S]tit Apollo. Virgilius" (fol. E4v).[16] Such glosses serve to distance Skelton from Chaucer, pointing the reader to other literary allusions—*Ecclesiasticus, Acts*, and Virgil—even while omitting the obvious one. The editorial shaping present in this first edition of *The Garlande or Chapelet of Laurel* stresses Skelton as a poet in his own right

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were namyd, / Or gummis of Saby so derely that be solde" (fol. C2v). Granted, these Latin glosses do very little to shape interpretation, but they do call attention to the proverbial qualities Skelton demonstrates.

[15] Compare to the *Squire's Tale*: "Appollo whirleth up his chaar so hye / Til that the god Mercurius hous, the slye" (V.671-672).

[16] Scattergood notes that these lines may relate to *The Boke of Three Fooles* or *Shyp of Folys*, but neglects to note this gloss (Scattergood, 497).

apart from Chaucer: Skelton is the *vates*, compared to Classical and Biblical models, even while his plot, characters, details, even the light and comedic tone of the work, all point back to Chaucer's *House of Fame*.

If Skelton's *Garlande* shows him imitating the elevated poetry of Chaucer's dream visions, *The Tunning of Eleanor Rumming* (1517) reveals Skelton's debt to Chaucer's bawdy Wife of Bath.[17] The poem is set in an ale-house, and is a burly treatment of ugly drinking women. Scattergood notes only two direct parallels to Chaucer. The first direct Chaucerian reference occurs in the mock-blazon of Eleanor in the prologue, "Her kyrtell Brystowe red, / With clothes upon her hed" (71-72), which Scattergood enjoins the reader to, "Compare [with] Chaucer's portrait of the Wife of Bath, *The Canterbury Tales* I 435-5."[18] The other parallel occurs at line 521 in the grotesque description of the neck of one of the ale-hose patrons: "She had a wyde wesant; / She was nothynge plesant; / Necked lyke an olyfant; / It was a bullyfant, A greedy cormerant" (517-521). Scattergood notes that the description of the Cormorant at line 362 of Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowles* attributes gluttony to this particular bird.[19] While these direct parallels are rather scant, the overall tone of the poem is reminiscent to the more rowdy Canterbury Tales, with grotesque female bodies and drinking described in ribald and rolling rhyme. Those who appreciate the comedic Chaucer can easily see the bawdy Wife of Bath or the ribald Miller lurking in the background of the poem.

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[17] STC 226115; on the relation between "Eleanor Rumming" and Chaucer, see Cooper, 173.
[18] Scattergood, 450.
[19] Scattergood, 452.

Only one incomplete copy of the original printing from around 1517 is extant; it starts at line 412 and ends with the "Tercius passus."[20] Few conclusions can be drawn from such an incomplete copy, but it does show a minimal treatment of the text by the editor: the passus are marked, but besides that the text is given in a simple, single-columned Blackletter format. Skelton's comedic work is thus presented here in as straightforward a manner as Caxton's printings of Chaucer: the reader may encounter the work with a minimal amount of editorial shaping.

Agaynst a Comely Coystrowne and *Womanhood, Wanton, Ye Want!* are less immediately Chaucerian than *Eleanor Rumming*, but their use of Chaucerian stanzas merits them consideration among Skelton's Chaucerian pieces. Written as invectives against a particularly bad singer and a lewd lady, respectively, they are found in the sole surviving copy of the 1527 Rastell edition, although *Coystrowne* was probably written between 1495 and 1497 and *Womanhod* in 1504, according to historical evidence.[21] As scathing invectives, they perhaps owe more to the tradition of flyting poems than they do to Chaucer, but Skelton did choose to compose them in the Chaucerian rhyme royal stanza. As such, Skelton's poems stand next to the Chaucerian complaints, though rougher cousins to Chaucer's poems.

Perhaps more fascinating from the perspective of bibliographic rhetoric is the book in which the poems survive. Rastell's 1527 edition is a miscellany, an anthology of several short poems of Skelton. In addition to *Comely Coystrowne*, which is the first

[20] STC 226115.
[21] Scattergood, 391, 393.

piece in the book, the anthology contains *Contra Cantitatem et Organisantem Asinum*, *Uppon a Deedmans Hed*, and *Womanhod, Wanton, Ye Want!* This collection of short lyrics is presented as a printed miscellany, authorized explicitly by the title page: "Skelton Laureate agaynste a comely Coystrowne that curyowsly chawntyd And currishly cownted And madly in hys Musyakys mokkyshly made Agayste the .ix. Musys of polytyke Poems [and] Poettys matryculat." Below the title is a woodcut of Skelton, crowned with his laurels and sitting at a desk, with two open books before him (one turned to the reader). Over Skelton's head is written, "Arboris omne genus viridi co[n]cedite lauro," lest any reader be ignorant of his canonized, laureate status.[22] The poems are printed in Blackletter, with a guide-letter printed for the initial capital; there are generally four stanzas per page, with wide margins. Each poem is given a title—indexed by a paraph—but otherwise no editorial shaping is present in the text. The parallels to early Chaucerian anthologies should be plain: the title-page proclaims the authorial status of the collection, while the poems themselves are presented in a fairly straightforward manner, with little editorial direction for reading or interpretation. Even more significant is the fact that Skelton chose to write, and Rastell clearly presents through his layout, *Coystrowne* and *Womanhod wanton* in Rhyme Royal: the bawdy and comic characteristics of Chaucer's canon were not yet overshadowed by the post-Thynne editions, allowing Skelton to sound a ribald and comic note in Chaucerian stanza form, and allowing readers to perceive this connection without editorial undermining. Rastell's

[22] "Every type of green tree yield status to the laurel" (original translation).

treatment of his *Parliament of Fowles*, printed the same year as the Skelton anthology, shows a similarity in editorial treatment, presenting both Chaucer and Skelton as living authors, rather than monuments.

Chaucer clearly lives in Skelton's *Phyllyp Sparowe*, most likely written before 1505, which contains the most sustained references to Chaucer in the Skeltonic canon.[23] The theme of the poem as a whole—the requiem for Jane Scrope's pet sparrow—owes more to classical authors than Chaucer: Catullus, Ovid, and Martial are cited by Scattergood.[24] Catullus's second and third poems—"Passer deliciae meae puellae" and "Lugete, O Veneres Cupidinesque"—are the most clearly linked thematically, being eulogies for dead pet sparrows. While Classical in theme, however, *Phyllyp Sparowe* shows a sustained debt to Chaucer.[25] Skelton's catalogue of birds at Phyllyp's funeral (390-465) mirrors Chaucer's catalogue in *The Parliament of Fowles* (337-364); the order is different, Skelton's birds all playing liturgical roles in the procession, but the effect is similar.[26] Scattergood notes the relations between Skelton's treatment of Chaunticlere the cock and Chaucer's in both *The Nun's Priest's Tale* and *Troilus and Criseyde*.[27] The "courte of Fame" appears at line 892 and Skelton's use of "Dame Nature" at line 1042

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[23] For the probable date of composition, see Scattergood, 405.
[24] Scattergood, 406; he notes that Edwards also posits Caxton's *Reynard the Fox* as a source.
[25] Scattergood's attribution of *The Legend of Good Women* behind the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe at line 21 is not certain, however, insofar as the Legend had not yet been printed. Skelton could, of course, have read the *Legend* in a manuscript, but the assertion that the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, "was familiar in English through its inclusion in Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* 706-923" (407) does not hold in terms of the intertextual print history of Chaucer and Skelton.
[26] See Ilona M. McGuiness, "John Skelton's Phyllyp Sparowe As Satire: A Revaluation," *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Summer, 1991): 215-231. Her treatment of the poem in terms of the requiem liturgy is exemplary, as is her consideration of its relation to medieval Bird Masses (228).
[27] Scattergood, 410.

further reveals textual and thematic connections between *Phyllyp Sparowe* and *The Parliament of Fowles*: although Dame Nature is referenced in a blazon to Jane in Skelton's "Commendations," the fact that she presided over Chaucer's parliament is by no means insignificant, placed as she is in a poem about an avian liturgy. The general playfulness of the poem also seems to owe something to Chaucer's more rollicking tales, particularly in the more naughty sections of the poem: "Wherewith he wolde make / Me often for to wake / And for to take him in / Upon my naked skin. God wot, we thought not syn— / What though he crept so lowe?" (164-169); "Her kyrtell so goodly lased, / And under that is brased / Such pleasures that I may / Neyther wryte nor say; / Yet though I wryte not with ynke, / No man can elt me thynke, / For thought hath lyberte, / Thought is franke and fre; / To thynke a mery thought / It cost me lytell nor nought." (1194-1203).[28] In the latter passage particularly, the rhymed couplets recall sound and sense of *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, *The Miller's Tale*, and *The Merchant's Tale*. Were these the only Chaucerian influences present in the poem, it would be enough to place this poem among Skelton's most Chaucerian.

There are three sections of the poem, however, in which the persona of Jane Scrope refers directly to Chaucer and his works. When it comes time to write Phyllyp's

[28] This passage does not go unnoticed by Scattergood: "Looking back now over the first part of the poem from this second part, we seem to recognize in it a *Lolita*-like prurience in his imaginative construction of Jane's innocence—a prurience of which the real Skelton is of course perfectly aware, however indignantly the 'Skelton' of the poem may deny it in the cause of freedom of 'mery thought' . . . This may be the first poem in English to give direct expression to underwear-fetishism: Chaucer in *The Miller's Tale* had *implied* naughty thoughts about what might be underneath the delicious Alisoun's elaborate clothing, but Skelton makes the thoughts much more explicit" (Spearing, 238-39). References to ephebophilia do not seem to do justice to the playful quality of this passage, nor do they accurately reflect the acceptable age of consent in the Middle Ages.

epitaph, Jane, the speaker at this point in the poem, must justify her ability to compose; her first justification takes the form of her familiarity with Chaucer:

> But for I am a mayde,
> Tymerous, halfe afrayde,
> That never yet assayed,
> Of Elyconys well,
> Where the muses dwell:
> Though I can rede and spell,
> Recounte, reporte, and tell
> Of the *Tales of Caunterbury*
> Some sad storyes, some mery,
> As Palamon and Arcet,
> Duke Theseus, and Partelet;
> And of the Wyfe of Bath,
> That worketh moch scath
> Whan her tale is tolde
> Amonge huswyves bolde,
> How she controlde
> Her husbandes as she wolde,
> And them to despise
> In the homylyest wyse,
> Brynge other wyves in thought
> Their husbandes to set at nought (607-627)

Much has been made of Jane's character and the state of late medieval female reading.[29] What seems most notable in this passage are the three specific parts of *The Canterbury Tales* that Jane notes: *The Knight's Tale*, *The Nun's Priest's Tale*, and *The Wife of Bath's Prologue*. The popularity of the first of these sections—recall the persistence of woodcuts of Chaucer's Knight even when all others would fall away by the end of the sixteenth century—seems a sufficient reason for its inclusion. *Phyllyp Sparowe*'s reference to Chaunticleer is further illuminated by the second: Chaucer's tale of

[29] See Susan Schibanoff, "Taking Jane's Cue: *Phyllyp Sparowe* as a Primer for Women Readers," PMLA, 101.5 (Oct, 1986): 832-847.

Chaunticleer is one of Jane's "background books," encountered most likely through Caxton's editions.[30] Most striking, however, is the manner in which Jane dwells on Chaucer's Wife of Bath, referring to the events recounted in her *Prologue* rather than her *Tale*. Jane uses the *ethos* of the Wife of Bath as model for her own speech in this poem, as well as a parallel for excusing her sparrow's erotic journeys. Skelton's Jane Scrope, then, is a more respectable descendant of Chaucer's Alisoun.[31]

A little later on, Jane gives a second reference to Chaucerian reading, this time to *Troilus and Criseyde*.[32] In forty-seven lines, Jane gives her version of a summary of the poem, focusing on Pandarus' role in delivering tokens between the two lovers, Criseyde's power over Troilus, and the tragic end of the tale for the three main characters. Lehrer has noted the effect Skelton's recounting of the poem appears to have had on early printed works of the text.[33] In the context of Skelton's poem, the account is indicative of patterns of reading *Troilus and Criseyde* in the early sixteenth century: these readings—

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[30] The notion of "background books" is implicit in Jauss's "horizon of expectations", but is articulated clearly by Umberto Eco, "On Some Functions of Literature," *On Literature*, trans. Martin McLaughlin (Orlando et al.: Harcourt, Inc., 2002).

[31] *The Wife of Bath's Prologue*, 804.

[32] Lines 677-723: "And of the love so hote / That made Troylus to dote/ Upon fayre Cressyde, / And what they wrote and sayd, / And of theyr wanton wylles, / Pandare bare the bylles / From one to the other, / His maisters love to further, / Somtyme a presyous thyng, / An ouche or els a ryng, / From her to hym again; /.Somtyme a pretty chain, / Or a bracelet of her here, / Prayd Troylus for to were / That token for her sake; / How hartely he dyd it take / And moche therof dyd make; / And all that was in vayne, / For she dyd but fayne; / The story telleth playne, / He coulde not optayne / Though his father were a kyng; / Yet there was a thyng / That made the male to wryng; / She made hym to syng/ The song of lovers lay;/ Musyng nyght and day/ Mournyng all alone, / Comfort had he none / For she was quyte gone; / Thus in conclusion, / She brought him in abusyon; / In ernest and in game /She was moch to blame; Disparaged is her fame / And blemysshed is her name, / In maner half with shame; / Troylus also hath lost / On her moch love and cost, / And now must kys the post; / Pandare, that went between, / Hath won nothing, I wene, / But light for somer grene; / Yet for a speciall laud/ He is named Troylus baud; / Of that name he is sure / Whyles the world shall dure:"; Criseyde does send a ring to Troilus via Pandarus in III.885.

[33] See Seth Lerer, "The Wiles of Woodcut: Wynkyn de Worde and the Early Tudor Reader" *The Huntington Library Quarterly*. 59.5 (1996): 381-403.

derived from relatively "open" editions of the poem—became recorded and authorized through editorial glossing in the early modern period. Put another way, the interpretation and focus that Jane gives to *Troilus and Criseyde*, initially one way of viewing the poem, would become the authorized way of viewing the poem through the suggestions of editors. Jane's reading *itself*, however, was allowed to exist free from editorial shaping the editions she read: whether simply a repetition of conventional readings or not, Jane was allowed to read on her own, not through the mind of an editor.[34]

While the remainder of *Phyllyp Sparowe* contains further references to Chaucer, the last extended passage occurs from lines 788 to 803.[35] In this encomium on Chaucer, Jane repeats compliments found in the 1483 Caxton *Canterbury Tales*, letting the reader know exactly which Chaucer she reads:

> In Chauser I am sped,
> His tales I have red;
> His mater is delectable,
> Solacious and commendable;
> His Englysh well allowed,
> So as it is enprowed,
> For as it is enployd,
> There is no Englysh voyd,
> At those days moch commended;
> And now men wold have amended
> His Englyssh whereat they barke
> And mar all they warke;
> Chaucer, that famus clerke,

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[34] Henrickson's *Testament of Cressid* is a fairly good indication that this reading was indeed a common one; still, Jane did not take it from the *edition* of *Troilus and Criseyde*.

[35] The other references are as follow: "Though I regester her name / In the courte of Fame" (891-92); "Now Phebus me ken / To sharpe my pen, / And lede my fyst / As hym best lyst/ , That I may say / Honour always/ Of womankind!" (970-976; cf. *The Legend of Good Women* and *The Manciples Tale*); "Her beauty to augment / Dame Nature hath her lent / A wart upon her cheke" (1041-1043; cf. *The Parliament of Fowles*).

> His termes were not darke,
> But plesaunt, easy and playne;
> Ne worde he wrote in vayne (788-803)

Like Caxton, Jane's argument for Chaucer's language takes the form of an assertion rather than an explanation. While some Englishmen would "amend" Chaucer into modern English, Jane stands by Caxton's assertion that, "Ne worde he wrote in vayne," and that, "His termes were not darke." This assertion—perhaps now dubious in the Henrican court—supports the moral value of Chaucer's works: "His mater is delectable, / Solacious and commendable." Notice what happening in this passage: Skelton, through Jane Shore, is further authorizing Caxton's editorial justification of Chaucer through an original poem. Chaucer is canonized in these lines, but through specifically Caxtonian criteria; while Skelton drew from Chaucer in all of his complexities, in these lines he is recording the common reading experience of Chaucer in the early sixteenth century, a reading experience that already shows the effect of editorial rhetoric, even rhetoric as modest as Caxton's.

While Skelton's Chaucerian borrowings are clear in his plot, characters, and diction, the original editions of *Phyllyp Sparowe* do little to call the reader's attention to these facts. Although written before 1505, the earliest printed edition of *Phyllyp Sparowe* is Copland and Kele's 1545 printing.[36] The title page is fairly straightforward: "Here after foloweth the boke of Phyllyp Sparowe compyled by mayster Skelton Poete Laureate." While the word "compyled" may suggest a recognition of the synthetic and heteroglossic

[36] STC 22594.

quality of the poem, too much should not be read into the word choice; de Worde's *Troylus and Criseyde* used the same word to describe Chaucer's action in generating the poem. Beneath the title is a rather generic print of two woodwoses fighting one another: not particularly apt for the poem, but decorative. The text of the poem itself is given in a fairly straightforward manner: single-columned in Blackletter. Signatures are not seen before fol. B.1, and Capitals are used after line breaks to divide the poem into different sections. One editorial feature worth noting is the use of paraphs in this edition. Of the forty-eight paraphs employed, thirty are used at lines related to the Requiem, usually given in Latin. Not only do these paraphs point the reader to significant textual divisions—insofar as the Requiem liturgy is a major governing principle in the arrangement of the poem—they also call attention to the macaronic nature of the poem: Skelton's liturgical Latin is highlighted throughout the work. The final page (fol. 32v) gives an engraving of an open tomb in the foreground with hills and a river in the background; a bird sings on a dead tree to the right of the tomb and the words "Phyllyp sparowes tombe" stands above the picture, drawing the attention of the reader at the end back to the liturgical function of the poem as a memorial for Jane's pet.

This first edition uses modest editorial insertions to attain modest levels of shaping; as we have seen, the most prominent feature is the use of paraphs to call attention to liturgical lines, and even these are not completely consistent, eighteen of the paraphs referring to non-liturgical parts of the poem. Most striking to a Chaucerian reading of the poem, there are no editorial moves to highlight the Chaucerian content of

the poem: the avian beast-fable and Jane's Caxtonian intertexts are presented without any editorial noting. The Phyllyp's tomb on the final page may have originated simply as filler—the printing house not wanting a final blank page—but the ultimate effect is to focus the reader back on the plot of the poem, rather than on the layers of Chaucerian heteroglossia or cheeky Skeltonian commentary. As an edition, the originality of Skelton's achievement is brought to the forefront, with his Chaucerian debts left unnoticed.

Phyllyp Sparowe survives in two other printings after Kele's initial 1545 print.[37] The printings by John Wyght and Robert Toy (around 1554) are nearly identical rhetorically to Kele's; a few paraphs are omitted; two are added, but the overall effect on the reader is not changed terribly. Kitson, Weale, and Walley's printings (from around 1558) have some more thorough rhetorical changes, and as such deserve attention. The first major development is the title-page; the title is the same as in 1545, but the border has now become highly classicized: winged cupidons support a coat of arms (per fess, sable and argent, under crossed swords) at the top of the page. Silenus heads stand on the upper right and left; the title itself is supported on the left by a male figure with a lion-headed helmet and a shield with a face, on the right by a female figure with a young boy. On the bottom border, a nymph and a faun sit on either side of a scene depicting two women. Whatever the origin of the choice of these border features, the rhetorical effect is to circumscribe Skelton as an author of classical status and bearing; the fact that this

[37] STC 22595 (1554?); STC 22595.5 (1554? Variant imprint of the former); STC 22596 (1558?); STC 22596a (1558? Variant imprint of former); STC 22596b (1558? Variant imprint of the former)

border postdates the classicizing borders of all of the Thynne editions is worth noting as well.[38]

In the text of the poem itself, the single-columned, Blackletter layout is followed. There are some telling changes, however, to the paraphed lines. In the first place, nineteen paraphs found in the original edition are now omitted; the rhetorical difference is not terribly great, but still pertinent. More telling is the fact that now, in the mid-sixteenth century, Skelton's spelling is becoming altered by more "modern" orthography. Examples taken from paraphed lines show movement away from the kind of understanding demanded by a medieval text: "O cat of carlyshe kynde" (1545) is now given "O cat of churlyshe kynde" (1558), a modern word replacing a medieval. The "Christe" in "Christe eleyson" is now written out: "xp" may now be too obscure for a reader of Skelton. In a more minor, but still striking, way, "i" replaces "y" in such lines as "yet one thynge is behynde" (1545). The 1558 edition thus presents the reader with a rather curious character. On the one hand, the Classicized title-page clearly presents Skelton as a Classical author; at the same time, the diminution of division-marking paraphs and the unstable orthography serve to make the text oddly choppy when compared to previous editions and printings. At the end of the day, though, this edition distances Skelton even further from his medieval, Chaucerian, and liturgical roots.

Sixteenth-century editions of Skelton's works culminated in the 1568 first edition of his Complete works; one year before this edition, however, a work was published that

[38] The fact that this border is used for imprints of *Why Come Ye Not to Court?* (STC 22617 and 22617a) made in the same year by two of the same printers (Kitson and Weale) suggests that this title-page is merely generic, which does not, however, alter the rhetorical effect in the edition as a whole.

served both to canonize Skelton in his own right as well as to give evidence for the clear recognition of Skelton's affinity to the more comedic and bawdy Chaucer. *Merie Tales Newly Imprinted [and] made by Master Skelton Poet Laureat* presents supposedly biographical tales of Skelton that have the distinctive flavor of Canterbury Tales.[39] Even a simple list of the titles of the tales betrays a Chaucerian spirit at work in Skelton's literary hagiography:

> How Skelten came late home to Oxford, from Abington. Tale.i.
> How Skelton drest the kendall man, in the sweat time. Tale ii.
> Howe Skelton tolde the man that Chryst was very busye in the woodes with them that made fagots. Tale.iii.
> Howe the Welshman dyd desire Skelton to ayde hym in hys sute to the Kynge, for a Patent to sell drynke. The iiii. Tale.
> Of Swanborne the knaue, that was buried vnder Saint Peters wall in Oxford
> Howe Skelton was complained anto the Bishop of Norwich. Tale.vi.
> Howe Skelton when hee came from the bishop, made a Sermon. Tale.vii.
> How the Fryer asked leave of Skelton to preach at Dys, which Skelton wold not grant. Tale.viii
> How Skelton handled the Fryer that woulde needs lye with him in his Inne. Tale. ix.
> Howe the Cardynall desired Skelton to make an Epitaphe vpon his grame. Tale x.
> Howe the Hostler dyd byte Skeltons Mare vnder the tale. for biting him by the arme. Tale. xi.
> Howe the Cobler tolde mister Skelton, it is good sleeping in a whole skinne. Tale.xii.
> How Master Skeltons Miller deceyued hym manye times, by playing the theefe, and howe he was pardoned by Master Skelton, after the stealing of a waye of a Preest oute of his bed, at midnight. Tale.xiii.
> How the vinters wife put water into Skeltons wine. Tale.xiv.

Miller, Cobblers, Alewives, and Welshmen—the characters surrounding Skelton's life in these tales could have stepped from the pages of Chaucer, and confirm a popular view of Skelton as an heir to Chaucer's comic legacy: Skelton's poetry and biography are overtly

[39] STC 22618.

prized for their comedic content and wit. By this time, however, the *Complete Works of Chaucer* by Thynne and Stow have made Chaucer a grave, serious, "ancient" poet through their editorial commentaries. While the humorous elements of Chaucer are not highlighted in the most prominent editions of his own works, these same elements are prized by way of one of Chaucer's imitators, revealing the complex layers of interpretation surrounding Chaucer and Chaucerian works in the middle of the sixteenth century.

Even as Skelton is linked to comedic Chaucerian sensibilities in 1568, in *Pithy pleasaunt and profitable workes of maister Skelton. Nowe collected and published (by J. S[tow])* Skelton is further distanced from Chaucer and established as an author in his own right.[40] The fact that Stow was behind this printing is even more telling: as an editor of Chaucer, Stow shows himself to appreciate Skelton as a Chaucerian poet, but authorizes and Classicizes Skelton in much the same was as he did the same for Chaucer in his 1561 *Complete Works*. The edition opens with two commendations, one in Latin, the other in English, as would befit a poet of Skelton's linguistic proclivities. The English commendation is a long, doggerel poem by Churchyard that praises Skelton in the most generic terms possible. Chaucer is mentioned in the commendation, but in a manner vague to the point of damning with faint praise: "Chausers spreet was great" (fol. Aiiii r). Chaucer is nothing more than a name in a catalogue of great poets; as great as his spirit may have been, he is only a prop to support Skelton. Interestingly enough, however,

[40] STC 22608; Boswell and Holton reveal Stow's involvement in this edition's publication; his name is not on the title-page.

Churchyard's aesthetic criteria put forward to praise Skelton are those used to promote and frame Chaucerian editions: "[He] shoes vs in a glass, / The vertu and the vice, / Of euery wyght a lyve" (fol. Aiiii r). While Skelton is, suitably enough, the center of Churchyard's praises, the *terms* used to praise him are similar to the editorial frames given to Chaucerian editions: he is a poet whose literary value depends on moral instruction. This lexical similarity indicates clearly the genre of editorial praise in this period, influenced by the folio editions of Chaucer.

The contents of Skelton's complete works give precedence to Skelton's self-canonizing *The Crowne of lawrel*, as seen in the table of contents:

> Workes of Skelton newly collected
> by I.S. as folovveth
>
> 1. The crowne of lawrel.
> 2. The bouge of court
> 3. The duke of Albany
> 4. Speake parrot.
> 5. Edward the fourth
> 6. Against the Scottes
> 7. Ware the hauke.
> 8. Howe euery thinge must haue a time
> 9. A prayer to the father of heauen.
> 10. To ye second person
> 11. To the holy ghost
> 12. The tunning of Elinour Rumming
> 13. The reluce[n]t mirror
> 14. Why come ye not to court
> 15. Colyn Clout
> 16. Philip sparowe
> 17. Of a comly Coystrowne
> 18. Upo[n] a deadma[n]s heed
> 19. To maistris Anne
> 20. Of thre fooles
> 21. En parlement a Paris

22. Epitaphes of two knaues of dise.
23. Lamentation for Norwiche.
24. Against ye Scottes
25. Praise of ye palmtre
26. [Italic] Bedel quo[n]da[m] Belial
27. The dolorus death of the Lord Percie Erle of Northumberlande.
28. [Italic] Epitaphium Margarete countisse de Derbi.
29. [Italic] Epita. Hen.septi.
30. [Italic] Eulogium pro suorum temporum.
31. A parable by William Cornishe in ye Fleete
32. Against venomous tongues
33. Of Calliope. (fol. Av v)

The text for Skelton's works is given in Blackletter, while the running titles are in Italic—this choice gives Skelton's works a visual affinity to the folio Chaucers: the apparatus in more "modern" Italic, the poetry in more "ancient" Blackletter.

Individual Chaucerian works of Skelton receive varied treatment in the 1568 *Works*. *The Crowne of Lawrell*, placed in the prominent first position in the edition, is printed in single columns, with spaces between stanzas, a feature not found in the original printing. Glossing is severely cut down, but still present; there are no woodcuts. Significantly, Chaucer is now noted as a poet laureate in the editorial pointing: "Maister Chaucer Lawreat poete to Skelton" (fol. A8r).[41] Retroactively crowned with laurels—by John Stow's edition no less!—Chaucer and Skelton are linked a bit more closely in this edition through this one small detail. As the poem shifts from English to Latin to French, the hierarchy of scripts is still evident, the Romance languages tending to be presented in Italic rather than Blackletter. Skelton's catalogue of works is given in a triangular formation, which calls the reader's attention to the canonical list of Skelton's

[41] Folio signatures begin anew at the beginning of the text of *The Crowne of Lawrell*.

accomplishments. These small but significant changes further the canonical character of this poem through editorial apparatus.[42]

The Tunning of Elinour Rumming, *Philip Sparrow*, and *Comely Coystrowne* show comparatively little revision from previous editions. *The Tunning of Elinour Rumming* is given in a single column, with indentations marking "beats" in the poem; *Passus* are given in Italic instead of the normal textual Blackletter. *Philip Sparrow* has its paraphs radically reduced: from forty-eight to twelve. Strikingly enough, lines from the Bible and the Liturgy are printed in Italic; as such, the reduced number of paraphs is not as severe as it might seem: shifts in font indicate clear textual divisions while preserving the visual distinction between English and Romance languages. *Comely Coystrowne* has its stanzas separated by spaces and its Latin is given in Italic. In general, the 1568 *Works* of Skelton does relatively little to alter the editorial character of Skelton's Chaucerian works. Skelton's first *Complete Works* presents the Laureate Skelton as a classical author, but with a marked distinction between Blackletter English and Italic Latin and French: Skelton's Chaucerian paternity is hinted at by Stow, even while he is figured as a Classical author. This move is not, of course, contradictory: for Stow's edition, Chaucer *was* a Classical author. As with the single work editions, however, the editorial apparatus

[42] One part worth noting is a section altered by Scattergood in his critical edition. In both the 1545 and 1568 editions of *The Garlande or Crowne of Laurel*, the following lines are printed in double columns:

Think what ye will	*Vxor tua sicut Vitis*
Of this wanton byll.	*Habetis in custodiam*
By Mary Gipcie	*Custodite sicut scitis.*
Quod scripsi scripsit	*Secundum Lucam. &c.* (1453-1460)

This layout allows the reader to read this section either as two quatrains or as one octave—reading across, one English line, then one Latin line. Scattergood prints the English over the Latin, destroying the poetic possibility of these lines as a truly macaronic verse.

is minimal in the actual works—the heading materials aside—showing Skelton to be part of a living poetic tradition, rather than an over-glossed resuscitator of "medieval" literature. As such, the Chaucerian level of Skelton is allowed to exist as a lively layer of his verse, rather than as a monument to the "English Homer." In other words, by playing up Skelton's "classical", Latinate side, the 1568 edition retains a living Chaucerian character more similar to the single editions of the fifteenth century than the magisterial *Complete Works* of the sixteenth. The full complexity of the Chaucerian inheritance in English literature—comedy as well as seriousness—is thus allowed to live in the lines of Skelton in a way that it is not in the editions of Chaucer's own works.

Skelton's use of Chaucer—thorough and comedic, yet unacknowledged in editorial rhetoric—may well have served as an impetus for the *Complete Works* of Thynne. Thynne harbored Skelton from Wolsey, and had some appreciation for his poetry.[43] That Chaucer was the clear inspiration for the current poet laureate of England is itself an impetus for producing a *Complete Works*: Thynne's stated reasons notwithstanding, seeing the importance of Chaucer for Skelton—and its marked comedic character—may well have called for the production of a serious, moral collection of Chaucer's works. Furthermore, cause and effect intertwine between Skelton's poems and Thynne's edition: Jane praises Chaucer through generic Caxtonian aesthetic criteria—these criteria, in turn, serve as a starting-point for Thynne's own editorial framing of Chaucer and his works. As Skelton cast himself as a Renaissance poet, a Petrarchan

[43] See Blodgett, 38.

laureate, on the shoulders of Chaucer, the time was ripe for a Chaucerian edition to do for Chaucer what Skelton was doing for himself: canonize and authorize his complete works in no uncertain terms and further the poetic project of the renaissance: the *ethos* of Skelton called for a revision of the *ethos* of Chaucer, and the *Complete Works* of Thynne, Stow, and Speght answered that call.

Chapter 8

Early Editions and Imitations: Spenser

While Skelton's relationship to Chaucer was muted, Spenser himself proclaims his poetic debt to Chaucer, and there is no shortage of studies on the relations between the two poets.[1] Spenser imps himself on Chaucer's wings to so great an extent that, as we shall see, editions of his poems help shape the presentation of Chaucer himself by Speght. Spenser's relationship to comedic Chaucerian works is less clear, however,

[1] For some of the most helpful, see Georgia Ronan Crampton, *The Condition of Creatures: Suffering and Action in Chaucer and Spenser* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1974); A. Kent Hieatt, *Chaucer, Spenser, Milton: Mythopoeic Continuities and Transformations* (Montreal and London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975); Clare Regan Kinney, *Strategies of Poetic Narrative: Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Eliot* (Cambridge, New York, and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Alice Miskimin. *The Renaissance Chaucer.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975; A.C. Spearing, *Medieval to Renaissance in English Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Judith Anderson, "Prudence and Her Silence: Spenser's Use of Chaucer's Melibee," *ELH* Vol. 62, No. 1 (Spring, 1995), 29-46; Judith Anderson, "A Gentle Knight Was Pricking on the Plaine," *English Literary Renaissance* Vol. 15 (1985), 166-174; Judith Anderson, "Narrative Reflections: Re-envisaging the Poet in *The Canterbury Tales* and *The Faerie Queene*," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 87-105; Craig A. Berry, " 'Sundrie Doubts': Vulnerable Understanding and Dubious Origins in Spenser's Continuation of the *Squire's Tale*," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 106-127; J.A. Burrow, "*Sir Thopas* in the Sixteenth Century," *Middle English Studies Presented to Norman Davis*, ed. Douglas Gray and E.G. Stanley (Clarendon: Oxford University Press, 1983); Patrick Cheney, "Spenser's Completion of *The Squire's Tale*: Love, Magic, and Heroic Action in the Legend of Cambell and Triamond," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 15 (1985); Helen Cooper, "The shape-shiftings of the Wife of Bath, 1395-1670," *Chaucerian Traditions: Studies in Honour of Derek Brewer*, ed. Ruth Morse and Barry Windeatt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 168-184; Anthony M. Esolen, "The Disingenuous Poet Laureate: Spenser's Adoption of Chaucer," *Studies in Philology* Vol. 87, No. 3 (Summer, 1990), 285-311; A. Kent Hieatt, "Room of One's Own for Decisions: Chaucer and *The Faerie Queene*," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 147-164; Anne Higgins, "Spenser Reading Chaucer: Another Look at the *Faerie Queene* Allusions," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* Vol. 89, No. 1 (Jan., 1990): 17-36; Thomas William Nadal, "Spenser's Daphnaida and Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess,*" *PMLA*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (1908): 646-61; Thomas William Nadal, "Spenser's *Muiopotmos* in Relation to Chaucer's *Sir Thopas* and *The Nun's Priest's Tale*," *PMLA* Vol. 25, No. 4 (1910): 640-656; Glenn Steinberg, "Idolatrous Idylls: Protestant Iconoclasm, Spenser's *Daphnaida*, and Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess*," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 128-146.

than it is with Skelton: although Spenser *does* draw on more serious works in the Chaucer canon, and does use Chaucerian comedy for comic ends (*Mother Hubbard's Tale* is most prominent), his most pronounced borrowing takes comedic Chaucerian works and reworks them into serious poetry: *The Shepheardes Calendar, Daphnaida*, and *The Faerie Queene*. Why would a poet of the gravity of Spenser turn to comedic works to produce serious poetry?

While this is a complex question that ventures into the murky waters of authorial intent, consideration for the editorial characters of the works used helps clarify this matter. As seen above, the Chaucer of Skelton's time retains space for comic readings amidst the minimal editorial interventions. By the time the *Complete Works* have arrived, however, Spenser and his immediate audience cannot encounter the comic Chaucer without the hermeneutic burden of editorial suggestions and an ever-increasing, ever more serious canon. The comedy of Chaucer, even the comedy of some of his most ridiculous poems, becomes lost on Spenser and his audience largely through the rhetoric of their editions. Spenser's imitation of Chaucer, in turn, will inform the presentation of Chaucer in Speght's edition, firmly establishing a Spenserian interpretation of Chaucer for the seventeenth century.

Eleven years after Skelton's complete works were printed, Spenser's *Shepheardes Calendar* revolutionized English lyric poetry and, arguably, brought the Renaissance

firmly into English literary works.[2] Spenser was clearly a poet of a different order than Skelton: his verse was recognized as revolutionary by his contemporaries and his influence on subsequent English poetry is so far greater than Skelton's that comparison between the two would seem to be ludicrous. At the same time, they shared a link to the history of English literature through the inspiration of Geoffrey Chaucer. We have seen how Chaucer's influence, mediated through more "open" editions, shaped Skelton's verses, which in turn helped determine the influence of printed editorial rhetoric. We shall now see how the editorial shaping of Chaucer's works profoundly influenced the way in which Spenser approached and appropriated Chaucer, allowing the "sage and serious" Spenser to assert Chaucer as one of his most profound influences.[3] By observing the way Spenser uses Chaucerian source material in *The Shepheardes Calendar, Mother Hubbard's Tale, Daphnaida,* and *The Faire Queene*, the print *ethos* of the original editions of Spenser's works, and the correlation between Spenser and Chaucerian editions of the sixteenth century, we shall see that not only did Spenser conform to the reading of Chaucer printed in the folio editions of Thynne and Stow, but that his use of Chaucer on the printed page influenced profoundly the layout and look of Speght's 1598 and 1602 editions of Chaucer. The Thynne and Stow Chaucers shaped the

[2] The commendatory verses printed alongside the *Faerie Queene* make much mention of Spenser's *Calendar* as the beginning of this new age of poetry.

[3] On Spenser's "sage and serious" character, see John Milton, *Areopagitica*: "Which was the reason why our sage and serious Poet *Spenser*, whom I dare be known to think a better teacher then *Scotus* or *Aquinas*, describing true temperance under the person of *Guyon*, brings him in with his palmer through the cave of Mammon, and the bower of earthly bliss that he might see and know, and yet abstain." *Areopagitica,* in *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2003, original 1957), 728-29.

character of Spenser's printed works, and Spenser's printed works, in turn, shaped the character of Speght's Chaucer.

In the first place, we should consider the editions through which Spenser most likely encountered Chaucer. Miskimin and Hudson point to the 1561 Stow edition as the most likely candidate for Spenser's Chaucer.[4] As we shall see, there is reason to suspect at least ancillary familiarity with the 1550 Thynne, but insofar as Stow borrowed liberally from Thynne's edition, the overall effect on Spenser's reception of Chaucer would most likely be similar regardless of the edition used. The central point to keep in mind is that Spenser approached Chaucer not through the more editorially open single-work editions of the early Tudor era, but through the thoroughly classicized and authorized editions of the mid-sixteenth century. This rhetorical shaping of Chaucer's works would have profound effects on the ways in which Spenser approached Chaucer, measuring himself by Chaucer's ancient and venerable standard, while at the same time distancing himself from a Chaucerian voice much more thoroughly than Skelton. Although Spenser makes much more overt claims to Chaucerian inspiration in both his poetry and his editions, his use of Chaucer is much less central to his poetry. While this is undoubtedly the result of a radical difference in poetic vision—Skelton imitating the Classical authors as a laureate poet, Spenser announcing a revolution in English poetry drawn from Classical and Continental models—it is also the result of what Chaucer has become through the editions of Spenser's time: a dumb monument to be reverenced rather than a living poet

[4] Miskimin, 289; Hudson, 53.

with whom to converse. The fact that Spenser took Chaucer seriously in any poetic capacity shows a sensitivity to England's medieval poetic past uncommon in poets of the age; Spenser is the last major English poet to respond in any serious way to Chaucer until Dryden (and Dryden did not so much respond to Chaucer as "improve" on him). Milton, perhaps the greatest poet of the seventeenth century, praised Chaucer but made little, if any, use of him in his own works.

Knowing that Spenser approached a Chaucer rendered "sage and serious" by Stow and Thynne, we can understand better the presence of Chaucer in Spenser's works. We shall treat these works in chronological order: *The Shepheardes Calendar, Daphnaida, Mother Hubbard's Tale, The Faerie Queene*. While the Chaucerian elements in these poems are evident in any edition used, we will proceed by considering the Chaucerian presence through a treatment of the earliest editions of Spenser. The reason for this is twofold: in the first place, contemporary editions of Spenser are often conscientious enough to reproduce textual features from the first editions: Oram's *Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser* and Hamilton's critical edition of *The Faerie Queene* both reproduce woodcuts, title pages, and other rhetorically significant editorial features: the rhetoric of Spenser's first editions is still present in some form or another in contemporary editions, and treating the first editions—rather than simply critical editions—will provide those other textual features not readily observable to twenty-first-

century readers of Spenser, particularly these editions' use of the hierarchy of scripts.[5] In the second place, Spenser took a keen interest in the preparation of his own editions.[6] The rhetorical effects of Spenser's early editions are thus overseen by the author in a way not found in any other edition in this study. Presumably, not all effects of these editions arise directly from Spenser, but Spenser must have at least approved of them: presumably a layout, a title page, or a method of glossing that he seriously disapproved of would have been noted, at very least in an errata list.[7] The effects of early Spenser editions are thus Spenserian in a way that the first editions of Skelton are not "Skeltonian" or the earliest manuscripts of Chaucer "Chaucerian." Aside from *The Shepheardes Calendar,* Spenser's earliest editions served, by and large, to diminish the overt Chaucerian presence in his poems, even while preserving Chaucer in a monument similar to that of the folio editions, showing the Spenserian balancing act of simultaneously linking himself to Chaucer and presenting poetry as original.[8]

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[5] *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, ed. William Oram, et al. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989); *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton, et al. (London, et al.: Pearson/Longman, 2007). All line numbers are taken from these editions.

[6] Oram, 217 (In the introductory materials written by Ronald Bond).

[7] Consider Speght's apology at the end of his 1598 *Complete Works*; even if the offending material still made it to print, the supervisor of the project could still register his displeasure. See Eisenstein (2005) on errata lists and complaints about print.

[8] Both Esolen and Higgins notice that Spenser is not exactly clear in acknowledging all of his Chaucerian debts in his verses; the editorial rhetoric confirms this judgment.

The Shepheardes Calendar

First printed in 1579, *The Shepheardes Calendar* stands as a turning point in English literature: while looking back to Classical and Medieval models of poetry, it also announces a new age of English poetry and serves as a showcase of Spenser's poetic virtuosity, fusing complex allegorical frameworks onto a variety of poetic forms and meters in the setting of a Golden Age pastoral.[9] Thomas H. Cain notes the connection between *The Shepheardes Calendar* and Spenser's own self-promotion as a successor of Virgil, a poet whose career will begin with the pastoral lyric and end with the epic:

> So imperative is [the Virgilian] model for Spenser that, although we know the names of poems he had already written by 1579, he publishes none before his *Calendar* and none after until three books of his epic are in print. The title Spenser chose for his pastorals serves two functions. In one sense it means "the announcement of the shepherd" (Gk *kalein*, announce) and so heralds his taking up the Virgilian role. But to organize a series of eclogues (as poems in a pastoral series are called) by a calendar design and to subordinate his speakers to the exigencies of the seasons is Spenser's innovation, with the result a structurally more intricate yet more unified pastoral sequence than Virgil's or any other previous poet.[10]

The *Kalendar of Shepherds* (*Le compost et Kalendrier des bergiers*) had been published by Richard Pynson in 1506, a translation of the French original of 1493, and the Italian calendrical model was already well established.[11] Nevertheless, Spenser's first published work was a conscious attempt at launching a new poetic career and a new kind of poetry;

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[9] STC 23089 (1579)

[10] Oram, 3.

[11] On *The Kalendar of Shepherds*, see A.H. Diplock's Introduction to the 1908 edition: *The Kalendar of Shepheardes*, ed. A.H. Diplock (Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd.: 3 Adam Street, Adelphi W.C., 1908). Accessed through < http://www.archive.org/details/kalendarofshephe00compiala> (March 15, 2011) . On the calendrical tradition in Italian poetry, see Thomas P. Roche, Jr., "The Calendrical Structure of Petrarch's *Canzionere*," *Studies in Philology*, Vol. 71, No. 2 (April, 1974): 152-72. For a treatment of Spenser's general relation to the Italian literary tradition, see Reed Way Dasenbrock, *Imitating the Italians: Wyatt, Spenser, Synge, Pound, Joyce* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

Spenser shows himself to be an heir to the past while performing as an innovative poetic virtuoso.

It may be perhaps surprising, then, given this concern for self-promotion and innovation, that Spenser should spend so much time in his *Calendar* praising Chaucer and taking him for his poetic master. In reality, there is little, if any contradiction here: Spenser is constructing himself as the successor of the grave and authoritative Chaucer of the Thynne and Stow *Complete Works*, a poet worthy of canonization. While some read this Chaucerian pose as either an excuse for "rustic" diction or a clever method of criticizing Elizabeth's court, the consistency with which *The Shepheardes Calendar* weaves Chaucer into the text and glosses shows the monumental Chaucer to be far more central to the poetic vision of the work.[12] Arguably the first mature work of the English Renaissance is calculated to feel like a Chaucerian edition, as we shall see in a consideration of its form and content.

The beginning of the 1579 edition of *The Shepheardes Calendar* is focused most clearly on Sidney, not Chaucer; the title-page is rather bare and straightforward, lacking Spenser's name and dedicating the work to Sidney: "The Shepheardes Calendar Conteyning the tvvelue Eclogues portoinable to the twelue monethes, Entitled TO THE NOBLE AND VERTVous Gentleman most worthy of all titles Both of learning and cheualrie M. Philip Sidney." The Sidneian dedication is followed immediately by a dedicatory poem by "Immerito"—"he who is unworthy"—that sounds a decidedly

[12] See Esolen, 287.

Chaucerian note in the very first line by beginning with a reference to *Troilus and Criseyde*, V.1786:

> *Goe little booke: thy selfe present*
> *As child whose parent is vnkent:*
> *To him that is the president*
> *Of noblesse and of cheualree*
> *And if that Enuie barke at thee,*
> *As sure it will, for succore flee*
> *Vnder the shadow of his wing,*
> *And asked, who thee forth did bring,*
> *A shepheards swaine saye did thee sing,*
> *All as his straying flocke he fedde:*
> *And when his honor has thee redde,*
> *Craue pardon for my hardyhedde.*
> *But if that any aske thy name,*
> *Say thou wert base begot with blame:*
> *For thy thereof thou takest shame.*
> *And when thou art past iopardee,*
> *Come tell me, what was sayd of mee:*
> *And I will send more after thee.*
>
> *Immeritô.*

Chaucer exhorted *Troilus and Criseyde* to go forth with the promise of future comedies, in a humble position towards the classics: "Go, litel bok, go, litel myn tragedye, / Ther God thi makere yet, er that he dye, / So sende might to make in som comedye! / But litel book, no making thow n'envie, / But subgit be to alle poesye; / And kis the stepes where as thow seest pace / Virgile, Ovide, Omer, Lucan, and Stace" (1786-1792).[13] Spenser's book begins with a strong Chaucerian parallel, but with this major difference: in contrast to Chaucer, the humility found in Spenser's "To His Book" appears to be more of a trope:

[13] Taken from *The Riverside Chaucer*, Anthony Burgess, ed. (Oxford, New York, et al: Oxford University Press, 1987).

although "unworthy", the "anonymous" poet has the ear of Sidney, and promises more poetry if the reader enjoys what follows. In point of fact, Spenser had written much poetry before the publication of *The Shepheardes Calendar*, and posed the Calendar specifically as a triumphant entry into the world of poetry. This initial Chaucerian reference in the *Calendar*, then, serves a double purpose. On the one hand, it establishes Spenser's poetic *ethos* in the work: rustic, humble, and unworthy of approaching the greatness of those past. On the other, however, the overt borrowing from Chaucer, and a part of Chaucer, furthermore, whose full quotation does homage to the great authors of the past, puts Spenser on the same level of Chaucer and—by extension—the Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Lucan, and Statius that Chaucer himself honors. By extension, in dedicating the poem to Sidney, Spenser claims poetic equality to Sidney himself through this Chaucerian dedicatory move.

Following the dedicatory verse, the reader is confronted with the dedication to Gabriel Harvey, written by the mysterious "E.K."; regardless of "E.K."'s identity, for the purposes of editorial rhetoric, the identity is irrelevant: the *ethos* E.K. presents is that of a learned scholar glossing and commenting on Spenser's text in the manner of a scholar of classical literature.[14] Significantly, this dedication is fundamentally shaped by the folio editions of Chaucer produced in the decades before *The Shepheardes Calendar*: E.K.

[14] For a sample of the sometimes heated (and often fruitless) debate on the identity of "E.K.", see Agnes Kuersteiner, "E.K. is Spenser," *PMLA*, 50 (1935): 140-55; D.T. Starnes, "Spenser and E.K.," *Studies in Philology*, 41 (1944): 181-200; Paul McLane, *Spenser's "Shepheardes Calendar"* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961); Celeste Turner Wright, "Anthony Mundy, 'Edward' Spenser, and E.K.," *PMLA*, 76 (1961): 34-39; and Theodore L. Steinberg, "E.K.'s *Shepheardes Calendar* and Spenser's," *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Autumn, 1973): 46-58. The effect of E.K.'s materials on the text of *The Shepheardes Calendar* is much the same regardless of his identity.

writes about poetry and Spenser's poetic project using concepts borrowed from the classicized Chaucer of Thynne and Speght, and his defense of old terms particularly owes its tone to the defenses of Chaucer presented by these pre-Spenserian editors.

The very first sentence of E.K.'s dedication presents the reader with the classicized, monumental Chaucer of Thynne and Stow: "Vncouthe Vnkiste, Sayd the olde famous Poete Chaucer: vvhom for his excellencie and vvonderfull skil in making, his scholler Lidgate, a vvorthy scholler of so excellent a maister, calleth the Loadestarre of our Language: and vvhom our Colin clout in his Eclogue calleth Tityrus the God of shepheards, comparing hym to the worthiness of the Roman Tityrus Virgile" (1-7).[15] In one (particularly long) breath, E.K. has linked Spenser to Chaucer by way of Lydgate, fusing the "loadstar" of English with the *Calendar*'s "god of shepherds", asserting Chaucer to be a poetic equal of Virgil. This classicized Chaucer is then used in the very next sentence to inaugurate the new poetic project of Spenser; the mythos of this new poet is immediately authorized by Chaucerian gravitas: "VVhich prouerbe myne owne good friend Ma. Haruey, as in that good old Poete it serued vvell Pandares purpose, for the bolstering of his baudy brocage, so very vvell taketh place in this our nevv Poete, vvho for that he is vncouthe (as said Chaucer) is vnkist, and vnknown to most me[n], is regarded but of fevv" (7-14). This new poet is presented in Chaucerian terms, an heir to the Chaucerian work most esteemed in the English Renaissance, *Troilus and Criseyde*.

[15] All line numbers are taken from Oram's edition. For bibliographic clarity, I have retained the typography of the original 1579 edition.

What follows then is a passage of particular significance when read in light of the folio Chaucers of the sixteenth century:

> But I dout not, so soone as his name shall come into the knovvledg of men, and his vvorthiness be sounded in the tromp of fame, but that he shall be not onely kiste, but also beloued of all, embraced of the most, and vvondred at of the best. No lesse I thinke, deserueth his vvittinesse in deuising, his pithinesse in vttering, his complaints of loue so louely, his discourses of pleasure so pleasantly, his pastorall rudenesse, his morall vvisenesse, his devve obseruing of Decorum euerye vvhere, in personages, in seasons, in matter, in speech, and generally in al seemely simplycitie of handeling his matter, and framing his vvords: the vvhich of many things which in him be straunge, I knovv vvill seeme the straungest, the vvords them selues being so auncient, the knitting of them so short and intricate, and the vvhole Periode & compasse of speache so delightsome for the roundnesse, and so graue for the straungenesse. And firste of the vvordes to speake, I graunt they be something hard, and of most men vnused, yet both English, and also vsed of most excellent Authors and most famous Poetes (13-32).

This catalogue of poetic virtue is shaped greatly by the presentation of Chaucer in the folio editions: "wittiness in devising, pithiness in uttering"—these specific stylistic virtues best appreciated by the cultivated reader/poet echo the praises of Chaucer's style used to legitimize publications of Chaucer's Complete Works: the aesthetic categories used overtly to frame Chaucer's works are the aesthetic categories used to measure every author of the sixteenth century, including Spenser. "His complaints of love so lovely, his discourses of pleasure so pleasantly"—these show the emphasis on the more serious genres found in Thynne and Stow: Spenser himself, as we shall see, will latch onto the complaint as a genre central to his canon, while "discourses", even if on pleasure, retain

an erudite air through E.K.'s praises and glosses.[16] "His pastorall rudeness, his moral wiseness, his due observing of decorum . . . and generally in all seemly simplicity in matter and words"—the "rudeness" gives weight to Esolen's interpretation of Spenser's Chaucerian "pose",[17] but the focus on morality and decorum finds echoes in the late anthologies of Chaucer—focused on moral usefulness—to the defenses of Chaucer that will appear in Speght nineteen years after *The Shepheardes Calendar*, in which decorum plays a large role in explaining away Chaucer's more bawdy parts. Furthermore, Spenser focuses on the specifically *linguistic* strangeness of Chaucer, which fits perfectly into Speght's project of providing a lexicon: *The Shepheardes Calendar* set the challenge for Speght, and Speght's edition later answered that challenge. "Grave for the straungeness" is also telling of Spenser's use: if this is a true estimation of the effect of Chaucerian language on the later sixteenth-century reader, then Spenser's own use of "Strange" language should be seen as an attempt at aesthetic gravity more than simple pastoral "rudeness". The final sentence anticipates perfectly the Speghtian stance towards Chaucer: he grants that some of the words are hard, but asserts that this difficulty should not be an impediment for the educated, cultivated reader to enjoy Chaucer. In one short passage, E.K. imbues *The Shepheardes Calendar* with value derived from the Chaucerian editions of the past while anticipating the last major Chaucerian edition of the English Renaissance.

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[16] For more on Spenser's use of the complaint genre, see Richard Danson Brown, *The New Poet: Novelty and Tradition in Spenser's Complaints* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999).
[17] Esolen, 310-311.

In addition to Chaucerian stylistic praise for Spenser, *The Shepheardes Calendar* is also lauded in national terms raised by Thynne's edition. One of Thynne's major excuses for publishing Chaucer's *Works* is linked to a project of purifying English in the manner in which the other vernacular languages of Europe have been "purified" through great vernacular poetry. E.K. asserts that this purification is not a project only to be left to Chaucer, but one that has now been taken up by this new poet:

> But if any vvill rashly blame such his purpose in choyse of old and vnvvonted vvords, him may I more iustly blame and condemne, or of vvitlesse headinesse of iudging, or of heedelesse hardinesse in condemning for not marking the compasse of hys bent, he vvil iudge of the length of his cast for in my opinion it is one special prayse, of many vvhych are dew to this Poete, that he hath labored to restore, as to theyr rightfull heritage such good and naturall English words, as haue ben long time out of vse & almost cleare disherited. VVhich is the onely cause, that our Mother tonge, which truly of it self is both ful enough for prose & stately enough for verse, hath long time ben cou[n]ted most bare & barrein of both. Which default when as some endeuoured to salue & recure, they batched vp the holes with peces & rags of other languages, borrowing here of the French, there of the Italian, euery where of the Latine, not vveighing hovv il, those tonges accorde vvith themselues, but much vvorse vvith ours: how they haue made our English tongue, a gallimaufray or hodgepodge of al other speeches (77-97).

Spenser's *Calendar* is restoring the heritage of the English language, one that has been abused by the indiscriminate borrowing of foreign words. Here the reader of the Thynne Chaucer cannot help but hear echoes of Thynne's discourse on the renewal of Latin letters and the Romance languages: those renewals sprung from within the language, not from without, and as such were superior. If Chaucer was the originator of this renewal of English, then Spenser—E.K. implies—is the continuer of this project, using older English words for the sake of the national honor of England.

To the end of furthering this patriotic project of renewing English through old words and phrases, E.K. notes that he has graciously provided the glosses which now grace each eclogue. While this scholarly treatment clearly looks forward to Speght's own glossing of Chaucer, perhaps even more significant is the reason E.K. gives for subjecting Spenser's poetry to this learned treatment:

> Hereunto haue I added a certain Glosse or scholion for th'exposition of old vvordes & harder phrases: vvhich maner of glosing and commenting, vvell I vvote, vvil seeme straunge & rare in our tongue: yet for so much as I knew many excellent & proper deuises both in wordes and matter vvould passe in the speedy course of reading, either as vnknovven, or as not marked, and that in this kind, as in other vve might be equal to the learned of other nations, I thought good to take the paines vpon me, the rather for that by meanes of some familiear acquaintaunce I vvas made priuie to this counsel and secret meaning in them, as also in sundry other vvorks of his vvich albeit I knovv he nothing so much hateth, as to promulgate, yet this much haue I aduentured vpon his frendship, him self being for long time furre estraunged, hoping that this vvill the rather occasion him, to put forth diuers other excellent vvorkes of his, vvhich slepe in silence, as his Dreames, his Legendes, his Court of Cupide, and sondry others; vvhose commendations to set out, vvere verye vaine; the things though vvorthy of many, yet being knowen to few (178-198).

With the advent of Speght's Chaucer, such glossing and commenting would no longer be rare in English, and the beginnings of scholarly treatment of Chaucer was already well established by the Thynne and Stow editions. Significantly, though, this scholarly treatment of Spenser's poetry is calculated, according to E.K., to motivate this new poet to publish the rest of his extant poetry: Dreams, Legends, the "Court of Cupid," and others. This presumed extant poetry is clearly a catalogue of Chaucerian genres; although E.K. elsewhere hints that Spenser's poetic career may follow classical models; he overtly situates Spenser squarely in Chaucerian genres, genres, moreover, that are

highlighted by the sixteenth-century folio Chaucers: the apocrypha included in the folios, as we have seen, tended towards new poems of courtly love, legends, and dream-visions.[18] A look at Spenser's actual poetic production reveals that this Chaucerian list does not match completely the Spenser canon, in which the epic is most central. Here the reader sees the most clear use of Chaucer to authorize Spenser's new poetic project: not only is he an heir to Chaucer in style and in patriotism, but has at ready poems of the major Chaucerian genres praised by Thynne and Stow. The importance of this rhetorical move cannot be underestimated: Spenser is presented as a Chaucerian poet by the very genres of works he (supposedly) will write.

E.K.'s dedication thus frames Spenser in undeniably Chaucerian terms; paradoxically, however, E.K. also highlights the "rudeness" of Chaucerian speech, and its decorous use by Spenser as a vehicle for pastoral poetry. Immediately after praising Spenser's verse in Chaucerian terms, E.K. gives a defense of his lexis in terms of appropriateness to his subject:

> But whether he vseth them by such casualtye and custome, or of set purpose and choyse, as thinking them fittest for such rusticall rudenesse of shepheards, eyther for that theyr rough sounde vvould make his rymes more ragged and rustical, or els because such olde and obsolete wordes are most vsed of country folke, sure I think, and think I think not amisse, that they bring great grace and, as one vvould say, auctoritie to the verse. For

[18] Compare this catalogue to the overtly Virgilian "pastoral to epic" model alluded to earlier: "And as young birdes, that be nevvly crept out of the nest, by little first to proue theyr tender vvynges, before they make a greater flight. So flevv Theocritus, as you may perceiue he vvas all ready full fledged. So flew Virgile, as not yet vvell feeling his vvinges. So flevv Mantuane, as being not full somd. So petrarque. So Boccace; So Marot, Sanazarus, and also diuers other excellent both Italian and French Poetes, vvhose foting this Author euery vvhere followveth; yet so as few, but they be wel sented can trace him out. So finally flyeth this our nevv Poet, as a bird, vvhose principal can be scarce grovven out, but yet as that in time shall be hable to keepe wing with the best" (156-167).

> albe amongst many other faultes it specially be obiected of Valla against Liuie, and of other against Saluste, that vvith ouer much studie they affect antiquities, as coueting thereby credence and honor of elder yeeres, yet I am of opinion, and eke the best learned are of the lyke, that those auncient solemne wordes are a great ornament both in the one & in the other; the one laboring to set forth in hys worke and eternall image of antiquitie, and the other carefully discoursing matters of grauitie and importaunce (38-55).

Spenser's words, then, are on the one hand "rough" and thus appropriate for the speech of rustic shepherds; on the other hand, they set forth the "eternal image of antiquity" and matters of "gravity and importance." This "eternal image of antiquity" is worth pondering. Language that is antiquated to the point of not being used is dead; dead languages, however, attain a kind of eternal perfection. Dead languages do not change, and thus do present "eternal images" to their readers. As such, dead languages attain a kind of Platonic perfection, a timelessness whose attraction would not have been lost on Spenser.[19] As to "matters of gravity and importance", we come back to Chaucerian style as decorum, decorous not simply in a Wordsworthian language of the "common people" but in terms of a grave language for grave matters, the *verba* fitting the *res*. Spenser's poetic language, then, aspires to a kind of perfection through its Chaucerian nature, even while sounding rhymes ragged and rustic.

In the very next sentence, however, E.K. appears to undercut his previous statement on eternal images and antiquity by praising dead language for the contrast it provides to more living speech, taking as his authority none other than Cicero:

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[19] For a view of Spenser's Platonism, see Robert Ellrodt, *Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser* (Folcroft, PA: Folcroft Press, 1969, original, 1960).

> For if my memory fayle not, Tullie in that booke, vvherein he endeauoureth to set forth the paterne of a perfect Oratour, sayth that ofttimes an auncient worde maketh the style seeme graue and as it were reuerend: no otherwise then vve honour and reuerence gray heares for a certain religious regard, which we haue of old age. yet nether euery where must old words be stuffed in, nor the commen Dialecte and maner of speaking so corrupted therby, that as in old buildings it seme disorderly & ruinous. But all in most exquisite pictures they vse to blaze and portraiet not onely the daintie lineaments of beautye, but also rounde about it to shadow the rude thickets and craggy cliffs, that by the basenesse of such parts, more excellency may accrew to the principall; for oftimes we fynde ourselues, I know not hovv, singularly delighted with the shewe of such natruall rudenesse, and take great pleasure in that disorderly order (55-72).

According to E.K., then, these old words and phrases *are* ugly in a certain sense; their use in verse, however, is reminiscent of chiaroscuro in drawing: the "rudeness" of certain phrases highlights the "dainty lineaments of beauty" found elsewhere. E.K. thus presents Spenser's relationship to Chaucer as doubly virtuous: Chaucer's language is mysteriously pleasurable in itself, grave, decorous, and eternal, and yet at the same time serves as a dark contrast to Spenser's living poetic language. Insofar as Spenser is Chaucerian, he retains Chaucer's perfections, but insofar as he moves beyond Chaucer's verse and language he shines even brighter for using Chaucer as a point of contrast. This "disorderly order" is perhaps a perfect phrase for Spenser's synthetic poetic imagination: he takes the literary tradition heretofore given and fuses it into a single allegorical system whose very dissonances give pleasure. Spenser is the only English poet grounded enough to be worthy to use Chaucer's language for whatever purpose he would: "For vvhat in most English writers vseth to be loose, and as it vvere vngyrt, in this Authour is vvell grounded, finely framed, and strongly trussed vp together" (124-127). As we shall see,

this bifurcated stance towards Chaucer—his straightforward heir and his perfector—will continue to show itself in Spenser's use and presentation of Chaucerian materials.

Interposed between the dedication and the Eclogues themselves, the reader finds E.K.'s "General argument of the whole booke". While this section is mostly an opportunity for E.K. to discourse on Greek philology and various opinions on which month should begin the new year, his section on the genres found in *The Shepheardes Calendar* again recalls terms used for praise of Chaucer:

> These xij. AEclogues euery where answering to the seasons of the tvvelue moneths may be vvell deuided into three forms or ranckes. For eyther they be Plaintiue, as the first, the sixt, the eleuenth, & the twelfth, or recreatiue, such as al those be, vvhich conceiue matter of loue, or commendation of special personages, or Moral: vvhich for the most part be mixed with some Satyrical bitternesse, namely the second of reuerence devve to old age, the fift of coloured deceipt, the seuenth and ninth of dissolute shepheards & pastours, the tenth of contempt of Poetrie & pleasaunt vvits (27-37).

At first glance, this generic division may not appear to be particularly Chaucerian. When compared to the Chaucerian anthologies of the fifteenth century and the folios of the sixteenth, however, a clear trend appears: Spenser's eclogues are Complaints, Love Poems, and Moral Poems, the latter being often satirical. As we have seen, Caxton, de Worde, Pynson, Thynne, and Stow all collected Chaucerian works and praised them for their moral gravity, their treatment of love, or their status as Complaints. Chaucer's bawdier sections are defended as being "satirical" and therefore moral. In the generic presentation of *The Shepheardes Calendar*, then, E.K. is giving the work the character of a Chaucerian anthology, an anthology, however, deliberately crafted to appear as it is by

the author, a consciously produced, authorial imitation of a possibly disordered, editorially determined edition. Thus, even before the reader arrives at the eclogues, Chaucer is used in three major ways: 1. As a source for generic divisions; 2. As an authority, an inspiring god, a progenitor of the new English poet and new English poetry; and 3. As a pretext for rustic speech, which both highlights the distance between Chaucer's English and the English of 1579, as well as begins Spenser's aesthetic of "ancient and grave" speech.

When we turn to the poems that make up *The Shepheardes Calendar*, we find that woodcuts, fonts, and glosses serve a specific rhetorical purpose: to make the work look like a Chaucerian anthology even as they set a new tone for what such an anthology should look like. The woodcuts given before each eclogue's argument were made for this edition, and are integral to the overall experience of reading *The Shephearedes Calendar*. The woodcuts function allegorically and dramatically in their interaction with the text, and as such have little bearing on the woodcuts of Chaucerian editions; the Spenserian woodcuts have deeper roots in the classical emblematic tradition, as found in sixteenth-century emblem books. Even though these woodcuts are more deeply integrated into the poetic text than the woodcuts that appear in Chaucerian editions, they nevertheless recall the use of woodcuts in Chaucerian editions, particularly the fifteenth-century *Canterbury Tales*, de Wordes *Troilus and Criseyde*, and one of Stow's 1561 imprints. More significantly, the fonts used in *The Shepheardes Calendar* display the influence of later Thynne and Stow editions, and provide the inspiration for Speght's use

of fonts: the "Argument" of each eclogue is given in Italic, as are the characters' names, the headings, and—importantly—the glosses. The words for the poems *themselves*, however, are printed in Blackletter, a clear imitation of Chaucerian editions. The antique character of *The Shepheardes Calendar* is not only constructed through diction but through the very typeface encountered on the page: as we have seen, this practice is not new to Spenser, but by now is an editorially-invented tradition for Chaucer. As to the glosses, they are certainly a major source of Speght's editorial project nineteen years later: both E.K.'s glosses of Spenser and Speght's glosses of Chaucer have the same flavor—relating to a word or a short phrase, they both often expand on a display of erudition that serves more to demonstrate the glosser's classical learning than to illuminate the poem itself. These glosses go beyond the commentaries found in Thynne and Stow and set the stage for Speght. Thus the visual rhetoric of the original *Shepheardes Calendar* emphasizes continually the continuity between Spenser's book and Chaucer's book, even while differentiating the two by use of scholarly glosses, turned to a living, modern poet.

In the eclogues themselves, Chaucerian hints and echoes may be found throughout their diction, themes, and characterization. For the purposes of this study, however, only the most overtly Chaucerian eclogues will be considered, eclogues that owe central portions of their composition to Chaucerian models. The first eclogue to show sustained Chaucerian debt is *Februarie*, wherein the reader finds the tale of the Oak and the Briar. Cain notes that the four-stress line used has a *Piers Plowman* feel of

medieval rusticity; this feel should not be thought of as only linked to Langland; the inclusion of *The Plowman's Tale* in the 1550 Thynne and the 1561 Stow placed Chaucer within the Plowman-complaint tradition of the later middle ages.[20] Thenot's first speech in *Februarie* has a decidedly Boethian tone, meditating on Fortune and the fallen world (9-24); while not strictly Chaucerian, when coupled with medieval "rusticity", it does fit with the Chaucerian ethos of the piece. More importantly, the tale of the Oak and the Briar is framed specifically as a tale of Chaucer in the manner of *The Canterbury Tales*. Before Thenot launches into his moral allegory, he and Cuddie engage in a discourse on Tityrus, the god of shepherds whom E.K. glosses consistently as an allegory for Chaucer:

> (THENOT) . . .But shall I tel thee a tale of truth,
> Which I cond of *Tityrus* in my youth,
> Keeping his sheepe on the hils of Kent?
> CVDDIE
> To nought the more *Thenot*, my mind is bent,
> Then to heare nouells of his deuise:
> They bene so well thewed, and so wise,
> What euer that good old man bespake.
> THENOT
> Many meete tales of youth did he make,
> And some of loue, and some of cheualrie:
> But none fitter then this to applie:
> Now listen a while, and hearken the end (91-101)

Tityrus's Kentish origin links him unambiguously with Chaucer, and the tale Thenot is to tell is one of Tityrus's own devising; the heart of *Februarie* is thus clearly Spenser's invention of a Canterbury Tale. Spenser's understanding of the nature of a Chaucerian

[20] Cain, 38. Cain curiously gives *Piers Plowman* as a literary forebear of *Februarie*, even while noting in his commentary on the glosses that one gloss is taken from *The Plowman's Tale* (50). Given the other overtly Chaucerian references in this tale, it would seem likely that the folio Chaucer, not Langland, is in the background of this poem.

tale, however, is clearly shaped by the moralizing Chaucer constructed by early editors. Notice how Cuddie's praise for Tityrus/Chaucer centers on the goodness and wisdom of these tales: the moral *sentence* to be extracted from the *solaas*. Even as the moral application of the tales is stressed (100), Thenot's catalogue of the works of Tityrus/Chaucer is unmistakably formed from the genres praised by early Chaucerian editors: "meete tales of youth"; "And some of loue, and some of cheualrie." Chaucer the poet of courtly love and knightly virtue, constructed so consistently by the folio Chaucers is the god inspiring Spenser's characters in *Februarie*, moralizing against pride through an original "Canterbury Tale". The end of *Februarie* is even reminiscent of *The Canterbury Tales* insofar as Cuddie interrupts Thenot much as the Host interrupts Chaucer in the bridge between *The Tale of Sir Thopas* and *Chaucer's Tale*:

> Such was thend of this Ambitious brere,
> For scorning Eld
> CVDDIE
> Now I pray thee shepheard, tel it not forth:
> Here is a long tale, and little worth.
> So longe haue I listened to thy speche,
> That graffed to the ground is my breche:
> My hartblood is welnight frozne I feele,
> And my galage growne fast to my heele:
> But little ease of thy lewd tale I tasted.
> Hye thee home shepheard, the day is nigh wasted (237-246)

Thenot's long tale is cut off and dispraised by Cuddie's sore buttocks; the fact that Spenser uses a comic device in the context of what is, on the face of it, a straightforwardly moralizing tale indicates a deftness in using Chaucer. Spenser *can* make use of Chaucerian comedy from an early stage in his poetic career, but this is done

strictly in the context of clownish shepherds. Later on, Spenser will not allow such indecorous bawdry in his use of Chaucerian sources.

E.K.'s glosses for *Februarie* stress the Chaucerian nature of this poem, even while focusing on strictly generic praise of Chaucer. His gloss on the "galage" worn by Cuddie is telling: "a clown's shoe"—rustic, Chaucerian English of *The Canterbury Tales* is appropriate for this clownish pair, but that is the only function of Chaucerian comedy. E.K. notes that line 35—"So loytring liue you little heardgroomes"—is "Chaucers verse almost whole", which does draw a connection between *Februarie* and *The House of Fame*, even if Spenser's paraphrase is not, in fact, "Chaucer's verse almost whole."[21] The most significant Chaucerian gloss of *Februarie* is, of course, the first mention of Tityrus as Chaucer: "Tityrus) I suppose he meane Chaucer, whose prayse for pleasaunt tales cannot dye, so long as the memorie of hys name shal liue, & the name of Poetrie shal endure." This rather bland, generic praise of Chaucer is linked to the clearly moralizing interpretation given by E.K.'s gloss immediately above it on the nature of the tale: "Youth is) A verye moral and pitthy Allegorie of youth, and the lustes thereof, compared to a vvearie vvayfaring man." Chaucer receives very general praise for his "moral and pithy" tales; given the more subtle reworking of Chaucer in the poem itself, we can perhaps here see a distance between E.K. and Spenser—E.K. mimics the generalizations of Chaucerian editions much more doggedly than Spenser's balance of moralizing genres and Chaucerian comedic effect (at least in the context of rustic

[21] *The House of Fame*, 1224-1226: "And pipes made of grene corn, / As han thise lytel herde-gromes / That kepen bestis in the bromes."

shepherds). E.K. further undercuts the Chaucerian background of the Oak and the Briar by his gloss on it: "There grew) This tale of the Oake and the Brere, he telleth as learned of Chaucer, but it is cleane in another kind, and rather like to AEsopes fables. It is very excellente for pleasaunt descriptions, being altogether a certain Icon or Hypotyposis of disdainfull younkers." E.K. is correct, of course, in that the tale of the Oak and the Briar is not found in the Chaucerian canon, but the Aesopian similarity overlooks the Aesopian flavor of certain Canterbury Tales: *The Manciple's Tale* is very much "like to Aesop's fables." What is more striking is the purely technical praise for Chaucer here: the tale includes "pleasant descriptions" and gives an "icon of disdainful younkers." Chaucerian form is praised almost as a rhetorical exercise rather than a fully realized poetic mode: Spenser is demonstrating his ability to use Chaucerian technical virtues, such as description, rather than writing the poem as an homage to his poetic predecessor. In this way, Chaucer's influence in *The Shepheardes Calendar* is downplayed even as it is upheld: the glosses have the rhetorical effect of calling attention both to the continuity between the canonized Chaucer and the new Spenser, as well as the distance Spenser's works are supposedly putting between themselves and Chaucer's.

This mode of downplaying the clear use of Chaucer as a model is continued in *March* and *Aprill*. In *March*, Chaucer receives only one direct mention: E.K. notes him as a source for the older definition of "spell" as "verse". What goes unmentioned is Spenser's use of the rhyme-scheme from *The Tale of Sir Thopas* for the entire eclogue. Cain notes that the Host in *The Canterbury Tales* tells the Chaucer-character to stop his

tale because the sound hurts his ears.[22] What Cain does not delve into is why Spenser would use this stanza if it clearly caused aural pain. A direct answer may be found in the lack of Middle English pronunciation Spenser would have brought to the verse; not knowing the rules for Middle English pronunciation, the verse may be read as easier on the ear than it actually should be. But this does not explain away the Host's direct words to Chaucer. As we shall see, this will not be the last time Spenser will enter into dialogue with *The Tale of Sir Thopas*; while deliberately downplaying the connection between *Sir Thopas* and *March*, Spenser is nevertheless elevating the verse-form found in Chaucer to a legitimate pastoral mode. The rhetorical effect is the unstated perfection of an "imperfect" form of Chaucer, a perfection that the careful reader would discern, but which the general reader would not, further distancing Spenser from Chaucer by subtle means.

Aprill is called "entirely Arcadian" by Cain, and placed in the position of Virgil's fourth Eclogue, the annunciation of a new poet/vates is appropriate.[23] What Cain fails to mention is that in announcing this new poet and his poetry, Spenser also makes reference to *The Canterbury Tales* in the seventh and eighth lines: "Like April shoure, so stremes the trickling teares / Adowne thy cheeke, to quenche thy thriftye payne." Already aware of Chaucer's presence in *The Shepheardes Calendar*, the reader cannot help but note that this annunciation of a new poet and praise of Elizabeth occur during the month of *The Canterbury Tales*. While not overtly revealing this fact, E.K. nevertheless gives a gloss

[22] Cain, 55.
[23] Cain, 67.

that is clearly a paraphrase of the opening lines of the General Prologue: "Attempred to the yeare) agreeable to the season of the yeare, that is Aprill, vvhich moneth is most bent to shoures and seasonable rayne: to quench, that is, to delaye the drought, caused through drynesse of March vvyndes." The eclogue of new poetry and praise for Elizabeth thus becomes linked to the national poem of pilgrimage in a subtle, though unmistakable, manner.

While *Maye* provides E.K. the chance to give some more Chaucerian glosses on specific words, *June* is the next eclogue with a sustained Chaucerian presence.[24] The most significant section of *June* itself is the lament for Tityrus by Collin Clout, Spenser's poetic persona in the *Calendar*:

> The God of shepheards *Tityrus* is dead,
> Who taught me homely, as I can, to make.
> He, whilst he liued, was the soueraigne head
> Of shepheards all, that bene with loue ytake:
> Well couth he wayle hys Woes, and lightly slake
> The flames, which loue within his heart had bredd,
> And tell vs mery tales, to keepe vs wake,
> The while our sheepe about vs safely fedde.
>
> Now dead he is, and lyeth wrapt in lead,
> (O why should death on hym such outrage showe?)
> And all hys passing skil with him is fledde,
> The fame whereof doth dayly greater growe.
> But if on me some little drops would flowe,

[24] Cain notes, at 85, the presence of The Plowman's Tale in the background of Maye; he does not note the Chaucerian implications of an allegorical beast-fable as well (cf. The Nun's Priest's Tale and The Parliament of Fowles). E.K.'s two most significant glosses are ones that are apparently copied by Speght in his glossing of Chaucer himself: EK: "Cheuisaunce) sometime of Chaucer vsed for gaine: sometime for other for spoyle, or bootie, or enterprise, and sometime for chiefdome."; Speght: "Cheuisance, f. merchandise, deuise, a bargaine." "Clincke.) a key hole. VVhose diminutiue is clicket, vsed of Chaucer for a Key."; Speght: "clicket, b. an instrument of yron to lift vp a latch."

> Of that the spring was in his learned hedde
> I soone would learne these woods, to wayle my woe,
> And teache the trees, their trickling teares to shedde (81-96).

This verse serves to highlight the fact that while Chaucer is dead, Spenser now lives, the rightful heir to Chaucer's poetry; Tityrus/Chaucer taught Collin/Spenser how to "make". The catalogue of poems is, again, informed by editors: Chaucer is the poet of complaints, love poetry, and mirth, but with a very specific outcome: to keep us awake. Spenser's moral verse takes up the task left by the moral Chaucer of the folio editions.

E.K.'s two major Chaucerian glosses for *June* indicate the pervasiveness of the Chaucer/Tityrus connection in *The Shepheardes Calendar*. In the first place, E.K.'s explanation of the phrase "friendly faeries" is unmistakably derived from *The Wife of Bath's Tale*:

> Frendly faeries) the opinion of Faeries and elfes is very old, and yet sticketh very religiously in the myndes of some. But to roote that ranke opinion of Elfes oute of mens hearts, the truth is, that there be no such things, nor yet the shadowes of the things, but onely by a sort of bald Friers and knauish shauelings so feigned; vvhich as in all other things, so in that, sought to nousell the comen people in ignorounce, least being once acquainted vvith the truth of things, they vvoulde in tyme smell out the vntruth of theyr packed pelfe and Massepenie religion [25].[25]

The Reforming, moralizing tone of E.K.'s gloss does not fit well with the tone of the Wife of Bath, but the connection with friars is clearly her doing; thanks to blessing the elves out of nature: "Wommen may go saufly up and doun / In every bussh or under every tree / Ther is noon oother incubus but he [the friar], / And he ne wol doon hem but

[25] Oram's edition does not number the lines of the glosses; it does, however, give the line to which the gloss refers in brackets.

dishonour" (878-881). E.K.'s other gloss in this eclogue, his second on Tityrus, is as mundane as his last one: "Tityrus) That by Tityrus is meant Chaucer, that bene already sufficiently sayde, & by thys more playne appeareth, that he sayth, he tolde meye tales. Such as be hys Canterburie tales. VVhom he calleth the God of Poetes for hys excellencie, so as Tullie calleth Lentulus, Deum vitae suae .s. the God of hys lyfe" [81]. This gloss reemphasizes Chaucer's presence in *The Shepheardes Calendar*, though the focus on "merry tales" does not seem to match the actual genres Collin notes in the poem: wailing woes and slaking love's flames. Here again we see rather a disjunction between the use of Chaucer in the eclogue and the explanation of Chaucer in the gloss.

While the rest of the eclogues contain Chaucer in fleeting ways—a line here, a reference to Tityrus there—his sustained treatment does not return until the very end of *The Shepheardes Calendar* in the final "square poem" of the Epilogue.[26] The twelve months of the year over, the reader is left with a final impression that returns to references from *Troilus and Criseyde* and a rather disingenuous treatment of Chaucerian emulation:

> Loe I haue made a Calender for euery yeare,
> That steele in strength, and time in durance shall outwear:
> And if I marked well the stares reuolution,
> It shall continuewe till the worlds dissolution.
> To teach the ruder shepheard how to feede his sheepe
> And from the falsers fraud his folded flocke to keepe.
> Goe little Calender, thou hast free passeporte
> Goe but a lowly gate emongste the meaner sorte.
> Dare not to match thy pype with Tityrus hys style

[26] On Chaucer in the autumnal eclogues, see particularly the misattribution to Chaucer of "the grene path way to lyfe" by E.K. in November. As to the "square poem" Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie* (1589) associates such poems with Aristotelian virtue (Oram, 213).

> Nor with the Pilgrim that the Ploughman played awhile:
> But followe them farre off, and their high steppes adore,
> The better please, the worse dispise, I aske nomore.

Spenser's "little Calender" is on the one hand to go out into the world as a monument of poetic immortality, a calendar for every year, continually new and continually instructive. At the same time, Spenser exhorts his book not to try to "match" the "style" of Tityrus or Chaucer's Ploughman, who, as we have seen, effects a sustained influence on Spenser's work. While this may look initially like a turn of poetic humility (a turn invented by Chaucer in *Troilus and Criseyde*, as we saw at the beginning of the *Calendar*), it is, in fact, more complex than it may first appear. Spenser does not exhort his book to avoid matching Chaucer or his works absolutely, but merely in "style." While style is certainly central to poetry, it is not the entirety of poetry: the form and the content are linked, but not identical. In this way, the first edition of *The Shepheardes Calendar* closes with an orientation towards Chaucer in the manner that it has sustained throughout the entire work: Spenser pays homage to Chaucer and emphasizes his unworthiness, all the while hinting, suggesting, glossing, that this work is an immortal piece of poetry that takes up the English poetic project where Chaucer left it over one hundred fifty years earlier. As we have seen, this complex relationship with Chaucer has been communicated to the reader through the rhetoric of the edition itself, centrally dictated by Spenser's own pen, but reinforced and complicated by E.K.'s commentaries.

Subsequent editions of *The Shepheardes Calendar* by and large kept up this stance to Chaucer, but gradually came to distance Spenser ever further from his poetic

predecessor. The 1581 edition of the *Calendar* is nearly identical rhetorically to the 1579; the major exception is a more subtle use of Italic for proper names; the 1581 italic is not as pronounced a visual difference as the 1579.[27] Furthermore, the glosses in 1581 now italicize the word or phrase defined: "*Colin Cloute*, is a name . . . ." These differences, though, are slight compared to the fact that the 1581 edition transliterates the Greek words into the Latin alphabet throughout the edition.[28] This subtle but important shift somewhat downgrades the status of *The Shepheardes Calendar* from a work primarily accessible to those with the Classical Languages to one that accessible to a broader reading public. The 1581 edition also uses a much smaller font size for the emblems after each eclogue, making the emblems less pronounced. Whatever the reason for this size shift (saving space, for instance), the rhetorical effect shifts dramatically: in 1579, the reader is confronted with the emblems as large, loud finishes to each eclogue; in 1581, the reader sees emblems that visually appear almost an afterthought, rather than an emphatic part of the poem. Still, for all of these differences, the majority of the 1581 edition retains the rhetorical effects of the original from three years earlier.

The next two editions of *The Shepheardes Calendar*—1586 and 1591—are rhetorically identical, and shall thus be treated together.[29] The 1586 edition is the first to have an ornate, neoclassical border on the title-page: a royal crest is on the top of the page (supported by a lion and a dragon); female supporters are on either side of the page,

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[27] STC 23090 (1581)
[28] There is an important typo (missed by Oram) in the running title for *December* in the 1581 edition: *December* is given as "Aegloga Vndecima", the eleventh eclogue. This typo is fixed in the subsequent 1586 edition.
[29] STC 23091 (1586); STC 23092 (1591)

a phoenix is at the bottom of the page, and the entire edifice is festooned with fruits and flowers.[30] The rhetorical effect of this shift should be clear: *The Shepheardes Calendar* is being presented, from the very beginning, as a work that looks back to classical antiquity, not the middle ages. The *Argument* in this edition is given in a larger, more slanted italic type, which means that it spills over onto the Fol.1 wherein *Januarie* begins; while the 1579 restrained E.K.'s commentary, the 1586 presents the reader with the critical apparatus overtaking the first page of Spenser's poetry. Oddly enough, the presence of E.K. throughout the rest of the edition is rather more muted than in the first edition by the fact that the glosses are printed in a much smaller type size than the poetry: the poetry itself becomes more central, rather than E.K.'s interpretation.

The 1597 edition, the last edition produced during Spenser's lifetime, restores some of the elegance of the 1579 edition by keeping the Argument within its proper bounds and giving folio 1 clearly to *Januarie*.[31] The title-page now has no border, but it does contain an emblem: the hand of God coming out of a cloud, whipping a naked, crowned person. The motto around the emblem is "Vires sit Vvlnere Veritas"—"Truth may wound men," not a particularly specific emblem and motto for *The Shepheardes Calendar*, but not inappropriate. The most significant developments in the 1597 edition are the fact that the foliation is now different; beginning in 1597, editions of *The*

[30] Fascinatingly enough, even though *The Shepheardes Calendar* acquires an ornate title-page in 1586, no edition of the work printed during Spenser's life (nor those printed in the decades following his death) gives his name on the title-page. This preservation of the "anonymity" of the author is striking, both in the preservation of the "immerito" ethos of the poet as well as a testament to Spenser's fame: so famous was the collection that it did not *need* an author's name on the title-page.
[31] STC 23093 (1597)

Shepheardes Calendar will bear different foliation than the original edition. Furthermore, the pages in 1597 are numbered instead of the folios: this may appear to be a small shift, but it takes *The Shepheardes Calendar* another step away from the appearance of a Chaucerian or otherwise medieval book.

The first edition produced after Spenser's death, the 1611 *Shepheardes Calendar* gives the reader some markedly different effects from any edition produced during Spenser's lifetime.[32] This is the first edition of *The Shepheardes Calendar* not to have any Blackletter on the title-page, a marked shift from every previous edition. Like the 1597 edition, there is no title-page border. It does include an emblem, but a very different one from the previous edition: a siren combing her hair. The emblem is under a coat of arms, flanked by angels, held up by two fauns with grapes around their necks. The motto with the siren is "Omnia tempus habent"—"All things have time." Perhaps more striking is a page included opposite the title-page, which is topped by a neoclassical edifice centering around four Hebrew letters.[33] Beneath this border is a dedication to the Duchess of Pembroke: Mary Sidney, Sir Philip Sidney's sister. Oram does not mention this significant difference: the first edition after Spenser's death dedicates the work simultaneously to Philip Sidney and his sister. Mary was still alive in 1611, so this move had marked financial advantages, appealing to a living patroness rather than a dead patron. Rhetorically, however, this dedication frames *The Shepheardes Calendar* in

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[32] STC 23093.5 (1611).

[33] Consultation with Biblical scholars Jeremy Holmes of Wyoming Catholic College and Francis Borchardt of the University of Helsinki did not yield a translation, insofar as the Hebrew is unpointed (with no vowel markings, the letters are ambiguous) and printed in a mangled font.

terms of the entire Sidney circle, not simply the great Sidney himself. This is the only separate edition to include the dedicatory poem to Mary Sidney, and as such merits further study.[34] Perhaps as striking is the fact that this is the first edition to print the text of *The Shepheardes Calendar* in Italic instead of Blackletter. This difference of type is vital to the character of the work: while the editions published during Spenser's lifetime sought to resemble Chaucerian works in their very type-faces, the first edition produced after his death separates Spenser's verse from Chaucer's through the very style of font. Furthermore, the 1611 edition gives the text of the eclogues in double-columns, while the Arguments for the eclogues and the glosses are printed in a larger type font than the poems themselves, and in a single-columned format. The effect of this change is striking: focus is now placed on the editorial frame, rather than on the poem itself. Spenser, the classicizing poet, is now classicized himself in the 1611 edition: the arguments and glosses dominate the page by their size and format, leaving Spenser's poetry overshadowed by E.K.'s scholarship.[35]

The final single-work edition of *The Shepheardes Calendar* (as opposed to the versions found in Spenser's *Collected Works*, treated below) was published in 1617, and continues the rhetorical stance of the 1611 edition.[36] The title-page has no border or

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[34] This dedication will be reproduced in the *Complete Works* of Spenser in the seventeenth century, preserving the link between Spenser and both Sidneys.

[35] Another minor note for the 1611 edition: borders are placed throughout, purely as space-savers: if there is some white space at the bottom of a page, a stamp is inserted as a decoration. While this move is not terribly unusual, the choice of borders is: a large number of these stamps focus on death: death's heads and skeletons rising from graves. Whatever the reason for this choice, the effect is clear: the 1611 *Shepheardes Calendar* has a rather morbid feel about it, focusing the reader on the ever-fleeing sands of time and his own mortality.

[36] STC 23094 (1617)

emblem, but rather returns to the inverted floral stamp found in the earliest editions of the work. The arms of the King of England now top the dedication to Gabriel Harvey, a testament to *The Shepheardes Calendar*'s patriotism, but also reminiscent of the presence of Henry VIII in the folio Chaucers of the mid-sixteenth century. Most significantly, the 1617 edition retains the 1611 edition's treatment of the poetic and critical texts: E.K.'s glosses overwhelm the now-Italic poetry of Spenser. By the early seventeenth century, Chaucer was still being printed in Blackletter: both of Speght's editions retains this tradition. By the Jacobean era, however, Spenser's own Chaucerian verses are visually separated from his master Chaucer to an extent unknown while Spenser was still alive. Spenser, even while being canonized by scholarly apparatus, is now presented to the reader as a solidly modern poet whose medieval inheritance has been visually erased.

Spenser's Shorter Chaucerian Poems

Between the overtly Chaucerian *Shepheardes Calendar* and the more complexly Chaucerian *Faerie Queene*, we find two short poems that stand as Spenser's most clearly Chaucerian poems: *Mother Hubberd's Tale* and *Daphnaida*. The former is included in Spenser's set of *Complaints* and is a beast fable written in the couplet form of *The Canterbury Tales*. The latter was first published by itself, then alongside *Four Hymns*, and is a rewriting of Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess*. As we shall see, the editions of these works continue the trend begun by E.K. in *The Shepheardes Calendar* of distancing the works from their clear Chaucerian predecessors.

Spenser's *Complaints* first appeared in 1591 with the subtitle: *Containing sundrie small poems of the worlds vanitie*.[37] One might well expect an imitation of Chaucerian Boethianism in such a collection. In addition to *Mother Hubberd's Tale*, the collection includes *The Ruins of Time, The Tears of the Muses,* and *Muiopotmos*. While this collection of Complaints is fashioned in the style of a Chaucerian verse-anthology, it shows small overt Chaucerian reference, containing no editorial references to the poet. Its title-page is Classical in architecture and religious in theme, portraying Moses and King David supporting the title-page, with fauns underneath. It is also printed entirely in italic. Oram mentions that *Mother Hubberd's Tale* is "Spenser's most Chaucerian work, beginning with an astrological *incipit* and participating in two recognizably medieval traditions [estate satire and beast fable]."[38] This is true, but the rhetoric of the edition itself works to downplay any Chaucerian ties: it is printed alongside works that show little relation to medieval or Chaucerian works and is presented to the reader in italic with no overt references to Chaucer. In *Mother Hubberd's Tale*, Spenser showed again that he could write satire and fable in the mode of *The Canterbury Tales*, but the work itself is silent on its literary patrimony: every subsequent edition of *Mother Hubberd's Tale* is treated in a similar rhetorical fashion.[39] With more poetic clout, Spenserian editions can afford to be silent on Spenser's connection to the medieval father of English poetry.

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[37] STC 23078 (1591)
[38] Oram, 329.
[39] See STC 23087 (1613), which includes the 1611 *Shepheardes Calendar* Hebrew border, coats of arms, the arms of the city of London, a map of Middlesex, and no further Chaucerian allusions.

Daphnaida. An elegie vpon the death of [Lady] Douglas Howard was also published in 1591 in a single-work edition.[40] Spenser's cloying dedication to the Howard family shows no reference to Chaucer and instead seems centered simply on winning the favor of rich patrons.[41] The poem itself is a rendering of Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess*: while Chaucer's work retains a touching, comedic level through the use of the dreaming narrator as a framing device, Spenser's rewriting plunges the elegy into bathos. Despite the overt connections between Chaucer's original and Spenser's imitation, no overt reference to Chaucer is found in the entire edition. In this poem—widely regarded as Spenser's worst—Spenser appears to be using Chaucer as an easy crib-note to win patronage, rather than as a model to reinvent into a work of real poetic value.[42] The 1596 edition of *Daphnaida* is rhetorically identical to the first edition, although it is included in *Four Hymnes* a reissuing of shorter poems aimed at poetic patronage. Between Spenser's triumphant *Calendar* and his epic *The Faerie Queene* we find minor, poetically questionable Chaucerian works of Spenser that indicate a purely practical stance towards Chaucer and his works. C.S. Lewis noted that Spenser spent his life writing *The Faerie Queene*, during which time shorter, less consequential poems got in the way:

> It is therefore quite possible that in 1579 Spenser had already written work better than the *Calendar* and more like the *Faerie Queene*, some of which the *Faerie Queene* absorbed. If so, the *Calendar* itself was in some sort the interruption of a life's work already begun . . . It will also be seen how profoundly right the common reader has shown himself in regarding Spenser almost exclusively as the poet of the *Faerie Queene*. Almost

[40] STC 23079 (1591)
[41] For the relationship between this poem and the Howard family, see Jonathan Gibson, "The Legal Context of Spenser's *Daphnaida*," *The Review of English Studies* Vol. 55, Issue 218 (2004), 24-44.
[42] On *Daphnaida*'s connection to Protestant poetics see Steinberg.

> everything else he did was something of a digression. All his life he was in the position of a painter who, while engaged on some great work, frequently has visitors in the studio. They have to be entertained (it is his only chance as a man, if not as an artist) with anything he can lay his hands on. Old canvases that he himself cares nothing about will be brought forward. Worse still, they must be shown the great work itself in various stages of incompleteness. This helps to explain the extraordinary disparity invalue between the *Faerie Queene* and nearly all the minor poems. [43]

While this estimation rather detracts from the dramatic effect of *The Shepheardes Calendar* upon the world, it does seem to ring true when considering the sensitive, acknowledged relation to Chaucer in the *Calendar* and *The Faerie Queene* in relation to the insensitive, unacknowledged copying of Chaucer in these shorter pieces, overtly presented for patronage.

The Faerie Queene

When Spenser leaves the genres of the pastoral and complaint behind to complete his career as an epic poet, he has a problem: how shall he keep his grounding in Chaucer even while moving into more serious, epic work? The obvious choice would have been for him to draw almost exclusively from the more serious works in the Chaucerian canon: *The Knight's Tale* and *Troilus and Criseyde* spring immediately to mind. While Spenser did draw on the more knightly parts of the Chaucerian canon—Book IV of *The Faerie Queene* is an overt continuation of *The Squire's Tale,* whose main action is actually

[43]C.S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1944), 357-58.

modeled on *The Knight's Tale*[44]—we also find in Spenser's later Chaucerian borrowing continued use of more comic pieces, but with the comedy removed. As we shall see, these later Chaucerian borrowings are not glossed in the early editions, but rather glossed over: Spenser appears to be deliberately trying to "reform" or "perfect" pieces of the Chaucerian canon that lend themselves most clearly to comedic treatment. While this use of Chaucer is no doubt tied to Spenser's own poetic vision, the editorial shaping of Chaucer, particularly in *The Tale of Sir Thopas*, gives Spenser the impetus to attempt such bold borrowing: while the editors distance *Sir Thopas* from Chaucer, Spenser latches on to this trifling and satirical bad poem as a recurring model for *The Faerie Queene*. In doing so, Spenser takes a tale whose joke has become lost on editors and seeks to "save" it by transfiguring a brilliant parody of an awful metrical romance into a centerpiece of Spenser's own epic romance.

The presence of *Sir Thopas* in *The Faerie Queene* is seen at several key points in the epic.[45] The first clear debt Spenser owes to Chaucer's *Thopas* appears in the very first line of *The Faerie Queene*: "A Gentle Knight was pricking on the plaine" (Book I, Canto I, Stanza 1, Line 1). Hamilton notes the sexual connotation of "pricking" in this first line, but fails to mention its connection to the Red Cross Knight's comedic predecessor: in *The Tale of Sir Thopas*, the word "pricking" is used no fewer than eight times: "He priketh thurgh a fair forest" (754); "And as he priketh north and est" (757);

[44] See Higgins, 21-24. The visual link between the Squire and the Knight in the woodcuts used in Thynne's 1542 edition is tantalizing as a point of origin for this Spenserian adaptation of the link between the two.
[45] For further treatments of the presence of Sir Thopas in Spenser, see Anderson, Cheney, Hieatt, Higgins, and Nadal.

"And pryked as he were wood" (774); "His faire steede in his prikynge" (775); "For prikyng on the softe gras" (779); "And priketh over stile and stoon" (798); "But if thou prike out of myn haunt" (811); "Pryking over hill and dale" (837).[46] Now Sir Thopas, like Spenser's virtuous knights, is "chaast and no lechour" (745), but his continuous pricking seems to have made a deep impression upon Spenser; the term is used repeatedly in one of the shortest *Canterbury Tales*. From the very beginning of *The Faerie Queene*, then, Spenser is drawing literary inspiration from *Sir Thopas*, but cast in a straightforwardly moral epic romance.

Later in the first Book, Arthur is given a vision of the Faerie Queene herself; while Arthur's blazon may well be drawn from *Sir Thopas*, there is no doubt that the vision itself was inspired by Sir Thopas's vision of his own queen of faerie.[47] Arthur recounts his vision of the Faerie Queene in I.I.ix.13-15:

> 13.
> For wearied with my sportes, I did alight
> From loftie steed, and downe to sleepe me layd;
> The verdant gras my couch did goodly dight,
> And pillow was my helmet fayre displayd:
> Whiles euery sence the humour sweet embayd,
> And slombring soft my hart did steale away
> Me seemed, by my side a royall Mayd
> Her daintie limbes full softly down did lay:
> So fayre a creature yet saw neuer sunny day.

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[46] Hamilton's note on "pricking" in his edition reads thus: "**pricking**: spurring; the words' association with sexual desire is noted by Anderson 1985:166-68" (Hamilton, 31). Given the myriad senses and references noted by the critics above, this note seems rather sparse, particularly since Anderson herself notes the Chaucerian background of the term!

[47] Arthur's blazon (I.I.vii.29-33) seems to me to be sufficiently similar in feel to the blazon of Sir Thopas (851-887) to warrant consideration as a literary descendant. At the same time, the convention of blazon is so well established in the epic that proving this connection would be impossible. Given the circumstantial evidence, however, I think it fair to note the similarity.

14.
Most goodly glee and louely blandishment
She to me made, and bad me loue her deare;
For dearely sure her loue was to me bent,
As when iust time expired should appeare.
But whether dreames delude, or true it were,
Was neuer hart so rauisht with delight,
Ne liuing man like wordes did euer heare,
As she to me deliuered all that night;
And at her parting said, She Queene of Faries hight.
15.
When I awoke, and found her place deuoyed,
And nought but pressed gras where she had lyen,
I sorrowed all so much, as earst I ioyed,
And washed all her place with watry eyen.
From that day forth I lou'd that face diuyne;
From that day forth I cast in carefull mynd,
To seeke her out with labor, and long tyne,
And neuer vowd to rest, till her I fynd,
Nyne monethes I seek in vain yet ni'll that vow vnbynd.

Arthur encounters his Faerie Queene in a dream vision and her presence so inspires him that he vows to seek her out upon waking. Compare this vision to that of Sir Thopas:

Sire Thopas fil in love longynge,
Al when he herde the thrustel synge,
And pryked as he were wood.
His faire steede in his prikynge
So swatte that men myghte him wrynge;
His sides were al blood.
Sire Thopas eek so wery was
For prikyng on the softe gras,
So fiers was his corage,
That doun he leyd him in that plas
To make his steede som solas,
And yaf hym good forage.
"O Seinte Marie, benedicite!
What eyleth this love at me
To bynde me so soore?
Me dremed al this nyght, pardee,
An elfe-queene shal my lemman be

And sleepe under my goore.
"An elf-queene wol I love, ywis,
For in this world no woman is
Worthy to be my make in towne;
Alle othere women I forsake,
And to an elfe-queene I me take
By dale and eek by downe!"
Into his sadel he clamb anon,
And priketh over stile and stoon
An elf-queene for t'espye,
Til he so longe hath riden and goon
That he foond, in a pryve woon,
The contree of Fariye
so wilde;
For in that contree was ther noon
That to him durste ride or goon,
Neither wyf ne childe; (772-806)

The parallels here are so evident that they hardly bear repeating, but Hamilton's omission of any reference to Chaucer at this point warrants attention.[48] Sir Thopas, like Arthur, is wearied, has a vision of a beautiful queen of Faerie, and is impelled by this vision to journey into Faerie (through pricking). Spenser even appears to derive the quality of the lawn from Chaucer, the "soft grass" being "pressed" by Arthur's queen. Spenser, however, uses this vision as an impetus for a serious, epic adventure, not an abortive metrical romance so harsh on the ear that the Host must cry: "Namoore of this, for Goddess dignitee" (919).

Sir Thopas's presence in *The Faerie Queene* becomes so overt in Book III, Canto vii that Hamilton becomes forced to mention him: at this point in *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser sees fit to recount the battle between Sir Thopas and Ollyphant, a direct

[48] Hamilton, 215-216.

continuation of Chaucer's tale.[49] Immediately after vowing to find the Queen of Faerie, Chaucer's Sir Thopas ventures forth into Faerie, where he meets a giant:

> Til that ther cam a greet geaunt,
> His name was sire Olifaunt,
> A perilous man of dede.
> He seyde, "Child, by Termagaunt,
> But if thou prike out of myn haunt,
> Anon I sle thy steede
> with mace.
> Heere is the queene of Fayerye,
> With harp and pipe and symphonye.
> Dwellynge in this place."
> The child seyde, "Also moote I thee,
> Tomorwe wol I meete with thee,
> What I have myn armoure;
> And yet I hope, *par ma fay*,
> That thou shalt with this launcegay
> Ayben it ful sowre.
> Thy mawe
> Shal I percent, if I may
> Er it be fully pryme of day,
> For here thow shalt be slawe."
> Sire Thopas drow abak ful faste;
> This geant at hym stones caste
> Out of a fel staf-slynge.
> But faire escapeth child Thopas,
> And al it was thurgh Goddes gras,
> And thurgh his fair berynge. (807-832)

Spenser integrates this comedic non-combat between Thopas and Olliphaunt into his treatment of much more fearsome giants:

> 47.
> Then trembling yet through feare, the Squire bespake,
> That Geauntesse *Argante* is behight,
> A daughter of the *Titans* which did make
> Warre against heuen, and heaped hils on hight,

[49] Hamilton, 359.

To scale the skyes, and put *Ioue* from his right:
Her syre *Typhoeus* was, who mad through merth,
And dronke with blood of men, slaine by his might,
Through incest, her of his owne mother Earth
Whylome begot, being but halfe twin of that berth.

48.
For at that berth another Babe she bore,
To weet the mightie *Ollyphant*, that wrought
Great wreake to many errant knights of yore,
Till him Chylde *Thopas* to confusion brought.
These twines, men say, (a thing far passing thought)
Whiles in their mothers wombe enclosd they were,
Ere they into the lightsome world were brought,
In fleshly lust were mingled both yfere,
And in that monstrous wise did to the world appere.

In Spenser's hands, Ollyphant becomes one of the Titans, a stature far from his comedic existence on the pages of Chaucer; as Hamilton notes, Ollyphant and Argante become vicious parallels to Belphoebe and Amoret, to the extent of recounting the Ollyphant/Argante story again at III.xi.3.4-4.4.[50] Fascinatingly enough, even while Spenser elevates Chaucer's comedic knight by inclusion in this titanic battle, Hamilton notes that the 1596 edition of this passage was revised to exclude the overt reference to Thopas: "Till him Chylde Thopas to confusion brought," becomes, "And many hath to foule confusion brought." Hamilton's conclusion is based on verisimilitude: since Chaucer did not have Thopas finish off Olliphaunt, Spenser revised the passage to keep Ollyphant alive. While this reasoning is valid, it does not seem satisfying enough: surely if Spenser felt free to borrow and revise Chaucer in other works—*The Shepheardes Calendar, Daphnaida*, Book IV of *The Faerie Queene*—he could have taken the story

[50] Hamilton, 359.

forward along the presumed lines of Thopas conquering Ollyphant. Why keep the implicit reference to Chaucer while erasing the explicit one?

In point of fact, when read against the rhetorical treatment of these and other Chaucerian passages in the editions of *The Faerie Queene* published during Spenser's lifetime and immediately afterwards, the choice to erase Thopas's name from Book III can be read as part of an ongoing project in Spenser's editions to minimize the debt to Chaucer found on Spenser's pages. As we have seen, this rhetorical move is not new: E.K. used it to a certain extent in *The Shepheardes Calendar* and Spenser himself seems to have authorized its use in *Mother Hubberd's Tale* and *Daphnaida*, but in *The Faerie Queene* the glossing over of Chaucerian inspiration becomes so palpable that presumably contemporary editors such as Hamilton do not see the need to note borrowings even when obvious. In the three editions of *The Faerie Queene* published before Spenser's 1611 *Collected Works*, the editorial rhetoric is fairly consistent: the text is printed in Italic—the pastoral Blackletter has fallen away—and the rhetorical focus is clearly on Spenser's works on their own terms, not in relation to any predecessor.[51] In all but the 1596 edition, the epic is followed by laudatory poems focused on Spenser and his *Faerie Queene*, as well as Spenser's Epistle to Raleigh. The former laud Spenser as a poet in his own right, with references to Classical and Modern poets: Petrarch, Sidney, Homer, Virgil, Ennius, Maro; nowhere do we find even a brief mention of Chaucer as a literary predecessor. In the latter, Spenser gives his poetic antecedents as Homer, Virgil, Ariosto,

[51] STC23080 (1590): the first three Books; STC23081 (1590)—variant imprint of the former; STC23082 (1596): the first six Books; STC23083 (1609): all six books plus the Cantos of Mutabilitie.

and Tasso. *The Tale of Sir Thopas* is the most pervasive unacknowledged source for *The Faerie Queene*, though many scholars have shown further debts to Chaucer.[52] Spenser's use of Chaucer in his epic, then, becomes rather disingenuous: so intent is Spenser on framing himself as an epic poet that his use of Chaucer, his alchemization of *Sir Thopas* into *The Faerie Queene*, stands unacknowledged. Significantly enough, the 1550 Thynne edition of *The Tale of Sir Thopas* gives paraphs indexing the very stanzas Spenser uses in *The Faerie Queene* noted above (fol. lxxi v and fol. lxxii r). While not conclusive of the fact that Spenser used this as one of his sources for Chaucer, the parallel is too enticing to go unnoted. In his quest to make himself a monumental poet, Spenser had to leave behind his debt to a likewise monumental poetic master.

There are, however, three passages in *The Faerie Queene* that complicate this estimation: in Books IV, VI, and VII, Spenser makes explicit mention of Chaucer. While the editorial rhetoric of his editions seeks to efface any clue of Chaucerian borrowing—these passages are not highlighted visually or otherwise—Spenser praises the poet at the beginnings of Books IV and VI in no uncertain terms. In Book IV, Canto ii, stanzas 32-34, Spenser relates himself to Chaucer in terms similar to those in *The Shepheardes Calendar*:

> 33.
> Whilome, as antique sotries tellen us,[53]

[52] These major studies are cited above; it is worth quoting Anderson here on why the *Sir Thopas* connection has been willfully overlooked: "[T]here is Prince Arthur's dream of the Faerie Queene in Book I, for which *Sir Thopas* offers as close a source or analogue as decades of researchers determined to find a more dignified candidate have been able to unearth" (Anderson, 170). It is perhaps this hope for a more dignified predecessor that informs Hamilton's silence on Chaucerian sources for most of his edition.
[53] That "whilome" should sound familiar to readers of Chaucer as a typical opening word.

Those two were foes the fellonest on ground,
And battell made of dreddest daungerous
That ever shrilling trumpet did resound;
Though now their acts be no where to be found,
As that renowmed Poet them compiled
With warlike number and Heroicke sound,
Dan Chaucer, well of English undefiled,
Of Fames eternall beadroll worthie to be fyled.

33

But wicked Time that all good thoughts doth waste,
And workes of noblest wits to nought out weare,
That famous monument hath quite defaste,
And robd the world of threasure endless deare,
The which mote haue enriched all vs heare.
O cursed Eld that cankerwrome of writs,
How many these rimes, so rude as doth appeare,
Hope to endure, sith workes of heauenly wits
Are quite deuourd, and brought to nought by little bits?

34

Then pardon, O most sacred happie spirit,
That I thy labours lost may thus reuiue,
And steale from thee the meede of thy due merit,
That none durst euer whilest thou wast aliue,
And being dead in vaine yet many striue:
Ne dare I like, but through infusion sweete
Of thine owne spirit, which doth in me surviue,
I follow here the footing of thy feete,
That with thy meaning so I may the rather meete.

Given Book IV's debt to *The Squire's Tale*, it is rather curious that Spenser waits until the third canto to mention Chaucer. To be sure, the reader hears filial piety in these lines: Spenser asks for an infusion of Chaucer's own spirit in order to follow Chaucer's feet (both literal and metrical) in order to achieve Chaucer's own meaning. A close look at the passage in its entirety, however, discloses a sentiment much like that of the dedication to the 1530 *Parliament of Fowles*: Chaucer the monument has been so ravaged by time that living men must revise him and make him live again. Furthermore, Spenser takes the

editorial project of reviving Chaucer to another level by suggesting that Spenser is the *completion* of Chaucer's poetic project: "That I thy labours lost may thus reuiue, / And steale from thee the meede of thy due merit, / That none durst euer whilest thou was aliue" (IV.iii.34.2-4). No poet in Chaucer's day could complete what Chaucer left unfinished; Spenser, however, asserts that he is up to the task and completes it, even while drawing more heavily on *The Knight's Tale* as a source. The first overt reference to Chaucer—not found in the first editions of *The Faerie Queene* of 1590 because of the fact that they contained only the first three Books—serves to give credit to Chaucer but in a rather backhanded way: Spenser is the completion of Chaucer.

All editions of *The Faerie Queene* subsequent to 1596 contain the next passage of Chaucerian praise at the beginning of Book VI. This passage does not mention Chaucer by name, but instead relates a quotation from *The Wife of Bath's Tale*:

> 1.
> True is, that whilome that good Poet sayd,
> The gentle minde by gentle deeds is knowne.
> For man by nothing is so well bewrayd,
> As by his manners, in which plaine is showne
> Of what degree and what race he is growne.
> For seldom seene, a trotting Stalion get
> An ambling Colt, that is his proper owne:
> So seldom seene, that one in basenesse set
> Doth noble courage shew, with courteous manners met.

Given the pastoral flavor of Book VI—and hence its relation back to Chaucer through *The Shepheardes Calendar*—it is rather curious that Spenser waits until the third canto to mention Chaucer, and even then obliquely. Furthermore, as Hamilton notes, Chaucer's Wife says something rather different than Spenser makes her say: "Reedeth Senek, and

redeth eek Boece; / ther shul ye seen expres that it no drede is / That he is gentil that dooth gentil dedis" (1168-1170). He is a gentleman who does gentlemanly deeds is subtly different from a gentle mind is known by gentle deeds, but is close enough for Spenser's purposes. Why throw this reference in? Insofar as Book VI is a pastoral—as Hamilton notes, the closest part of *The Faerie Queene* to a Shakespearean romance[54]—Spenser litters the book with references back to his overtly Chaucerian persona in *The Shepheardes Calendar*. Consider the plowing at VI.ix.1; the reference to Colin Clout at VI.x.16; the death of Meliboe at VI.xi.18; the reference to the "homely verse" in Spenser has written this Book at VI.xi.40-41: all point back to *The Shepheardes Calendar* and its Chaucerian sensibilities.[55] The entire Book takes on the feel of an allegory for the relationship between Chaucer and Spenser: Spenser is greatly in his debt, yet seeks to downplay this debt even while acknowledging it—hence his oblique reference to "that good Poet" to make a point while leaving the other relations in this Book unnoted.[56]

The final overt reference to Chaucer in *The Faerie Queene* is found in Book VII, the *Cantos of Mutabilitie*. The Boethian nature of these cantos raises a decidedly Chaucerian note, and the description of Dame Nature at VII.vii.5-10 undoubtedly owes much to Chaucer's Dame Nature in *The Parliament of Fowles*, and Spenser is gracious enough to make this connection clear:

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[54] Hamilton, 16.
[55] See also Anderson on the connection between Spenser's Melibee and Chaucer's ("Prudence and her Silence").
[56] Theresa M. Krier's treatment of gratitude in the context of the literary tradition might be useful: "Receiving Chaucer in Renaissance England," *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance*, ed. Theresa M. Krier (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 1-20.

9.
So hard it is for any liuing wight,
All her array and vestiments to tell,
That old *Dan Geffrey* (in whose gentle spright
The pure well head of Poesie did dwell)
In his *Foules parley* durst not with it mel,
But transferd to *Alane*, who he thought
Had in his *Plaint of kinds* describ'd it well:
Which who will read set for th so as it ought,
Go seek he out that *Alane* where he may be sought.

Again, Spenser's praise is curious. Chaucer was clearly his source for this central part of Book VII, but Dan Geffrey is notably "old", and even he derived his description from Alanus ab Insulis, whom Spenser suggests the reader seek out. Hamilton notes that Spenser probably would not have had access to Alanus, being that his works had yet to be printed by the end of the sixteenth century.[57] Spenser thus achieves his usual end of acknowledging Chaucer even while minimizing his influence.

Throughout Spenser's career, then, one sees a dual impulse: to acknowledge Chaucer when convenient, but to assert continually—both overtly and through editorial choices—that Spenser is the heir apparent and perfector of Chaucer. Such a stance is furthered in the *Collected Works* of Spenser: the 1611 and 1617 *Collected Works* both have the appearances of simply being anthologies of previously printed works, with little or no effort on their part to change the rhetorical effects present in the previous editions.[58] The 1611 *Collected Works* does not contain *Mother Hubberd's Tale*, perhaps for political reasons; it is included in 1617.[59] Most significantly, *The Shepheardes Calendar* is

[57] Hamilton, 702.
[58] STC23083.3 (1611); STC23087 (1611); STC 23085 (1617).
[59] For the exclusion of *Hubberd* from the 1611 edition, see Oram, 327-329.

rhetorically identical to the 1611 *Shepheardes Calendar*—in fact, it appears as though the single-work edition is an excerpt from the *Collected Works*: it is printed in italic, with the apparatus outweighing Spenser's poetry. Spenser's original and classical nature is left to overwhelm the Chaucerian presence in his works, particularly when Spenser has seen it fit to raise Chaucer's comedic works to the dignity suggested by his monumental folio editions by revising and completing them in an earnest or epic manner, worthy of Milton's "sage and serious Spenser." Spenser's editions use Chaucer—both textually and visually—differently in different works. The overt Chaucerian mode seems to be reserved for Satire (*Mother Hubbard*; the rustic poems of *The Shepheardes Calendar*), while poems that are thorough reworkings of Chaucer—*Daphnaida* (*The Book of the Duchesse*) and Book IV of The Faerie Queene (*The Squire's Tale, The Knight's Tale*)—are not heralded as inspired or influenced by their Chaucerian originals. While the educated reader may have been assumed to be able to decode the Chaucerian references, it is just as likely that Spenser is consciously attempting to gloss over his connections with Chaucer in an effort of promoting himself as a poet in his own right: his use of Chaucer becomes, if not exactly covert, then at least glossed over.

Spenser, Speght, and the Seventeenth Century

This view of Spenser as the completion of Chaucer should remind one of the editorial treatment of Chaucer himself in Speght's 1598 and 1602 editions. Coming forth, as they were, in a world now populated by *The Shepheardes Calendar* and *The*

Faerie Queene, their attitude towards Chaucer is filtered through the lens of Spenser. Chaucer is imperfect, in need of preservation and clarification: hence Speght's arguments and glosses, reminiscent of E.K.'s treatment of Spenser's text in *The Shepheardes Calendar*. Chaucer's most worthy tales are those of consonance with *The Faerie Queene*; hence their heightened profile in Speght's edition. The Speght Chaucer—the Chaucer of the entire seventeenth century—is a Chaucer informed by Spenser and his editions. By the dawn of the seventeenth century, most readers were encountering Chaucer firmly through the lens of Spenser. Extracting one from the other has perhaps been the most valuable contribution of medieval scholars in the twentieth century, uncovering the ambiguity, the good humor, and the comedic center of Chaucer. Our editorially-shaped understandings of Chaucer's works are, of course, arguably as limited as those of the later Renaissance, and perhaps more so as textual apparatus—footnotes, endnotes, introductions, commentary, scholarly summaries—further threaten to obscure the poems themselves. But we cannot encounter "the poems themselves" but through the character of an edition, whether subtle or heavy-handed. A thorough understanding of the characters of Renaissance editions of Chaucer helps us to understand better why Chaucer was imitated as he was by the most prominently Chaucerian English Renaissance poets.

Chapter 9

Conclusions

Having analyzed every edition of the works of Chaucer produced in the English Renaissance and having analyzed the poetic reception of Chaucer by Skelton and Spenser through their first editions, several conclusions may be drawn regarding the interrelation between editions and imitations of Chaucer in the English Renaissance. While these conclusions are not exhaustive—this subject is worthy of further study—they do provide a starting point for a deeper investigation of the interpretive patterns expressed in editorially-shaped characters of Chaucerian editions, and the respective roles of editors and poets in shaping these patterns.

The first conclusion that may be drawn is that Chaucerian editing in the Renaissance should be seen fundamentally in terms of increasing emphasis on Horatian utility (*sentence*) through editorial apparatus that downplayed Horatian delight (*solaas*). That printers and readers in the English Renaissance should approach literature in these categories is no surprise; the renewed interest in classical rhetoric and poetics is a hallmark of Renaissance literary thought. What is surprising is how consistently and persistently the editions of Chaucer showed this trend in their characters. The process began with Caxton's prologues and epilogues, as well as his selection of materials for anthologies, stressing the moral use of Chaucer over the pure delight of his comedic vision. Caxton left the text itself, however, relatively free from editorial cues for reading

the text in this manner; he may well have simply been copying the textual formats of his manuscript exemplars, but the effect is clear: Caxton's sense of literary utility is relatively muted, serving to bookend Chaucerian texts but not weave themselves into them (with the obvious exception of the Caxtonian ending to *The House of Fame*). Caxton's immediate successors continued this project in more or less pervasive ways: editorial insertions in the text became more regular, but interpretive cues were still primarily confined to introductory or concluding material.

With William Thynne and the age of the *Complete Works*, this pattern of editorial interpretation along the lines of moral *sentence* was increased greatly. The order and contents of Chaucer's canon—and therefore the sequence in which readers approached them—were set, even though subsequent editions tinkered with the arrangement and presentation, sometimes in quite significant ways. By waning of the English Renaissance, readers were most likely to encounter Chaucer through the lens of Speght, an editor whose interpretive glosses precede each text and even embed themselves within the text. By the seventeenth century, Chaucer's status as a poet of moral qualities has been established through overpowering editorial interventions, often cutting against the grain of Chaucer's comedic and ambiguous poetic sensibilities. This editorial process helps explain the bifurcated vision of Chaucer in the Renaissance: his works retain a patina of bawdry—bawdry that is *actually* present in this canon—but have been elevated to the status of moral classics, the fountainhead of the English Literary Tradition. By the end of the sixteenth century, Chaucer has become a poetic monument, a role that he does

not play perfectly—"Canterbury Tales" are still tales of bawdry—but that readers and poets nevertheless have to acknowledge, even if this acknowledgement is mere lip service: Chaucer as an ancient, venerable father of English poetry, and thoroughly dead and imperfect, coming to completion only through Spenser's pen.

The second major conclusion is that Caxton's immediate successors—Pynson, de Worde, Notary, Rastell, and the printers of apocryphal Protestant tales—deserve a central place in the tradition of Chaucerian printing. As this study has shown, printers of Chaucer between the 1490's and 1530's did not simply copy Caxton (although Caxtonian standards are found throughout), but developed the tradition of Chaucer in print in significant ways: authorial title-pages, more varieties of Chaucerian anthologies, and inventive uses of visual cues such as woodcuts, layouts, and changes in type. It is questionable whether the *Complete Works* of Thynne, Stow, and Speght would have existed without the work of the printers of shorter editions of Chaucer's works in the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII. At the very least, the patterns of editing and interpreting that Thynne used for his edition were being set by the post-Caxtonian printers in the decades before the advent of the first *Complete Works*.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that this period of Chaucerian printing saw the highest number of variant manners of presenting Chaucer seen in the English Renaissance. While Caxton's successors tended towards textual presentations that favored moral utility as the major way of interpreting the text, their editorial apparatus remained relatively "open," allowing the text of Chaucer to speak more on its own terms

than the terms set by the editor. Some of the editions printed in this period even allow more emphasis on Chaucerian comedy, as in de Worde's 1498 printing of *The Rime of Sir Thopas* that copies a verse format seen in the Ellesmere Chaucer, emphasizing the oddity of the tale in the midst of *The Canterbury Tales*. Woodcuts were used as explicit frames for parts of the text, adding a level of visual interpretation to text. The period between Caxton and Thynne deserves to be viewed as the most exciting and inventive period of Chaucerian printing in the Renaissance, when the full possibilities of the Chaucerian text were explored and a variety of rhetorical characters of Chaucer produced, even while *sentence* continued to be stressed as a means of approaching Chaucer.

The third conclusion this study has yielded is that as vital as the editors and printers of Chaucer were in transmitting and authorizing interpretations of Chaucer and his texts, the poets of the period played a significant role in how Chaucer's text was presented. While further study is necessary to include *all* major Chaucerian writers of the period—both poets and playwrights—the case study of Skelton and Spenser, as the two most prominent Chaucerian poets of the English Renaissance, has yielded the vital insight that not only were their imitations of Chaucer shaped by the characters of the editions they used, but that these imitations further served as an impetus for subsequent editions of Chaucer's own works. In the case of Skelton, Chaucer's comedic vision not only suited Skelton's own poetic sensibilities, but had not yet been downplayed to the extent that it would be as the sixteenth century unfolded. Skelton was therefore able to approach Chaucer as a living comic author, not a dead monument to moral gravity.

Skelton's own editions show a concerted attempt—both on the part of Skelton himself and Skelton's printers—to downplay, often subtly, the relationship between Chaucer and Skelton. This is precisely the reaction one would expect from a new poet dealing with a "living" author: Skelton goes to great lengths to construct his poetic authority *apart* from Chaucer, not dependent on a Chaucerian ethos for recognition. Perhaps paradoxically, Skelton's concern for establishing himself apart from Chaucer—while remaining silent on his deep debts to Chaucer's poetry—comes immediately on the heels of Thynne's editorial project in his series of *Complete Works*: the way in which Skelton used Chaucer was dependent upon the lack of editorial involvement in the editions of Caxton and his successors; the effect of Skelton's use of Chaucer was the editorial interest in increasing involvement in the text, to the end of establishing Chaucer as a laureate poet in the same manner of Skelton, and of greater age and venerability.

In the case of Spenser, Chaucer is mediated for him by this very editorial rhetoric: whether he is using primarily a Thynne or a Stow edition, Spenser reads Chaucer as the monumental father of English letters, whose works are concerned primarily with moral instruction in philosophical and Protestant virtues: Chaucer is now the English Homer, not the English Chaucer. In order to appreciate the comic heart of Chaucer, then, Spenser had to read more consistently against the editorial presentation than Skelton had to. The fact that Spenser used any comedic effects from Chaucer is therefore striking. What is more striking, however, is the fact that Spenser returned, time and again, to comedic sections of Chaucer to serve his own serious purposes. In this respect, Spenser carried on

the editorial tradition of stressing useful *sentence* over morally questionable *solaas*: even the parts of Chaucer most resistant to strictly moral readings serve as the foundation for moral Spenserian works. Spenser also allows his editions to present his works as venerable, scholarly tomes: E.K.'s glosses for *The Shepheardes Calendar* set this tone, and it is carried out to varying degrees in every Spenserian work printed. Not only is this move related to the very presentation of Chaucer's works by Thynne and Stow—Spenser's works require the same kind of scholarly praise that Chaucer's works receive—but the Spenserian apparatus goes beyond the Thynne and Stow editions to include glossaries of antique words and more persistent classicism. These developments in Spenserian textual rhetoric inspired Speght to make his *Complete Works* look like a Spenserian book. Spenser began to build his poetic career on the clout of Chaucer, in direct contrast to Skelton; while Skelton had to downplay his debt to a living author, Spenser could acknowledge his own greatness by casting himself as the successor to a monumental, dead author. As a result of this complex rhetorical move, Spenser linked himself inextricably from Chaucer in the standard edition of Chaucer's works for the seventeenth century: readers of Chaucer from the Jacobean to the Augustan eras encountered him and his works on Spenserian terms.

The final conclusion to be drawn from this study is that editorial rhetoric is not simply a thing of the past: our own attitudes and approaches to Chaucer are shaped to a large degree by what is included by editors and printers. The experience of Chaucer's text most closely resembling that of his first readers would give us a text free from all but

the most minimal editorial cues, and allow the reader himself to select and order the texts: the Chaucerian "book" would be a free-form anthology whose contents and order are generated by the interests of the reader. In this respect, Chaucer in the digital age is closer to Chaucer before the printing press: a reader may approach Chaucer's text with minimal editorial notes, in whatever order interests him. The age of the i-Pod is the age of anthologies generated again by the audience, not the writer or the printer.

Even with the relative freedom of digital media, our own preconceptions and aesthetic categories for Chaucer are still set by the editors and the characters of the editions we use. To take but a few examples, consider soft-cover edition of *The Riverside Chaucer*, *The Oxford Guides to Chaucer: The Canterbury Tales* by Helen Cooper, and W.W. Skeat's Oxford edition of the Complete Works of Chaucer.[1] These standards for scholarly treatment of Chaucer go to great lengths to delve into the complexities of Chaucer without circumscribing his works with too narrow aesthetic categories. Nevertheless, the reader of *The Riverside Chaucer* begins his encounter of Chaucer's poetry with a vibrantly colorful fifteenth-century illustration of what appears to be a troop of pilgrims: members of various estates and classes ride horses outside a walled city. This choice of illustration presumably argues for the centrality of *The Canterbury Tales* in the Chaucerian canon, a claim that is not hard to argue.

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[1] Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, Anthony Burgess, ed. (Oxford, New York, et al: Oxford University Press, 1987); Helen Cooper, *The Oxford Guides to Chaucer: The Canterbury Tales*, second edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, original, 1989); Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. W.W. Skeat (New York, London, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1951, original, 1912).

Nevertheless, the canny reader will note that this illustration is taken from a manuscript of John Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*; as in the English Renaissance, Lydgate's work is passed off as Chaucer's. The editorial framework for Chaucer's canon continues today in much the same manner as it did in the age of the Tudors.

In the case of *The Oxford Guides to Chaucer: The Canterbury Tales*, the cover art shows the woodcut of the Wife of Bath from the 1483 Caxton edition of *The Canterbury Tales*. This cover is at least rhetorically appropriate: it presents the reader with a visual link to an early printed edition of the *Tales*, even though the cover art credit does not give its date or provenance. At the same time, the choice of the Wife of Bath still shapes the reader's approach to this work of criticism. The Wife of Bath is a bawdy, comic character in the *Tales*; the bawdy, comic nature of the work is thus stressed by the choice of cover art. Instead of Chaucer's Knight, whose woodcuts dominated *The Canterbury Tales* for the entirety of the English Renaissance, Chaucer's Alisoun is given central position. This choice, while certainly appropriate for a treatment of *The Canterbury Tales*, nevertheless owes as much to the age that produced it as the woodcut of the Knight owes to the aesthetic concerns of the English Renaissance. In a critical age that prizes ambiguity, that is more apt to stress the functions of the body rather than the habits of the soul, that has a strong interest in feminism and the role of women in the literary tradition, the choice of the Wife of Bath and the subsequent frame it creates for *The Canterbury Tales* makes sense. The fact that Cooper herself has produced exemplary studies of the

Wife of Bath and medieval comedy makes the choice all the more appropriate, even if it still does suggest strongly an interpretive method for the reader.

Perhaps one of the most rhetorically "open" editions of Chaucer in the modern age is W.W. Skeat's 1912 *Complete Works*. Regardless of one's estimation of Skeat as an editor (subsequent Chaucerian textual critics have found fault with his editorial methods, as textual critics tend to do), his edition's presentation of the Chaucerian text leaves much open to the reader. The cover is a simple Oxford blue with the Oxford seal in the center, the same cover as any Oxford edition. Skeat's table of contents gives Chaucer's texts in roughly chronological order, leaving *The Canterbury Tales* for the end. The text is presented in a straightforward manner, without any editorial introductions to the works included. Skeat gives scholarly introductory materials and appendixes, but the reader is free to ignore them; the text stands on its own terms. The Skeat edition's nod to Chaucerian printing traditions comes in the running titles, which are printed in a version of Anglicana/Bâtarde, harkening back to the editions of Caxton. While not the most solid critical edition for a twenty-first-century reader of Chaucer, the Skeat Oxford edition does show a laudable degree of non-intervention in the experience of reading Chaucer's poems. Such considerations of past Chaucerian rhetorics should make us more sensitive to our own limitations as readers of Chaucer's works.[2]

[2] The considerations of contemporary approaches and attitudes to Chaucer become all the more complex when one ventures outside of scholarly editions and studies. The 1932 Random House *Troilus and Cressida*, for example, is advertised as being "Englished anew" by George Philip Krapp and includes numerous engravings by Eric Gill (New York: Random House, 1932). This translated version is subtitled, "A Love Poem in Five Books" and focuses overtly on a highly erotic reading of the poem through the explicitness of many of the woodcuts. The romantic action of the poem is further circumscribed by the

In the end, this study has demonstrated that intertextual and reception studies of Chaucer in the Renaissance are incomplete and often severely lacking without attention to the rhetorical characters of the editions of Chaucer's works produced during this period. The consideration of "background books" that formed Renaissance approaches to poets of the past needs to be revised to include "background editions," even as our own understandings of literary authors need to be informed by sensitivity to our own editors and their agendas. Studies of the print history of Chaucer simply in terms of textual criticism without reference to the aesthetic categories and rhetorical dimensions of these editions cannot account for the poetic responses to Chaucer that these editions generated. Intertextual studies always need to account for the "background editions" of poets and the specific effects the text produces through a variety of rhetorical cues. Only a combination of these approaches can begin to articulate sufficiently the poetic responses of Renaissance readers to the works of Chaucer, articulating the ways in which these older works inspired new ones, "as out of fields come new corn.

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subtitles to the Books: Book I: "The Temple Door"; Book II: "Attack"; Book III: "Surrender"; Book IV: "Charge and Countercharge"; Book V: "The Betrayal"—even if one estimates that these subtitles are appropriate, they are completely editorial; the reader of the Krapp and Gill *Troilus* is thus encountering Chaucer through a variety of non-Chaucerian lenses.

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