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CONTENTS

Articles

King Alfred and the Latin Manuscripts of Gregory’s Regula Pastoralis
Richard W. Clement 1

Can We Speak of an Islamic Middle Ages? A Conceptual Problem Examined Through Literature
Julie Scott Meisami 15

Deception and Distance in Béroul’s Tristan: a Reconsideration
Norris J. Lacy 33

The Fiction of the “Livre” in Robert de Boron’s Merlin
Stephen Maddux 41

Gawain’s “Anti-Feminism” Reconsidered
S. L. Clark and Julian N. Wasserman 57

Adam’s Dream: Fortune and the Tragedy of the Chester ‘Drapers Playe’
George Ovitt, Jr. 71

Belief, Justification, and Knowledge—Some Late-Medieval Epistemic Concerns
Ivan Boh 87

Latin and Vernacular in Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century Italy
Paul Oskar Kristeller 105

Rites of Passage in Leonardo Bruni’s Dialogues to Pier Paolo Vergerio
Olga Zorzi Pugliese 127

Great Black Goats and Evil Little Women: The Image of the Witch in Sixteenth-Century German Art
Jane P. Davidson 141

Correspondence with Women: The Case of John Knox
A. Daniel Frankforter 159

Review Article
Chaucer and the Three Crowns of Florence (Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio): Recent Comparative Scholarship
Madison U. Sowell 173

Varia

Announcements 184

Notice to Contributors 187

Subscription Information 187
Articles

King Alfred and the Latin Manuscripts of Gregory's *Regula Pastoralis*

by

Richard W. Clement
University of Chicago

King Alfred's translation of Pope Gregory the Great's *Liber Regulæ Pastoralis* has long been recognized by students of Anglo-Saxon literature as one of the earliest and greatest monuments of Old English prose. Alfred's first translation, commonly referred to as the *Pastoral Care*, has been the focus of much scholarly attention by historians, philologists, and literary critics. Historians have seized upon the work more for Alfred's two prefaces and what they tell us of Ninth-century England than for the translation itself, but nonetheless the mode of translation is not without its biographical and historical implications. Philologists on the other hand have concerned themselves more directly with the translation as a lengthy coherent representation of Early West Saxon. The translation, even though often paraphrased, is exceptionally close to its original, and this close relationship provides crucial evidence in the Latin text for the philologist considering the OE text. Literary critics, in comparing Alfred's translation to Gregory's original, have been less than unanimous in their estimates of Alfred's competency as a translator, especially in this first attempt. Judgements have ranged from uncritical praise to damming condemnation, but in the main critics have been somewhat uneasy in coming to any hard conclusions because of a number of disturbing differences in the Latin original and Alfred's translation. The unpalatable conclusion (at least to traditional critics) is that the *Pastoral Care* is a novice's valiant, but often bumbling attempt at translating what is really a simple Latin text. This conclusion, however, is based on the faulty assumption that the printed editions of Gregory's *Regula* represent the Latin text as Alfred translated it. Actually Alfred's Latin MS belongs to a recension which has never appeared in print, and when the OE translation is compared to this Latin recensional version, many of the disturbing differences disappear. Alfred's translation does indeed contain errors, but these are errors of his recensional original. We may fault the King for not distinguishing these errors (e.g., in the attribution of biblical books), but we
cannot fault him for directly translating what he found in his Latin text. Thus it is essential that the historian, philologist, or literary critic considering the relationship of Alfred's Pastoral Care to Gregory's Regula understand the textual tradition of the Latin text and its recensional version in England.

The printed editions of the Regula are based on continental MSS that represent neither the original Gregorian edition nor the later recensional version of the English MSS. All of the many scholars who have examined the OE text in the light of its Latin original have relied only on the printed Latin editions. C. D. Jeffery has been the only scholar to state the case for investigating the English MSS: "... it is inherently unlikely that Continental editions like Westhoff's or Migne's would represent the English manuscripts of the Regula ... in every particular, and that none of Alfred's peculiarities are actually due to readings peculiar to these manuscripts [of Anglo-Saxon provenance]. It is strictly preposterous to assess his skill as a translator before we know just what he was translating, or at least before anybody has read the English manuscripts carefully with the Old English version in mind."

The MSS of Anglo-Saxon provenance follow:
A Worcester, Cathedral Library, Add. 3, s. vii, fragment (Gneuss 771, CLA 264);
B Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 9561, s. vii (Gneuss 894, CLA 590);
C Kassel, Landesbibliothek, Thol. Fol. 32, s. vii (Gneuss 833, CLA 1138);
D London, British Library, Cotton Otho A.i, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Arno. Selden B.26, fol. 34, s. viii, fragment; this is an abridged version (Gneuss 346, CLA 188+229);
E Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 263, s. vii ex; technically this is not of English origin, but it was written by Insular scribes at Mainz (CLA 1400);
F Oxford, St. John's College 28, s. x; Canterbury: St. Augustine's (Gneuss 684);
G Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 708, s. x ex; Canterbury: Christ Church and Exeter (Gneuss 590);
H Glasgow, University Library, Hunterian 431, s. x/xi; Worcester (Gneuss 261);
I Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 361, s. xi; Malmesbury (Gneuss 991);
J Salisbury, Cathedral Library 157, s. xi; Salisbury? (Gneuss 742); and
K Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 783, s. xi/xii; Exeter (Gneuss 598).
In addition, I have consulted the oldest and most authoritative continental MS:
T Troyes, Bibliothèque Municipale 504, c. 590; Rome (CLA 838). This MS actually contains two nearly contemporary editions: T^1 and T^2.

T^1, the original version of c. 590, contains a number of errors. These were corrected certainly sometime before Gregory's death in 604 to form the T^2 version, probably under the Pope's supervision. Not only were a number of errors corrected, but most of the Old Latin quotations were regularized against the Vulgate. Finally there are a number of additions to the text that must be authorial, but it is impossible to be sure that they are Gregory's. Each of the two editions is the archetype of a distinct recension.

Although I have examined all of these MSS in this preliminary investigation, I have only examined F, I, and T in detail. In first collating T and T, I found 759 differences, mostly of orthography, word order, or semantic preference. There are, however, 119 significant variants (i.e., variants that may be reflected in the OE translation) in I, 61 of which agree with the corresponding readings in Alfred's translation of the Regula in MS, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 20 (A.D. 909-7). The MS closest in date to Alfred's lifetime, F, was collated at these same points at which I differed from T: only 107 readings in F were available for comparison because of a missing quire, and out of these 107, 76 agreed with Hatton 20. T and F together agree with Hatton 20 against T in 45 instances. Thus, neither F nor F alone represents the text of Alfred's Latin MS, but each has independent correspondences with readings in the OE translation. F has 16 variant readings that correspond to the OE, but are not found in T; F has 31 "standard" (i.e., equivalent to T) readings that correspond to the OE, but are not found in T.

Twenty of the most significant of these variants (between T, I, and F) have been further scrutinized. Each of these 20 MSS and each have been considered in detail. Each MSS and each has been collated in the vernacular translation in Hatton 20. (Although variant IV 2 [below] occurs 34 times, it is treated as a single variant, even though in the collation each individual occurrence was counted. Thus, the 20 variants considered below were counted as 53 variants in the collation.) Each of the 6 OE MSS of the Pastoral Care has also been consulted to note any OE variants or glosses which might shed further light upon the Insular MSS of the Regula. The 20 variants have been grouped into four categories: (I) Corrections, (II) Additions and Deletions, (III) Substitutions, and (IV) Structural Changes. Each variant is first considered in detail in terms of the initial collation of T, I, and F, and then in a summarizing table in terms of the other MSS under consideration.

1. Corrections
As noted above, two authorial editions of the Regula are extant in T: an earlier uncorrected edition T^1 and a later corrected edition T^2. These two Gregorian editions have been distinguished below because Alfred's Latin MS was clearly a T^2 text. T^1 is considered before T^2 because there can be no doubt as to its readings: the T^2 text has been written over the T^1 text. In many instances it is possible to read the underlying T^1 text, but in others the text has been obliterated beyond recovery. In those instances in which the T^1 text is illegible, 1
have resorted to the later recensional MSS for evidence as to probable $T^1$ readings.

1. $T^*$ (PL 16.A.2-4) reads "hinc [the following 12 words over erasure] quoque cum sequens propheta lauus ruine hinc rursum de securibus dominus per nemo guippe amplius in ecclesia . . ." $T^3$ is illegible, but the reading of $I$ and $F$ easily fits the space of the erasure. $T^3$ regularizes the quotation so as to agree with the Vulgate version of Hes. 9:8.

$I+F$ "Hinc rursum dominus per prophetam dicit Causa ruinae populi sacerdotes mali."

Hatton 20 (31, 8-9) "Be ðam Dryhten cwæd eft ðurh ðone witgan: Yfe preostas biep folcs hyle:" (cfr. OE) clearly corresponds to the $T^1$ reading of $I$ and $F$.

2. $T^3$ (PL 16.C.10) [the following over erasure] "fugìt iterum in montem ipsam solus." The original reading of $T^1$ is illegible, but here also the reading of $I$ and $F$ easily fits in the erased section.

$I+F$ "Quo cognito Jesus fugit et abscondit se" is a variant Old Latin quotation of Joh. 6:15; $T^3$ is the correct Vulgate reading.

Hatton 20 (33, 15) "Da se Haelond þet onganet, da beierde he hic 7 gebyld heice." (cfr. OE) corresponds to the $T^1$ text of $I$ and $F$.

3. $T^3+F$ (PL 18.A.6-15) "Neque enim rex Babylonica tunc reus de elatione exstitit cum ad elationem uerae peruenti quippe qui a prophetico et ante cum ab elatione tacuit sententiam reprobationis audebat culpam namque perpetratione superiubræ audebat desiderat qui omnipotentem deum quem se offendisse reperit cucurit sub se genitus praedicta sed post huc successus suae potestatis elevarum dum magna se fecisse gauderet cucurit prætio in cogitatione se præuetit et post adhuc tumidius dixit . . . . $T^3$ reads [after an illegible erasure of 4 or 5 letters] "rex babylonianus fecisse suae potestatis elevarum dum magna se fecisse gauderet cucurit prætio in cogitatione se præuetit et post adhuc tumidius dixit . . . . " This reading is nearly the same as in $I$. $T^3$ at the point indicated by the superscript $hd$ continues in the bottom margin "tunc reus . . . sed post hæc hs." The $hs$ indicates the reader is to return to the main text.

$I$ "Vnde rex babyloniae audent suae potestatis elevarum dum magna se fecisse gauderet cucurit insigne in cogitatione se præuetit et post adhuc tumidius dixit . . . ."

Hatton 20 (39, 13-16) "Hwaet se Babylonia cyning was se wite upahafen on his mode for his anwalde 7 for his gilimpse, ða he f agnomede ðam siclan weares 7 faerinesse þære ceaste, 7 hine oðhaf innan his gebohte eallum ðrum monnum, 7 suigenge he cwæd on his mode." The OE corresponds to the shorter $T^3$ passage as represented in $I$.

4. $T^3+F$ (PL 18.B.3-6) [over an erasure in $T$] "quæ uideleuct vox illius irae uindicatam aperte pertulit quam occulta elatio ascendent nam distinctus indus prüus [the next five words added interlinearly in the hand of $T^3$] insinuabiliter uider quod posse publico feriendo reprehendi." $T^1$ is illegible, but once again the reading of $I$ fits the space of the erasure very well.

I "Quam tamen tacitae elationis uocem occultus iudex non tacitus auduit quia hunc regem protinus feriendo reprehendi."

Hatton 20 (39, 18-20) "Da sulgendan stefne suíde hræde se dielega Dena gehrde, 7 him suíde unedegolice geondwyere mid ðam wiþum ðe he hitte hrædlice wære." The OE corresponds to the $T^3$ passage as represented in $I$.

5. $T^3+F$ (PL 19.A.1-2) "simon iohannis amas me." $T^1$ clearly reads "petre" instead of "simon iohannis" (Joh. 21:17).

$I" petre amas me.""

Hatton 20 (43, 3) "Petrus ius hæstu me." The OE corresponds to the $T^1$ reading of $I$.


I "Hinc per Zachariam dictur . . . ."

Hatton 20 (91, 16) "Eft wæs gescutan dærh Zacharias . . . ." Again the OE clearly corresponds to the $T^3$ reading represented in $I$.

Although in several instances $T^3$ readings are obscure by $T^3$ corrections, variants 1.3, 1.5, and 1.6 clearly demonstrate the close textual affinity of undoubted $T^3$ readings and corresponding readings in $I$. All of the above 6 variants illustrate the very close relationship of the OE translation of Hatton 20 to the recensional $T^3$ text as represented in $I$. Alfred's Latin MS, although not textually identical to $I$, was certainly a remarkably pure and uncontaminated representative of the $T^3$ text (as $F$, closer to Alfred's lifetime than $I$, is not). In the following table I have laid out the recensional $T^3/T^1$ relationships of all the Insular MSS in terms of the 6 variants considered above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variant</th>
<th>$T^1$</th>
<th>$T^3$</th>
<th>Neither</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CEGFIJ</td>
<td>BK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BCIFGIJ</td>
<td>K</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BCIGFLJ</td>
<td>EFHJK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>BCIFHJKL</td>
<td>FHJK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>EGFIJK</td>
<td>BCIFHJKL</td>
<td>C13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>FGIJKL</td>
<td>BCIFHJKL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MSS G, I, and J$^1$ best represent the $T^3$ text, and of course Hatton 20 is a translation of the $T^3$ text. Only K$^1$ is a pure $T^3$ text.
II. Additions and Deletions

The variants in this section and in the two following sections are the products of scribal manipulation and error produced in the copying and recopying of the text during the three intervening centuries from the time when Gregory's original copy (T) was produced to the time when Alfred's now lost MS was copied. Of course we cannot know when that MS was copied: we only know when it was translated. It seems likely, however, in light of the number and variety of departures from the T archetype, that there are at least several stages of copying between T and Alfred's MS.

1. T + F (PL 19.C.3-4) "... proximorum negligit quasi ..."
   "... proximorum negligit curam quasi ..."[14]
   Hatton 20 (45, 13) "... agiemenesia ura niesthena dearfa ..." The OE dearfa is equivalent to curam in I.

2. (PL 24.A.1) "non offeret panes domino deo suo." This is a correct quotation of (Vulgate) Lev. 21:17.
   I "non offeret panes deo suo."
   Hatton 20 (65, 1-2) "ne offride his Gode nanne blaf." The OE God corresponded in the Latin deo of I, not to the domino deo of the PL or the Vulgate.

3. (PL 28.D.4) "blandimenta mundi respecto intimo terrae despiciet." I "Blandimenta mundi respecto intimo tempore despiciat." Hatton 20 (83, 5-6) "... ac geolze he done incudand ege Godes." The OE Godes corresponds to the deo of I.

4. T + F (PL 36.B.13) "feci sumus paruuli in medio uestrum." This is a correct quotation of (Vulgate) 1 Thess. 2:7.
   I "facti sumus sicut paruuli in medio uestrum."
   Hatton 20 (117, 3-4) "We sist gewordene swele lyllinges beteox eow." The OE swele corresponds to the sicut of I.

5. T (PL 57.C.3) "quatenus et illos uiciurn ratio frangeret.
   I + F "Haec dicit quatenus ..."
   Hatton 20 (205, 16) "Fordon he dus cuoed ..." The OE he ... cuoed is based on Haec dicit in I and F.

6. T (PL 58.A.8) "ut et illorum culpam inpercipere dura detegeteret."
   I + F "Haec dicit ut et illorum ..."
   Hatton 20 (207, 21) "Forden he spræce ..." The OE he spræce corresponds to the Haec dicit of I and F.

7. T + F (PL 83.C.3) "quatenus et illi discant cibus carnis inordinat non appetere."
   I "Haec ait quatenus [sic] ..."
   Hatton 20 (319, 7) "Forden he ðæt cuoed ..." Again, the OE he ... cuoed corresponds to the Latin Haec ait of I.

8. T (PL 103.D.4) "sed ad id quod honestum est." This is a correct quotation from (Vulgate) 1 Cor. 7:35.
   I + F "sed ad id quod honestum est prouoco."

Hatton 20 (401, 15-16) "ic ecw sceggwe hwæt ecw arwyrlicost is to beganne." The OE scægge plainly corresponds to the prouoco of I and F.

The following table traces these 8 later recensional additions and subtractions through all of the Insular MSS. As we might expect, the earliest MSS show fewer deviations from the original archetypal text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variant</th>
<th>Hatton 20</th>
<th>Other (PL)</th>
<th>Lacuna</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>GIJ</td>
<td>BCEFHT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CECHJK</td>
<td>BH</td>
<td>FT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>BCEGHJK</td>
<td>FT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>GIJK</td>
<td>BCFHT</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>FH'I</td>
<td>BCGLJKT</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>FGHIJ</td>
<td>BGCHJKT</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>HI</td>
<td>BEFGJKT</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>EFGHIJ</td>
<td>BKT</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I corresponds to Hatton 20, and thus Alfred's Latin MS, in all 8 instances (but this is to be expected as a collation of I and T formed the basis for the selection of the variants); G and J agree with Hatton 20 in 5 instances.

III. Substitutions

1. (PL 28.A.13-14) "imporuitas pulvereae cognitionis obscuret." I "importuitas pulloveae cognitionis obscuret." Hatton 20 (79, 19) "ðæt mod aðistrege se forhwriede fæwena gemali." The OE forhwiðredæfæ is closer to the polluteæ of I, than to the pulvereæ of the PL.

2. T (PL 42.B.7) "et rursus per moderatum cordis intentio."
   I + F "et rursus per inmoderatum cordis intentio."
   Hatton 20 (141, 7-8) "ðæt inhegeðnec se gebunen ðære heorfan for ðære ungemetunge ðæs ymbeðgan ðaða uterra ðinga." The OE ungemetunge clearly corresponds to the inmoderatum of I and F.

3. T (PL 80.C.12) "tune enim generma in se mutabilitatis arefacent." I + F "Tune enim simmina ... ."
   Hatton 20 (307, 20-308, 1) "Sona aestaria ðæa twiga ðære hwurflinesse." The OE twiga corresponds to the simmina of I and F.

4. T (PL 88.D.3) "per quærdom supieterne dominus."
   I + F "per salomonem dominus."
   Hatton 20 (343, 6) "Dryhten geceðode ðærh Salomon." The OE corresponds to I and F in identifying Solomon.

The following table traces these 4 later recensional substitutions through
all the Insular MSS. Again we see that the earlier MSS contain comparatively fewer deviations from the archetypal norm of $T$ ($T^1$ and $T^2$ are not distinguished in the variants of sections II, III, and IV: they are identical). Variant 4 appears to have entered the recension quite early, while variant 3 seems more recent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variant</th>
<th>Hatton 20</th>
<th>Other (PL)</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Lacuna</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CGHJIJ</td>
<td>BEK</td>
<td></td>
<td>FT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CFGH+IIK</td>
<td>BH\textsuperscript{2}KT</td>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>FGHJI\textsuperscript{1}</td>
<td>BEJK\textsuperscript{2}KT</td>
<td>K\textsuperscript{26}</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>BEFGHJII</td>
<td>KT</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MSS F, G, H\textsuperscript{2}, I, and J\textsuperscript{1} agree with Hatton 20, and are thus most like Alfred’s Latin MS.

IV. Structural Changes

1. In PL the following passage appears at the beginning of Chapter 11:  “Solert ergo se quiue metiatur ne locum regiminis assumere adaeat...” (PL 23.D.2-5).

In I, however, this same passage is placed at the end of Chapter 10.

In Hatton 20 this passage is also placed at the end of Chapter 10, thus corresponding to I: 63.18-21 “Ac pensa esti moni hieni selfe georne...”

2. Rubrics, in the form of a table of contents, are most common, as in T, but in a single instance, in I, the identical rubrics are not in a table but precede each chapter. The OE translation in Hatton 20 is similarly structured with each rubric preceding each chapter; thus the OE is most closely associated with the structure as found in I. (F is unusual in having both a table and chapter rubrics, but the chapter rubrics appear only in Book III.)

The following table traces these 2 later recensional structural variants through all the Insular manuscripts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variant</th>
<th>Hatton 20</th>
<th>Lacuna</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Begins “Hinc...etinum...”</td>
<td>Begins “Solert ergo...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubrics\textsuperscript{2}</td>
<td>BGHJII</td>
<td>EH\textsuperscript{2}K (PL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 w/chapters</td>
<td>Table</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 F\textsuperscript{*}</td>
<td>FJKT</td>
<td>BCEH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(* F has both.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only I agrees with Hatton 20 in both of these structural variants.

The Insular MSS and the Gregorian Archetypes

As noted above, T contains two contemporary editions of Gregory’s work: $T^1$, an earlier uncorrected version (which is certainly Gregory’s), and $T^2$, a later corrected and revised version (which may possibly represent Gregory’s final intentions). The eleven MSS under review in most cases show some degree of contamination between the two major recensions which descend from the archetypes $T^1$ and $T^2$. A is a fragment in which no significant variants appear. B, the oldest intact Insular MS, reflects both versions fairly equally. C generally follows $T^1$, but in one instance the reading is $T^2$ and in another a $T^3$ reading has been added in a later hand. D is a fragment of an abridged version. E and F equally reflect both recensions. G is a $T^1$ text. H generally follows the $T^1$ recension, but in one instance contains a $T^3$ reading; $T^1$ readings have twice been altered in a later hand to $T^2$ readings. I is a $T^1$ text. J is a $T^1$ text, but in two instances was later altered to $T^2$. K, the latest and certainly post-Conquest MS, is the only $T^2$ text, though in one instance a reading has been altered from $T^1$. The following table summarizes these recensional relationships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Edition ((&gt; 80%))</th>
<th>Second Edition ((&gt; 80%))</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GHIJ\textsuperscript{1}</td>
<td>K (PL)</td>
<td>BCEFHJ\textsuperscript{2}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(\* based on the 6 variants of Section I.)

Traditionally Augustine of Canterbury is thought to have brought a copy of the Regula with him to England. Indeed it would have been most unusual had Gregory not given his missionary and future archbishop a copy of his very popular handbook on episcopal conduct. Although at this stage in the investigation it is not possible to identify this probable Insular archetype as either a $T^1$ or a $T^2$ text, we may still draw some useful conclusions from the preceding analysis of the corpus of Insular MSS. All the textually pure extant $T^1$ MSS date from the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries. The only two complete (or nearly so) pre-Viking MSS (B and C) are both of a mixed nature, and it is thus difficult to hypothesize the dominance of either recension in Britain before c. 800. Clearly, though, Alfred’s Latin MS was a pure $T^2$ text. Unfortunately all traces of his MS’ probable Insular recensional descent have disappeared, but it is still possible that it may have had a continental origin. The $T^2$ text was not well regarded on the continent (after all it is a defective version which perturbs a number of errors) and it is unlikely (though certainly not impossible) that someone such as Archbishop Fulbert of Reims would have sent Alfred a $T^1$ text. It seems more likely that the $T^1$ recensional version, perhaps exemplified in one particular ancient copy, may have been regarded in Alfred’s time and
thereafter as Augustine's; Alfred tells us in his verse preface to the Pastoral Care that "Augustinus ofer salthe se ... brome" the Regula to England (B, 8). Regardless of which recensional version Augustine brought, the veneration of the T1 version as Augustine's version may explain its success in spite of its manifest errors, especially during the period of the Benedictine revival when churchmen would have certainly recognized its flaws. Significantly the latest MS, K, dated to c. 1100, is the only pure T2 text. This MS most probably reflects the Norman substitution of the much more common and correct continental T1 text for the Insular T1 text (although certainly the T1 recension was not confined to Britain). Every recensional correction in these MSS in a post-Conquest hand changes T1 readings to T2. Thus although the recensional history of the Regula is somewhat clouded before c. 800, by the time of Alfred's translation a strong T1 recension, extant in a number of later witnesses, was flourishing. With the Conquest, however, came the dominance of the T2 recension in both the copying of new T2 codices and in the altering of old T1 MSS.

The Later Recensional Tradition in Britain

As the text of the Regula was copied and recopied, a number of errors and changes were incorporated into the text which, as we have seen, are reflected in the OE translation. These errors and changes are exemplified in Sections II, III, and IV above. A is a fragment that contains no variants. B contains only two later recensional variants (14%-2 out of the 14 variants considered above). C contains only three later recensional variants (33%-3 out of 10 (only 10 due to a lacuna). D is a fragment of an abridgement. E contains only three later recensional variants (33%-3 out of 10 (only 10 due to a lacuna). F contains seven later recensional variants (70%-7 out of 10 (only 7 due to a lacuna). G contains nine later recensional variants (64%-9 out of 14); one T reading was later changed to a later recensional reading (71%). H contains five later recensional variants (36%-5 out of 14); four T readings were subsequently changed to later recensional readings (64%). All of the I readings are of the later recensional tradition (100%-out of 14). J contains ten later recensional variants (71%-10 out of 14); one of these variants was later changed to agree with T (64%). K contains only two later recensional variants (14%-2 out of 14); one T reading was subsequently altered to a later recensional reading (21%). Thus MSS F, G, I, and J contain texts, in terms of the later recensional variants, which are most like Alfred's Latin MS. The following table summarizes these later recensional relationships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variants reflected in</th>
<th>Variants not reflected in Hatton 20 (&gt; 70%)*</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FG</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>J</td>
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(* based on the 14 variants of Sections II, III, and IV.)

The MSS containing the fewest later recensional variants are once again the earliest (B) and the latest (K). It is only natural that the MS closest in date to the archetype would show the least deviation from it, but that the MS furthest in date should be equally free from deviation is remarkable. K's exemplar may have been an exceptionally pure and ancient Insular codex, certainly purer than B. However, as K is a T2 text produced after the Conquest, it seems much more likely that its lack of later recensional variants reflects the continental origin of its exemplar. It does not belong to our Insular T1 recension. Again, the MSS that show the greatest textual affinity to Alfred's MS date from the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries. Here we see something of a parallel with the T1/T2 recensional history considered above. The earlier MSS exhibit less deviation from the archetype, but by Alfred's time and during the following century we see several recensional branches, one of which is reflected in the OE translation. Again, with the coming of the Conquest and the subsequent imposition of the T2 text, the Insular T1 recensional variants disappear in new Insular copies. K is an example of just such a T2 copy which replaced the Anglo-Saxon T1 text.

Finally, there are three notable errors within this corpus of variants: 1; 6; 111; 2; and 111; 3. Significantly, all are reflected in the OE translation of Hatton 20 and in MSS F, G, H*, I, and J. As we have seen, these are the same MSS which are closest to Alfred's Latin MS in terms of the later recensional variants. Of these MSS, G, I, and J are also the most consistent T1 texts. Obviously, none of these MSS perfectly represents the text of Alfred's Latin MS, but each contributes a portion of the text of that now lost MS. A full-scale collation of T, F, G, H, I, J, and possibly some continental MSS is now required, and from this it will be possible, by selecting those variants which agree with the OE translation to reconstruct the Latin text that Alfred used. Until then, students of Alfred's translation should be aware of the limited textual relevance of the printed editions (which represent the corrected T2 text and none of the Insular variants). They should look instead to G, I, and J, as these Latin MSS most closely correspond to the Latin MS from which Alfred translated his Pastoral Care.

NOTES

1. J. P. Migne, ed., Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina, vol. 77 (Paris, 1862) is actually a reprint of the Benedictine edition completed by the scholars of Saint Maur in 1705 as part of Gregory's opera omnia. The base MS for this text is Troyes, Bibliothèque Municipale 504 (although the editors often silently emend and substitute alternate readings). According to E. A. Lowe, "There are numerous alterations, corrections over erasure, and marginal insertions—all by a contemporary hand—which suggest that our manuscript represents the author's revision of a preliminary edition of his work; the corrected version is closer to the text as we have it today" (Codicis Latinici Antiquiores, VI.838 [Oxford, 1953]). In spite of Lowe's suggestion that the revisions are
Gregory's own work (or perhaps [my own view], in the main, the work of one of his secretaries), there is little firm evidence upon which to base such a conclusion. (See my forthcoming "Two Contemporary Gregorian Editions of Pope Gregory the Great's Regula Pastoralis in Troyes MS 504," Scriptorium, 39, no. 1 [1985].) A number of variant readings from MSS preserved in Britain are given in the notes to the Benedictine edition which derive from Thomas James' Vindiciae Gregorianae, seu restitutione innumerum paene loci Gregorii M., ex variis manuscriptis ... collatis (Geneva, 1625). James included those variant MS readings which he considered plausible, but not those judged to be MS "errors." Similarly, Jeremy Stephens' B. Gregorii Magni Episcopi Romani, De Curis Pastorali Liber were aureus: Accurate emendatus et restitutus e Vat. MSS. cum Romana editione collationis, ab eximio aliquo Academiae Oxoniensis Theologis (London, 1629), based on James' collation project of 1610 (as was James' Vindiciae), also includes a number of recensional readings from a number of unspecified Oxford MSS, but again no readings which were "errors" were included. Only the Benedictine edition (and its numerous derivative reprints and editions) and Stephens' edition give any genuine variants which in some instances are closer to the version which Alfred translated, but neither the regular MS tradition nor Alfred's translation is mentioned in the apparatus of these editions. For the textual history of the Regula in its printed form and for a complete description of each of the 89 editions, see my forthcoming "Catalogue of the Printed Editions of Pope Gregory the Great's Liber Regulae Pastoralis," Westphal's edition (1846; 2nd ed. 1860) has often been used in Germany. Like the Benedictine edition, it is based on one or more continental MSS. No variant readings are given.


4. I am indebted to Professor Helmut Gneuss for providing me with the references to these MSS from his now published "A Preliminary List of Manuscripts Written or Owned in England up to 1100," Anglo-Saxon England 9 (1981), 1-60. The Gneuss numbers refer to this list.

5. Unfortunately, Cotton Otho A.I is almost entirely illegible because of the fire of 1731 at Ashburnham House, but as a single surviving leaf, Arch. Selden B.26, fol. 34, is a condensation of part of Chapter 11 (PL 24.4.5 "Ex horum . . . obscurant" 25.4.7; 25.4.8 "Albuginea . . . caecatur" 25.4.7; 25.4.11 "Iugum . . . dominatur" 25.4.2; 26.5.3 "Inceptum . . . dilatatum" 26.5.7; 26.5.12 "Ponderosum . . . demonstrennum" 26.5.9) the entire work may well have been abridged or alternatively may have consisted of a number of extracts. Arch. Selden B.26, fol. 34 is a skillful abridgement of the original; this passage, at least, is not a disconnected series of extracts. Although nothing is added, care has been taken with that which has been deleted.

6. I intend to treat all of these MSS in detail as part of a dual-language edition of the Latin Regula and its OE translation which Dorothy Horgan and I are preparing.

7. King Alfred's OE translation, the Pastoral Care, survives in six codices: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 20 (4113), 880-7 A.D. (Ker 324);
Can We Speak of an Islamic Middle Ages?
A Conceptual Problem Examined Through Literature

by

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In his introduction to *The Arabs and Medieval Europe* Norman Daniel, after rejecting the "traditional" Gibbonian definition of the Middle Ages as "the age between a fixed classical civilization and the modern world which inherits it" in favor of a view which affirms the unbroken continuity of European history, concludes that "for all non-European peoples . . . the concept of a Middle Age has no relevance, at least for their internal history. Any relevance it has must be in relation to Europe" (3). Similarly, in the area of literature, Robert Rehder in a review article states categorically that "*Medieval* is an European term that has no meaning when used with reference to Islamic or Persian culture," and goes on to observe that "The notions of the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages derive" from Petrarch's conception of a "middle period" in European history between the time of the adoption of Christianity and his own age, and that "There are no corresponding similarities in Islamic history." The concept of "medieval man", he concludes, "is a fiction", and cannot be invoked in discussions of Islamic culture or literature (111-12).

Daniel's objection is made from the perspective of the writer of history—specifically Arab history, which (from the Arab viewpoint) sees no "Middle Age", but "only an age of glory followed by a slow deterioration" culminating in Western colonialism (2); while Rehder is concerned (and justifiably so) with the indiscriminate application of Western critical terms and concepts to non-Western literatures. Yet these authors themselves have difficulty in abiding by such strictures; Daniel's study points out the existence of shared values and attitudes and of parallel aspects of development in Christian and Islamic civilization from the 8th to the 14th centuries, and he himself observes, "We shall be mistaken if we assume that there were as many cultural differences between eighth-century Christians and the early Muslims as we are accustomed to suppose" (10); and Rehder comments throughout his essay on the fertile grounds for comparison, in terms of structural and stylistic features, which exist between...
Persian and European poetry. Such observations suggest that "medieval man", though he may be a construct (as, indeed, all critical terms are ultimately), would scarcely seem to be a fiction, and that his habitat is more widespread that has sometimes been assumed.

Although Western historiography has moved towards a redefinition of the European Middle Ages less in terms of a "middle period" between two normatively defined periods which precede and follow (designated as Classical and Modern) and more on the basis of the internal dynamic of the period itself, in general such efforts have continued to stress the primacy and uniqueness of the Western experience; while historiographers of the Middle East still find themselves disturbed by the concept of "middleness" implied by the expression "Middle Ages". More recently, however, the once widespread tendency to view the civilizations of medieval Europe and of the contemporaneous age of Islam as isolated, unrelated and fundamentally dissimilar—a tendency which arose largely from consideration of the Western experience as both normative and exclusive, and from the belief that the emergence of modern Western society can be "explained" by what happened in medieval Europe and that the development of non-Western societies represents an aberration from the norm—has gradually given way to the realization that it is scarcely appropriate to set off medieval Europe from the rest of the world by boundaries approximating modern political ones, boundaries which are (retrospectively at least) assumed to constitute cultural lines of demarcation as well. As Hodgson has pointed out,

If we arrange societies merely according to their stock of cultural notions, institutions, and techniques, then a great many dividing lines among pre-Modern civilized societies makes some sense, and no dividing line within the Eastern Hemisphere makes final sense. It has been effectively argued, on the basis of the cultural techniques and resources to be found there, that all the lands from Gaul to Iran, from at least ancient classical times onward, have formed but a single cultural world. (1:30-31)

To counteract a too broad assumption of unity which disregards real differences, as well as the equally broad assumption of the ineradicable "otherness" of the two civilizations, it is necessary to establish criteria for periodization which rely less on strict geographical or chronological differences or on cultural "givens", and which will serve both to characterize the varying traditions within the larger area and to elucidate the parallels which exist throughout the region. This essay presents, albeit briefly, some of those elements which may be said to characterize medieval culture in its broader sense, first by pointing to some general parallels in historical and cultural development, and then by focussing on a specific literary manifestation of this parallelism: the emergence in Christian Europe and Islamic Persia, at roughly the same period, of that perhaps most characteristically medieval of literary genres, the courtly romance of chivalry and love.

In an essay addressing the question, "What Were the Middle Ages?", R. E. Sullivan defines the period as beginning "with the coming together of a particular set of forces in a particular geographical area. The forces that met on this soil were three: a senescent classical civilization, a vigorous religious movement, and a barbarian people." Sullivan continues, "The meeting of these three forces at a moment in history was a unique event, occurring no place else on the face of the earth," and states that this encounter produced "a new pattern of culture, a new civilization, confined to a specific geographical area" (190). It is of interest to note, however, that at nearly the same point in time (to be precise, about the mid-7th century), in an area lying between the eastern edge of the Roman Empire and the western border of its rival, Sassanian Iran, a parallel encounter was taking place, as the Arabs, possessors of an essentially tribal culture and bearers of a new and universalistic religious message, began the series of conquests which over the span of a century extended their hegemony from Transoxiana and Sind in the East to the Iberian Peninsula in the West. The years following these conquests (roughly, the mid-8th to the late 9th century) constitute the formative period of Islamic civilization, which—no less than that of Christian Europe—established itself as the inheritor of the classical traditions which preceded it, although (in contrast to Europe) it drew heavily on that of Islam as well as on those of Rome and Byzantium. This formative period culminated in the High Caliphate of the Abbassids, epitomized by the brilliant court of the famed Hārūn al-Rashīd (786-809).

Hārūn al-Rashīd and Charlemagne were contemporaries; and the Abbassid renaissance shares many features with the Carolingian, although the sophistication of the Baghdad court and the cultural and literary fecundity of the High Caliphate find no parallel in Europe. Walter Ullmann has commented on the symbolic importance, for Christianity, of baptism, through which the individual is "reborn" by virtue of his incorporation into the Church (14 ff.). To this, as Hodgson observes, corresponded the individual Muslim's act of islam, the personal submission to God from which the religion takes its name, which must equally have caused the community of believers to feel themselves "new men" required to interpret the past in the light of this communal rebirth (1:72).

The "unicolarity" characteristic of a society believed to be "divinely founded" (as opposed to the "natural society" of the tribe), and whose doctrinal principles were pronounced universal, led, in Islam as in Christian Europe, to the influential role played by ecclesiastics in government. Devotion to the study of Scripture and other religious materials (in Islam, prophetic tradition), the effort to make law accord with religious principles, the "sacralization" of the
language of Scripture, the language in which God has spoken, led to the harnessing of other disciplines, including the study of literature, to doctrinal ends; in this respect, the “Romanization” of early Christendom, with its base in Latinitas, found a parallel in the “Arabization” of the territories annexed by the early conquistadors, based on *Arabizah* (It should be noted parenthetically, however, that the achievements of Arabic secular literature during this period were unmatched by anything in contemporary Europe.) Both civilizations felt a pressing need to define principles of rulership and of secular administration, a need which led Europe to the model of Roman law, the Arabs to Iranian treatises on statecraft, and which was manifested in a proliferation of “mirrors for princes” in both societies. Yet, finally, embarked on vigorous movements of compilation and translation of ancient works which served a variety of needs, together with the production of florilegia, canonical collections of law, literary anthologies, and encyclopedic works of general knowledge.10

The initiative for this cultural dynamism came primarily, in both regions, from the rulers, although ecclesiastical support also furthered the growth of universities and other centers of learning, often in rivalry with the secular learning which flourished at court. With the dissipation, in the Islamic world, of caliphal authority, the increasing fragmentation of what had never, in any case, been a securely centralized or unified empire, the triumph of religious orthodoxy in Baghdad, and the rise of local princelydoms in the outlying regions, the center of cultural dynamism shifted eastwards, to Persia. There, intellectual development was characterized both by a continuity of scientific and philosophical activity in Arabic, and by the rise of neo-Persian vernacular literature; both were encouraged by local dynasties such as those of the Samanids in the north-East, the Ghurids in the East, and the Seljuks in the West of Iran.11

The traditional tendency to fragment Islamic history by dividing it along linguistic or ethnic lines has in general obscured the important aspects of continuity existing between diverse periods and in diverse regions. Scholars and poets alike migrated to those centers which provided patronage; and such centers witnessed the rise of Persian (and, later, of Turkish) as an important literary language, existing alongside Arabic while serving (on many occasions at least) different ends. The development of Persian may be compared to the rise of the vernaculars in Europe, which for a long while co-existed with Latin, the language of religion and scholarship. It is in Persia, in the 11th and 12th centuries, that a second period of cultural and literary florescence rivalling that of the High Caliphal occurs; and it is in this period that we observe the rise of the courtly verse romance, a genre known only to Persian and harking back to pre-Islamic Iranian sources. Examination of this genre reveals deep affinities not only in thought and outlook, but in matters of style as well, with its European counterpart; and it is a discussion of some of these affinities (as well as of some differences) that I now turn.

In *The Making of the Middle Ages* R. W. Southern, finding in the change from epic to romance an expression of more general cultural change, observes:

The contrast is not merely a literary one, though it is in literature that it can be most clearly seen. It is a reflection of a more general change of attitude which found expression in many different ways. Briefly, we find less talk of life as an exercise in endurance, and of death in a hopeless cause; and we hear more of life as a seeking and a journeying. Men begin to order their experience more consciously in accordance with a plan; they think of themselves less as stationary objects of attack by spiritual foes, and more as pilgrims and seekers (221–2).

Southern’s remarks ring true for Islamic Persian literature as well; for the rise of romance in Iran appears as the literary reflection of changing attitudes which (as in 12th-century Europe) may be seen to include an increased emphasis on the individual and on the importance of self-knowledge (in religion as well as in literature), along with a corresponding interest in personal relationships; an increasing number of occupational choices open to the individual, necessitating a discussion of conflicting codes of conduct; and the evolution of a philosophical conception of the universe and of nature as a whole, and of man as microcosmic embodiment of that larger order (a concept of much greater antiquity in Islam—due to its receptiveness to both Hellenistic and Iranian tradition—than in Christianity).12 Colin Morris has commented on the decline, in Europe, of reliance on traditional authority and a growing feeling that “it was necessary for men to take the initiative in solving problems for which they were given no real guidance in their texts” (58); it is this problem-solving effort which motivates the individual quests undertaken by the protagonists of romance, which, as it emerged in the courtly society of the High Middle Ages, “offered a literary form in which to work out the implications of individuality” (Hanning 3).

Eugene Vinaver contrasts romance, which demands that the reader ‘use his reasoning faculty . . . and cultivate the thematic mode . . . which is above all a questioning one’ (15) with epic, which he sees as being concerned more with action than with motives (11). The change from an emphasis on heroic, externalized values to more internalized ones—between a concept of man as driven by his fate and one of man as seeker of his own meaning and that of the world around him—occurs almost simultaneously in both East and West, in the mid-11th century, and reaches its peak at the same time in both (the late 12th century) with the courtly romances of Chrétien de Troyes and Nizāmī of
Ganjah. In the mid-11th century, what Peter Dronke has termed “the first medieval verse romance”, Ruodlieb, was composed by a Latin poet in southern Germany; but this “unique moment of poetic creation” (Poetic Individuality 33) was paralleled by the composition, around 1054, of the first major Persian verse romance, Vis u Rāmīn, written at the court of the Seljuk governor of Isfahan by Fakhr al-Dīn Gurgānī. Apart from their obvious differences, which arise chiefly from the domination of religious values in the Latin work and courtly in the Persian, the two poems show sufficient similarity—in their departure from the heroic ethos of epic and chanson de geste (of which both are, from their respective viewpoints, highly critical), in their emphasis on love, and in the efforts of both poets to convey a broad spectrum of human experience—to stand as milestones in their respective traditions, pointing forward to what is to come. They also share important stylistic features which become characteristic of later European and Persian romance alike: the use of dialogue and monologue to establish and individualize character and to present an array of varied perspectives, and the amplification of their symbolic narratives with both realistic and fantastic details which function to illuminate the deeper meaning of the action. Moreover, although Gurgānī’s romance is more markedly courtly than is Ruodlieb, it is no less morally oriented. The importance of such shared elements, especially in terms of the demands which they make upon the reader, offsets differences which are essentially regional rather than generic; while the nearly simultaneous appearance of the two works would seem to point beyond mere coincidence to the existence of close parallel tendencies in the development of medieval European and Islamic civilization.

In general, the emphasis in romance is on word rather than on deed, on the exploration, through discourse and dialogue, of complex moral issues. As Vinaver points out, the romance writer sees his task as the revelation of the meaning implicit in his material (usually a traditional source or sources which he adapts or reworks): “What a good romance writer is expected to do . . . is to reveal the meaning of the story . . . adding to it such embellishing thoughts as he considers appropriate . . . so as to raise his work to a level of distinction which no straightforward narration could ever reach” (17). This attitude, familiar among European writers of romance, is expressed by Gurgānī in his prologue to Vis u Rāmīn, his adaptation of a work of Parthian origin. Observing that its Pahlavi original is, in his own time, poorly understood, he adds that even those who can still read the tale do not understand its meaning—its ma‘na, or sense; but if an expert were to render it in a more elegant form, embellishing it with appropriate conceits, it would be seen to possess great significance.

When a work has meter and rhyme it is better when it is arranged haphazardly, particularly when

one may find therein good sentiments [ma‘wāni] which, when one reads them, will one day stand one in good stead. However dainty and sweet a tale may be, it becomes refurbished by meter and rhyme.

There should be numerous sentiments and expressions scattered here and there in the story, like a royal pearl set in gold, shining out from its midst like stars. Then the nobles and intelligentsia may read it to learn many sentiments from it, whilst the poulace and ordinary folk merely read it for the sake of the story. A discourse should be such that when it issues from the poet’s mouth it should travel the wide world, not merely stay at home, declaimed by none but its author!

Now those authorities of the past composed the tale of Vis and Rāmīn; they used all their arts to compose in Persian, for they were masters of Persian.

Thus they composed a story with strange expressions in it from every language. They took no pains over sentiments and proverbs, nor embellished it with these two. If a scholar were to apply himself to it, it would become pretty as a treasure full of gems; for this is a famous story, whose incidents contain numberless marvels. (18)

Gurgānī’s insistence that the function of style is to reveal meaning recalls, in turn, Chrétien’s bele conjugare, interpreted by Vinaver as “the art of composition in the etymological sense of the term” which transforms “a mere tale of adventure into a romance”, and “which only a learned man can practise properly” (37).

This “meaning” is, by and large, an ethical one. The ethical dimension of romance is emphasized by Chrétien’s Persian contemporary, Nizāmī, who, in the prologue to his masterpiece the Hafiz Paykar (Seven Beauties) praises discourse as “the treasure-keeper of the unknown” which “knows stories yet unheard and reads books yet unwritten,” and asserts its value as both record and exemplar of human conduct.

Look round: of all that God has made, what else, save discourse, does not fade?
Strive, from the worlds of mineral, plant, animal, and rational,
To learn what in creation lives
that to eternity survives?
He who his own self truly knows,
triumphant over this life goes.
Who knows not his design must die;
but who can read it, lives for aye.

(Haft Paykar 36-7)1

The purpose of discourse—of poetry—is, clearly, to provide man with knowledge
of his own nature and of his place in the cosmos; it is the progress towards
this self-knowledge (or the failure to attain it) which is a central concern of
Persian romance, as of Western.

The “marriage of matter and meaning, of narrative and commentary”
which Vinaver views as constituting the stylistic basis of romance is expressed
structurally in the alternation of narrative action with passages of monologue
or dialogue which stand in the relation of “interlinear commentary” to the
narrative text (23-8). The pattern established is as much a hallmark of Persian
romance as of European. Considering Fénicie’s “interior monologue” (as he
pondered the meaning of Cligès’s statement, on his departure for King Arthur’s
court, that he is “altogether hers”) as “one of the first on record”, Vinaver
observes that “Nothing like it is to be found in the literature of medieval
Europe before the middle of the twelfth century” (27). Something very like it,
however, is found in Vis u Ramin some hundred years earlier, for example in
the scene in which the hero debates “in her heart” whether to respond to Ramin’s
love (103). Christen’s characteristic technique of constructing his story so that
it “develops simultaneously on two levels: that of feeling and that of action,
one constantly motivating the other, even when by realistic standards no such
motivation is required” (Vinaver 26) is equally characteristic of Gurgian and
Nizami, and reaches a high point in the latter’s Khosrow u Shirin; it reflects,
not an interest in “character portrayal” or “psychological realism” in a modern
novelistic sense, but the desire to make the work structurally complete, to
interpret the action of the narrative and provide a commentary that will
illuminate the issues embodied in the actions of the characters.14

This brings us to the problem of the protagonist in romance; for while
writers on medieval European literature seen in the stylistic features mentioned
above an indication of a new interest in the individual, expressed through their
efforts to depict the “inner man”, we are assured by G. E. von Grunebaum that
medieval Islamic writers consciously avoided the presentation of “heroic”
figures in their works, primarily because their religion “feels that man, being
prone to vanity, self-adulation, and many another misconception of himself,
should restrain this temptation to pride and arrogance and shy away from
giving space in literature to the unobjectionable, the transitory—in short—to the
individual” (“The Hero” 87).15 This assumption is curiously at odds with

von Grunebaum’s own understanding of the definition of the hero (in the con-
text of the symposium to which his essay was addressed) as “the entity through
which the author as spokesman for himself or for the community conveys
whatever wisdom, warning, or propaganda he has made it his task to convey”
(85). It is, indeed, in this sense that the protagonist of romance functions; and
just as his acts and emotions are exemplary of conflicting attitudes and values
and of the ambiguities of the human condition, so he himself becomes an
exemplum of a human type, while at the same time embodying the conviction
that, in the last analysis, only the individual can come to terms with these
ambiguities through the acquisition of self-knowledge.

Moreover, the romance protagonist is frequently somewhat less than
“heroic” (to use the term in its epic sense). As Morton Bloomfield (in an essay
concluded to the same symposium as that of von Grunebaum) observes, “The
absence of a true charismatic hero who is valiant and noble is a characteristic
of most of the literature of the later Middle Ages in Western Europe” (33).
Pointing to the general suspicion of heroism in this period—a suspicion which
had its source (in part at least) in the distrust of worldly success which charac-
terized late medieval Christianity, and which “tended to downgrade earthly
fame and its accompanying heroism” (42) — Bloomfield discusses the diminu-
tion of heroism in romance through such devices as the presentation of mul-
tiple protagonists, the introduction of non-aristocratic heroes, and so on. The
combined fascination with and suspicion of earthly achievement described by
Bloomfield is shared by the writers of Persian romances (also inheritors of a
vigorous epic tradition), and their works are populated by a similar variety of
questionably “heroic” protagonists whose experiences reflect the complexities
of conflicting codes of ethics (public and private) and the questions which con-
front individuals whose journeys in search of resolutions to these conflicts may
end in success or in failure. Far from denying relevance to the individual, or feel-
ing embarrassment at his presentation in literature, Islamic writers (like their
European counterparts) focus on the interrelationships of individual characters
as a means of presenting the moral issues which confront the individual.

Colin Morris has emphasized the importance, in the romances of Christen,
of “the stress laid on the voluntary actions of the heroes,” which he relates to
“the central significance for Christen of the hero’s search for his true self”
(133-8). The knowledge which the romance hero seeks relates to the under-
standing of his own nature and of his place in the moral and natural universe;
this quest for knowledge itself carries with it the implication of human perfect-
ability, and thus an assumption of a measure of value inhering in the individu-
ual. At the basis of this assumption lies not merely the growing concern with
the nature of individuality, but that understanding of the relation between
man and nature which is expressed in the medieval notion of man as micro-
cosm, a notion closely associated with the analogical habit of thought common
to both the European and the Islamic traditions. Vinaver describes this mode
of thought, widespread in both theology and literature, as “based on the belief that the universe formed an ordered structure of such a kind that the pattern of the whole was reproduced in the pattern of the parts, and that differences from one category of phenomena to the other were therefore valid methods of approach for the understanding of either” (100) while Manzaliou calls attention to the continuity, throughout the Middle Ages, of the “belief . . . in correspondences’ between three entities, the individual man, or ‘microcosm’, the universe, or ‘macrocosm’, and the state, or ‘body politic’ (160). Nowhere is the system of cosmic correspondences more richly adumbrated than in the symbolism of Nizâmi’s Hafiz Pâykar; but in general it may be said that the protagonist of romance—the microcosm who carries within himself all the potentials of the macrocosmic universe—succeeds or fails in the understanding of the principles which link his being with those ordering the universe in which he exists in proportion as he succeeds or fails in his comprehension of the foremost of these ordering principles: that of love.

In both traditions, love is a fundamental issue, the common means through which other issues are made manifest. Over and above its personal dimension as “an alternative [for the romance protagonist] to an identity defined by forces outside himself” (Hanning 3) which most frequently produces a tension, if not an outright conflict, between private and public desires, it is perceived by medieval poets in its broader sense as that force which maintains harmony and order in the universe. Nizâmi’s lengthy praise of love, in his prologue to Khusraw u Shirîn, concludes with an affirmation of the conception of love:

All essences towards one another move; this movement the philosophers call Love.
If you but contemplate with Reason’s eye;
’tis Love maintains the world’s stability.
And if the heavens of Love devoid should be,
the earth would never find prosperity. (Khusraw u Shirîn 26)

For Persian ethical philosophers love is the greatest of natural virtues; its analogue, in human society, is justice. The interconnection of love and justice is a pervasive theme throughout Persian romance; the practice of the latter is contingent upon knowledge of the former. Thus, for example, the adulterous lovers Vis and Râmîn—in marked contrast to their European counterparts, Íseit and Tristan—ultimately triumph, accede to the throne, and enjoy a long and prosperous reign; through arriving at true self-knowledge through the experience of love, they are able to transfer, as it were, the ethical burden of this knowledge to the larger context of government. Conversely, the king Mawbad, Vis’s aging husband, who cannot distinguish love from concupiscence and whose actions become increasingly unjust (to the point that he loses the support of both populace and nobles), proves himself unfit for kingship, and is symbolically gored to death by a wild boar on the morn that he is to do battle with Râmîn for Vis and the kingdom. Similarly, in Khusraw u Shirîn (which is described by Nizâmi as a “tale of passion”, havoviwânhi, rather than a “love story” (Khusraw u Shirîn 24)), the king’s obsessive love for Shirîn shows itself to be primarily the desire for physical possession, while his vacillation in delaying marriage to her (while denying himself none of the pleasures of other women) reflects his vacillation as a ruler; thus Khusraw’s failure as a lover both figures and anticipates his ultimate failure as a king, and his final tragic end. Legitimacy and the qualifications of the ideal ruler were topics discussed throughout the medieval world; their somewhat contrasting treatment in Persian and European romance (by means of the theme of love) may reflect broader contrasts along the lines of what Hodgson has described as the distinction between the “contractualistic” pattern of determining legitimacy in social organization” characteristic of medieval Islam as compared to Occidental “corporativism”, where “for every office there was one predetermined ‘legitimate’ holder and any other was ‘illegitimate’ . . . no matter how long and how firmly he had been established” (2:338, 342 ff.) In Tristan, while Mark’s moral character may be questioned (as well as the values of the courtly society he represents), his legitimacy is not; whereas Mawbad can be challenged and deposed because of his unjust conduct. Nizâmi’s Hafiz Pâykar—which constitutes (on one level at least) an allegorical “mirror for princes”—depicts the progress of the prince, Bahram, who, in the course of establishing the legitimacy of his claim to kingship on both material and moral grounds, passes through a variety of tests to arrive finally at an understanding of the true nature of justice, embodied in the principle of rule by law rather than by will. Throughout this progress, he is guided by the illuminating power of love, embodied in a variety of figures (chiefly female) whom he encounters on the course of this spiritual journey.

The destructive potential of human love and the need to achieve equilibrium between its claims and other obligations (which often seem to be an impossible task) is another issue addressed by both European and Persian writers of romance. Mark, Mawbad, Khusraw—all of whom equate love with possession—are capable of acts of injustice towards those they love; and this capacity for injustice is translated to the larger social sphere, as it is also in the case of Râmîn and of Bahram before they have learned the true nature of love. The anti-social aspect of obsessive love suggested in the Tristan romances is treated by both Íseit and Nizâmi: in Èrec, for example, Èrec’s absorption in the delights of marriage creates an imbalance between private and public duties which must be redressed; while in Nizâmi’s Layîl u Majnûn, Majnûn’s obsessive love for his cousin Layîl becomes an end in itself, leading to his madness and to the death or destruction of most of the tale’s principals. Majnûn, like Tristan, fails to achieve a balance; and the reuniting of the lovers in Paradise
following their death does not validate this obsessive love any more than the interlacing trees in the Tristan-Béroul: both point to the problematic nature of the moral conflict involved, for the love which can only thrive by turning its back on society is doomed to failure.

The development of romance in Persia and the West at roughly the same period in history provides a useful model for the examination of parallels between the two cultures. No doubt other models as well—literary and nonliterary—might be found to provide further support for the view that, far from being rigidly divided along geographical, political, or religious lines, the "medieval world" extended over a broad area and encompassed a variety of peoples who shared many attitudes and preconceptions which they chose to express in strikingly similar ways. A discussion of later events, in the 13th century and after, which caused the Islamic and Christian traditions to grow in different and divergent directions is clearly beyond the scope of this brief essay; as is another topic which I have deliberately avoided here, that of specific contacts between the two traditions. With apologies for the obvious oversimplifications involved—with respect to which I invoke Kristeller's observation that "the very attempt to compare large periods and broad traditions will force us to emphasize the general patterns that characterize them in their entirety" I hope to have shown that the construct of "medieval man" must be based on a wider sampling than historians and literary scholars of East or West have generally been willing to allow, and that he is found in a variety of cultures, comparison between which can only enrich our understanding of the dynamics of medieval culture as a whole.

NOTES

1. The present essay is a slightly amplified version of a paper originally delivered at the joint Meeting of the Medieval Academy of America/Medieval Association of the Pacific, University of California, Berkeley, April 1983.

2. Daniel's observation might well be extended to include the entire period between the 8th and 15th centuries while Rehder's statement that "The European poetry from Petrarch (1304-1374) to Waller (1608-1687) is that which is closest to the poetry of Hafiz [a Persian lyric poet of the 14th century] and perhaps the most interesting to compare with it" (98) similarly needs to be extended backwards to encompass medieval European poetry from the 12th century onwards. Correspondingly, I see little value (given the current state of the art) in comparing Hafiz with Mallarmé (cf. Rehder 97-99), or Nizami with Goethe (as done by H. Ritter), until the essentially medieval character of the Persian poets' style has been recognized and elucidated.

3. For a discussion of such views in Western and Eastern historiography, see Sullivan, "The Middle Ages," especially 6-8, and Hodgson 1:34-9, 2:329 ff; cf. also Daniel 2-3, and Sullivan, "What Were the Middle Ages" 88-94. Goethe defines "the medieval civilization of the Middle East" as intermediate, "because it is intermediate in time between Hellenism and Renaissance, intermediate in character between the largely secular culture of the later Roman period and the thoroughly clerical world of Medieval Europe, and intermediate in space between Europe and Africa on the one hand, and India and China on the other hand, thus forming, for the first time in history, a strong cultural link between all parts of the ancient world" (59-60); while Hodgson observes: "The peculiar notion of some modern Western writers, that before the sixteenth century other societies, such as the Islamicate, were 'isolated' and were brought into the 'mainstream' of history only by such events as the Portuguese invasion of the Indian Ocean, is of course ridiculous: if there was a 'mainstream', it was the Portuguese who were coming into it, not the Muslims; the Muslims were already there" (2:331).

4. On regional differences in medieval Europe and the plurality of traditions, see Kristeller 86-7, 107-10.

5. For the view that Islam was more receptive to the Hellenistic heritage (which was transmitted by way of Iran as well as from the West) than were the Germanic peoples of Europe, see Goitein 60-67. Useful (though greatly oversimplified) charts of parallel developments East and West may be found in Farmer; see also the abundant charts in Hodgson.

6. For a discussion of some of the causes of this difference (particularly with respect to literature and science) see Goitein 55 ff; cf. also Daniel 20-22.

7. Cf. Ullmann 16-17 et passim, and the valuable discussion of the political role of the caliphs under the Abbassids by Cahen. Cahen's comparison of Christian and Muslim ecclesiologies is of particular relevance; he observes, "It is customary stated that there is no Muslim clergy, no Muslim church. In point of dogma that is a matter of course, since Islam knows no sacrament which would by its nature confer upon those who receive it more light than upon other men to guide them toward Truth and Salvation. But socially this makes little difference if there exist nonetheless men who have won spiritually and materially the power of a church . . . concretely every demand for an Islamization of institutions implied the claim of further influence for the caliphate" (177-8).

8. See Ullmann 45-6, and Fück 1-2 et passim; cf. also Goitein 64 ff.

9. Cf. Ullmann 26; on the Islamic tradition of mirror literature and its sources, see Lambton, especially 419-20, and Manzalaoû, passim.


11. See the discussions of Arabic and early Persian literature in Iran by Danner and Lazard. There was, as well, a corresponding shift Westwards to the Islamic Maghrib (Spain and North Africa); the development of Arabic-based literary and intellectual activity in this region is, however, beyond the scope of this essay. Hodgson 2:293-328 discusses literary and scholarly activity in Persia and the Islamic West; his literary judgments, however, should be viewed with caution.

12. For a general discussion of such changing attitudes, see Southern, Morris, and Chenu; on romance, see Hanning, especially 1-16. On theories of macrocosm and microcosm, see Chenu, especially 29-33, and Conger; see also Nast 96-104, and Manzalaoû 160.

13. Dronke's emphasis on the uniqueness of Roudâbâh is somewhat surprising in view of his earlier characterization of Vê us Râmân (with which he became acquainted through the French translation of Henri Massé and Sir Oliver Wardrop's English rendering of the German version, the Vīramând) as "the fullest articulation of amour courtois in the Islamic world of which we know" (Medieval Latin 1:22; see 1:21-6 for Dronke's discussion of the poem). On Vê us Râmân and parallels with European romance, see also Gallais. Earlier Persian romances (such as Ayyubi's Vâreb u Gâshâb, composed at the Ghaznavid court around 1020) are closer to the epic in both their style and their emphasis on heroic prowess.

14. The ethical import of Vê us Râmân, and particularly the interrelationship between love and justice which is a central theme of the poem, is discussed more fully in my

15. All translations from the works of Nizāmī cited in this paper are my own. The ethical significance of the Haft Paykar (and of Nizāmī’s romances in general) has traditionally been underestimated, and the courtly context downplayed; Hodgson’s comments (230-232) reflect the prevailing opinion of scholars such as Ritter and Rypka, see the discussion of the Haft Paykar in my forthcoming essay “Allegorical Gardens in the Persian Poetic Tradition: Nizāmī, Ṣūrūn, Ḥāfeẓ,” International Journal of Middle East Studies 17 (1985) 229-60.

16. In my consideration of “character” in romance I attempt to steer a middle course between Vinaver, who implies (30-32) that the characters exist solely as vehicles for larger issues, and Hanning, whose emphasis on the “central role of the individual” might lead the unwary to interpret such a concern for “individualism” in a modern sense. In fact, there appears to be a wide range of permissible variation with respect to the degree of abstraction or individualization with which romance characters are treated; all, however, reflect the typically medieval concern to express “the balance between . . . the universal and the particular” (Allen 8).

17. Although von Grunebaum’s essay deals specifically with Arabic prose, he himself takes pains to stress the general applicability of his remarks to medieval Islamic literature as a whole. Moreover, he deliberately excludes from his considerations those prose works which would appear most relevant to a discussion of protagonists (if not of heroes) whose adventures are both exemplary and associated with the acquisition of self-knowledge—the popular epic (sirāḥ) in prose, the romance prose maqāmah or picaresque novella, and works such as the 1001 Nights—on the basis of their genre or their “debased” language (84-6); thus it is scarcely surprising that he is left with little material to work with.

18. On analogy in general, see especially Chenu, passim. Analogy as an organizing principle in literature is discussed extensively by Allen, who observes, “In the largest sense, analogical thinking simply presupposes that full explanation of any given subject is accomplished in terms of an ordered array of parallel narratives and figures and propositions, each resonating in terms of all the others, and all properly dealt with and analyzed by a conscious elaboration of one-to-one parallels” (73). Allen’s statement might well serve as a definition of romance structure. Analogy is the basis for the so-called “decorative” imagery of Nizāmī, for example, his likeness of Khurram u Shīrīn, of Khurram to the sun and Shīrīn to the moon (an emblem not only of beauty but of both physical and spiritual illumination), or in Laylī u Majnūn of the mad lover Majnūn (whose obsessive love is sterile) to a desert and Laylī to a garden whose beauty and potential fertility are ultimately blighted by that love, are not examples of evocations of “mood” or of the “pathetic fallacy” (cf. Ritter, passim), but represent the poet’s insistence on the reality of the correspondences perceived between macrocosm (nature) and microcosm (individual man).

19. This relationship is perhaps best articulated by Nasīr al-Dīn Tūsī: “Men need each other . . . and the perfection and completion of each one lies with other individuals of his species. Moreover, necessity demands a request for aid, for no individual can reach perfection in isolation . . . . This being so, there is an inescapable need for a synthesis, which will render all individuals, co-operating together, comparable to the organs of one individual. Again, since Man has been created with a natural direction towards perfection, he has a natural yearning for the synthesis in question. This yearning for the synthesis is called Love. We have already alluded to the preference (that may be shown) to Love above Justice. The reason for this is that Justice requires artificial union, whereas Love requires natural union. . . . Thus, it is obvious that the need for Justice (which is the most perfect of human virtues) in preserving the order of the species, arises from the loss of Love; for if Love were to cease to be between individuals, there would be no necessity for equity and impartiality” (1965-6). The characteristic preoccupation with justice (in contrast to the interest in the relationship of love and prowess) seen in Persian romance may reflect what Hodgson identifies as an important contrast between the Christian and Islamic traditions: the former is characterized, as he sees it, by “the demand for personal responsiveness to redemptive love in a corrupt world,” the latter by “the demand for personal responsibility for the moral ordering of the natural world” (2:337).

20. On the importance of the 13th century for European history, see Sullivan, “The Middle Ages,” 13 ff. The problem of comparison between the European and Islamic cultures at various periods in time is discussed extensively by Hodgson, passim, especially 2329-85.

21. While it is clear that abundant contacts existed between the diverse traditions of the medieval world, the demonstration of specific and documentable influences is a well-nigh impossible, and probably fruitless, task. As G. E. von Grunebaum has observed (in a somewhat different context), “In postulating Eastern influences to account for a phenomenon of Western culture in the [medieval] period . . . it is frequently not sufficiently thought out what it means that, to a very large extent, medieval Orient and medieval Occident arose from the same roots . . . The interaction between East and West in the Middle Ages will never be correctly diagnosed or correctly assessed and appraised unless their fundamental cultural unity is realized and taken into consideration” (“Avicenna’s Risāla” 238). Given their common heritage and their shared preoccupations, it is scarcely surprising to see similarities and parallels in literature and thought between the medieval East and West.

WORKS CITED


Deception and Distance in Béroul's

_J Tristan:_ a Reconsideration

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Some years ago, I suggested that the irony and the pervasive equivocations that characterize the text of Béroul's _Tristan_ have the effect of precluding, on the narrator's part, an implicit ethical endorsement of the characters. Although that is still my view, I went on, perhaps too incautiously, to question Béroul's narrative reliability. Considering the importance of such matters for our understanding of Béroul's art, it is not inappropriate to reconsider this problem. In fact, I think it reasonable now to begin with the assertion that, although his work is full of ambiguities, ironies, and tricks, Béroul's narrator never deceives his readers. The reliability of signs and persons within his work—but not that of the narrator himself—is open to question. We may not be able to trust his characters, but we can trust him. If the definition of narrative postures in the _Tristan_ is more difficult than it may appear at first reading, one explanation is that the irony located within the narrative is strong enough to contaminate our perception of the narration. A re-examination of the subject will require a discussion of both theme and technique, of distance created within the text and of distance—or the lack of it—separating the narrator from his text and reader.

As a point of departure, we may profitably choose the subject of deceit, which serves Béroul both as a major theme and as a structuring device, and which also provides a prime source of irony within the romance. Of course, to say that Béroul's _Tristan_ is based on the notion of deception is to say nothing that is not patently obvious. The lovers' success in conducting an adulterous relationship obviously depends on their success in concealing it from Mark and in convincing him that his periodic suspicions are without foundation; for them, it is a practical necessity.

However, the theme of deception goes much further than the motivation imposed on Tristan and Isolde by their love and their relationship to Mark. First of all, they clearly take an almost malicious pleasure in deceit for its own
sake—a point to which I shall return. Second, and more important, the very world of this romance is constructed around the illusory nature of signs, that is, of appearances and phenomena. In Béroul, phenomena are illusion, and there is a systematic dislocation of result from preparation, of reality from appearance. Through all this, the narrator manages to bring us into complicity with him and cause us to view the story—but not its teller—with detachment and skepticism. He creates distance, but is not the kind of distance that should make us question him; it is rather a method by which Béroul brings into sharper focus the elaborate web of deception woven by his characters.

If Tristan and Isolde find it necessary to mislead Mark and take considerable pleasure in doing so in a most playful manner, they are also exceedingly resourceful in finding the most effective way to do so. Specifically, while they often deceive him, they apparently savor the particular irony of doing it without actually lying to him. Instead, they manipulate events in such a way that truth constitutes exculpation, in such a way that truth functions as falsehood.

When Mark is hiding in the tree, Isolde can say, quite truthfully, that she has never loved anyone except the man who had her virginity (vs. 20-25). 1 The statement is correct, but its referent is ambiguous. Mark, as a result, is touched by her apparent fidelity to him and conscience-stricken by his doubts. Later, in the masterly scene of Isolde’s judgment, much the same thing happens, as she can swear, again truthfully, that only Mark and the leprous beggar who carried her across the ford (and who is of course Tristan in disguise) have ever been between her legs (vs. 4195-4216). In that section, she repeatedly emphasizes the beggar more than Mark, in a sort of inside joke she shares with the reader, and also an illustration of her desire to play this game to the hilt. All this licentious playfulness (which seems to include various sexual innuendoes; see vs. 3961 ff.) is matched fully by Tristan’s, When, in chatting with Mark, he points out that he, Tristan, has been an outcast for three years and that he caught his leprosy from a lady whose beauty was comparable to Isolde’s and whose husband was a leper. In this short scene, Tristan manages to refer obliquely to his love for Isolde (a disease that has indeed removed him from society for three years) and to insult Mark without Mark’s realizing it.

In these episodes, as I suggested, the referent is ambiguous (that is, the signs are indeterminate, at least to the characters in question), although in the case of the equivocal oath, the lovers have to manipulate the events in such a way as to create that ambiguity. When Tristan invents the story of his mistress and her leper husband, the referent is clearly Mark himself, but Mark (no more perceptive than usual) misses the point. Mark’s problems are of his own making, for he clearly wants to see things a particular way, whether because of love for both Isolde and Tristan, or for the sake of social and political stability, or from simple vanity. The importance of Mark for our reading of the work is considerable. He is often the narrator’s “reflector” (the character through whose eyes and mind events are filtered), and yet he is in many instances the only character who does not see the truth. This situation—a center of consciousness who consistently lacks lucidity—is remarkable, and Béroul exploits it fully. Once the King’s frame of reference is based on the erroneous interpretation of signs, then the lovers have only to provide him with an opportunity. Either ambiguity or simple prevarication will allow him to interpret events and signs according to his preferences; and his conclusions are rarely correct.

In the forest, phenomena are consistently misinterpreted. Mark, even more gullible here than usual, is easily convinced of the lovers’ innocence when he finds them sleeping, separated only by the ultimate Freudian symbol, a naked sword (see my “Irony and Distance,” p. 24). The king chooses to see the sword as a sign of innocence rather than a symbol of guilt. Significantly, when he leaves his own sword, glove, and ring with them to indicate his trust, they immediately interpret it as a sign of his doubt and anger; apparently they, no less than Mark, can be deceived without great difficulty; they too are given to misinterpretation.

One of the crucial episodes (for the lovers’ future and for our interpretation) involves the waning of the love potion. Critics traditionally suggest that in Thomas, the potion is a symbol of a nascent love, whereas in Béroul’s version primitive it is the literal cause. In addition, we know that it has a specific time limit; when that limit passes and Béroul announces its expiration to us, the power of the potion wanes, and the lovers suddenly see matters in a new light. But in fact, the waning of the spell’s power does not work as we might expect, for they clearly do not stop loving each other. Unless we are wary here, we are likely to be the ones deceived in this episode, because the author tells us that Tristan se repent (vs. 2160). Moreover, there is undesirably a change in the direction of the narrative, but it is hardly the one we may anticipate. The waning of the potion brings the couple some insight and regret, but it does not end their love. In fact, not only do they continue to love each other, but they do not even regret their love, only its unfortunate physical, social, political, and (especially) economic affects (see vs. 2161 ff.).

1) If Tristan and Isolde continue to love each other, they at least find in the potion a reason for that love. As Mark has misconstrued the meaning of a symbol (the sword), they also take the symbol of their love (the potion) to be its cause. It is instead an alibi for their love, an explanation which they can provide to themselves and the readers (many of whom have accepted it), but clearly, it is not the cause, since the waning of its power does not end their love. Béroul does not misinterpret events and mislead the reader—but the lovers do, whether intentionally or not. Instead of lying to us, the narrator very explicitly tells the truth; we must simply be very careful readers. The potion’s waning produces decided changes, but one of them is not the disappearance of their love.

In certain episodes, even those not specifically constructed on deceptions, there is nonetheless a narrative dislocation of some sort, in which a narrative
preparation either produces an unexpected result or produces an expected result in an unanticipated fashion. This is a kind of sub-system related to the misinterpretation of lies as truth, of one truth as another, of symbolism as its opposite.

In one scene, that of the flour spread on the floor by Frocin (vss. 643 ff.), no doubt, no misreading of signs, is possible, even by Mark. The lovers' sin is entirely obvious here, and even they make no effort to deny it. Yet the trap set by the dwarf is only indirectly or accidentally their undoing; Tristan evades the trap by (literally) jumping into Isolde's bed, hereby leaving no footprints. Had the episode ended there, the flour would have served as evidence of innocence rather than guilt. It is instead the blood from his wound that gives them away, as it drips both on the bed and into the flour. The dwarf's intent is accomplished, but not by the means he intends: the narrative direction of the episode is deflected from its anticipated trajectory, and the irony of their being caught while actually evading the trap set for them is no less striking than their success, in other episodes, in escaping detection entirely.

Related episodes occur elsewhere. There is, for example, the scene in which the hateful dwarf is finally killed by Mark, but not for the reasons we might expect. Frocin's resentment of Tristan might serve as adequate motivation for Mark, when the latter wishes to believe only the best of his wife and nephew. Yet, the killing is motivated otherwise: the King learns that Frocin has revealed the fact that he (Mark) has orelles de cheval (vs. 1334). The King's rather strange trait, untold until now, is unrelated to the rest of the story, and it is of no narrative consequence. Moreover, Mark appears not even to be shamed by the revelation. When he learns of it, he laughs, kills the dwarf without preamble (vs. 1347), and immediately forgets the incident.

A natural corollary of this illusory universe is a certain flexibility and suppleness (at times inconsistency) of narrative method. In this regard, Béroul is systematically unsystematic. Not only does his method exclude his reader from his targets for deceit, but it may often call for him to have us prepared far better than his characters. He often takes his reader into his confidence, and even here his technique is extraordinarily supple. Either logic or the narrative direction of the work may seem to point toward particular developments, and then something else—often the opposite—happens. Sometimes, however, an ostensible deception is shown to be no deception at all, but rather a method used by Béroul to inform and prepare his reader for the truth. Before Tristan leaps from the chapel, Béroul comments, with a verbal "wink" at his reader, that no one could survive such a jump (see vss. 921-24). He announces this impossibility with an obvious irony that is fully as informative (in convincing us of the opposite) as would have been a direct statement. By assuring us that Tristan will not jump, he informs us that he will.

In many instances, the narrator announces events in advance, but in the flour scene he waits to tell about the wound (vs. 3585) until that information is needed. As a result, what appears momentarily to be success for Tristan turns out to be failure (though, again, not for the reasons the dwarf anticipated). But Béroul is not misleading us; he is simply reordering narrative to enhance its effect, and that is far from unreliability. Similarly, when the love potion's power wanes, he does not deceive us; he simply withholds information about the survival of their love until the unfolding of the story reveals it to us. A further example of this technique is given in the preparation for the equivocal oath; Isolde sends specific instructions to Tristan, and we know where he is to go and how he is to be attired. But the specific means by which they will save Isolde are not divulged: we must wait for the dramatizing of those events to learn just what has been planned (see vss. 3284 ff.).

Despite the ambiguity of words and relationships in Béroul's literary world, the narrator himself is remarkably unambiguous. Often, the authorial shaping of our response is quite open. The narrator is rarely hesitant simply to announce the "truth": he characterizes Brangien as a "tricheresse" (vs. 519), he condemns the dwarf's stupidity (1309), he expresses fear for the lovers and condemns those who are opposed to them, he frequently announces what is to happen later (see vs. 1310), and he speculates about the result if situations had been different (e.g., 1808-09: if Isolde had been naked, disaster would have befallen them), etc. In some of these cases, Béroul intervenes to comment in his own narrative voice; at other times, it is not a direct intervention, but rather a matter-of-fact, impersonal piece of information. The latter is of course a very effective method of authorial commentary, precisely because it does not require overt intrusion.

In this regard, the "fépons" (the lovers' enemies at court) provide an excellent illustration of Béroul's technique. He creates, indeed posits, a universe where, despite their truthfulness, the "fépons" are "fépons" for no reason other than that the narrator says so, and where Tristan and Isolde are to be admired as well as pitied, simply because the narrator would have it so. This is not irony or unreliable narration: there is no revealing disparity between textual presuppositions and narrative presentation. Béroul neither expressly misleads us nor compromises his narrator's reliability. We may—indeed, must—have serious reservations about Tristan and Isolde's narrative reliability and even about Mark's, but not about Béroul's relationship with his reader. The "fépons," who are judged according to their motives rather than their actions, are condemned for telling the truth; Tristan and Isolde consistently lie, cheat, deceive, and relish it all, and they enjoy the narrator's favor. Béroul's method (which creates thoroughly unreliable and devious characters who nonetheless manage to elicit the sympathy of most readers) understandably poses certain interpretive difficulties.

Under the circumstances, reader response to this work—by either medieval or modern readers—is likely to be very complex, personal, and inconsistent. In fact, the complexity of that response is related not to an ambiguous presentation...
of story by Béroul, nor even to a work which is ethically ambiguous, but rather to a situation where an apparent ethical ambiguity may disguise the fact that the ethical dimensions of the text, while contrary to traditional morality, are quite explicit and absolute. Tristan and Isolde are right, the “félon”s are wrong, and the method by which both those facts are established is simple authorial fiat.

There is a considerable difference between a narrator who intervenes on occasion to comment on his characters (informing us, for example, that those who tell the truth are evil) and one who constructs a fictional universe where, regardless of their actions, their evil is simply posited, as one of the given s of the work. In the former instance, we are likely to question the narrator’s reliability, for there is a (potential) conflict between the ethos of the work and narrative views. But when the narrator’s views are simply stipulated, as part of the fabric of the work, his presentation can be entirely consistent with the text’s ethos, even though the latter may well run counter to our own beliefs (or to those of the time and society in which it was written). And in that instance, readers who reject the narrator’s view are rejecting the most basic premises of the work itself; this may be a natural and human reaction (if we disapprove of sympathy for sinners), but it is not a literary one, deriving from and determined by the text.

A potential problem for Béroul’s reader, thus, is a confusion between ambiguity or irony that is a narrative property of the work and that which is part of a narrative method. Béroul is almost a textbook case in the consideration of such problems, all the more because of his humor and the Stone called the “fabliau” atmosphere that reigns within this romance about adultery and treason.

There is no lack of distance in the work, but it needs to be defined with care. Distance can exist on either side of a text; that is, between narrator and text or between text and reader. In Béroul’s Tristan, it is the latter: irony, which arises (as Booth reminds us) out of “any grotesque disparity between word and word or word and deed,” abounds within this text, and the resultant distance may well combat, to a degree, reader identification with the characters. On the other side of the text, however, there is no corresponding distance. The narrator expresses his sympathy with his hero and heroine, he condemns their enemies, and I find no reason to challenge either posture.

Problems of interpretation occur if we do not distinguish clearly enough between author (or, as Booth and others would have it, “implied author”) and narrator. This is a distinction that is always theoretically present, but in many texts the practical consequences of it are minimal. With Béroul, it is essential. We may assume (or not) that the historical Béroul would not condone the contravening of morality and feudal relationships, but his narrator clearly does, and he does it, moreover, not merely by intervening periodically to state his endorsement of his heroes’ behavior, but by constructing a literary universe in which the approval of that behavior is implicit, consistent, and not open to question.

These matters are neither simple nor inconsequential, for they raise serious problems concerning ethical criticism and narrative voice (specifically, the separation of authorial and narratorial views). What Béroul, a twelfth-century writer (or writers) may have thought of Tristan and Isolde, we cannot know. What his narrator thinks, on the other hand, is quite apparent. He offers an unambiguous endorsement of their actions, and the reader who disagrees and finds Béroul unreliable may well be substituting his own presuppositions for those of the narrator.

NOTES

1. Specifically, I wrote: “If the author and reader are completely sympathetic to Tristan and Isolde—that is, if we accept Béroul as a reliable narrator, as one who intends to be taken seriously—then we must reconcile the presentation of their behavior with the ethical tenets of the period.” See my “Irony and Distance in Béroul’s Tristan,” PR, 45, Special Issue, No. 3 (Fall, 1971), 26.

2. All references to Béroul’s work are given parenthetically in my text and are taken from Béroul, Le Roman de Tristan, ed. Ernest Muret (Paris: Champion, 1962).

3. Although it is my contention that the phenomena discussed in this essay are part of Béroul’s design, it is clear that the audience’s role goes beyond a perception of those phenomena to an active participation in them; accordingly, one might profitably treat the questions of deception and distance from the point of view of reader-response criticism, to examine what Iser calls “the realization accomplished by the reader.” See Wolfgang Iser, The Implied Reader: Patterns in Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1974), p. 274.

4. The character of the work is perceptively described by Stone as “... the very real world of fabliau psychology where nurse, disguise, and overt pleasure in vengeance are the fundamental elements of the action.” See “Realism and the Real Béroul,” L’Esprit Créateur, 5, No. 4 (Winter 1965), 227.

The Fiction of the “Livre”
in Robert de Boron’s Merlin*

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Robert de Boron, thought to have been responsible for changing Chrétien’s grail into a Christian relic and his tale of Perceval into a cycle, was also an innovator when it came to the convention of the bookish source for his story. Marie de France and Chrétien both were careful to supply their poems with some kind of external authority, which was often book-like, if not in fact always a written text. Chrétien twice refers to actual books; Marie de France’s sources were presumably all oral, but she treats them as though they were written, that is, deserving the same treatment as the venerable texts of antiquity. Robert, however, goes far beyond simply justifying his story by reference to an external, bookish authority; he actually brings his source within the fiction itself, and shows it being created. Other writers of Arthurian romance will take up this same device.1

Curiously, though the device may have been intended to reinforce the credibility of the story by actually showing us how its source came to be, it has in fact a rather different effect. Before, the source authenticated the romance; now the romance tries to prove the reliability of the source, with a resulting loss of credibility for both sides. However that may be, in Robert’s stories the “book” has taken on a new importance. No longer a mere source book, from which the romancer draws only what he finds interesting or useful, and which he is free to elaborate upon, to rearrange, even to alter as he sees fit, Robert’s bookish authority is hardly to be distinguished from the account based upon it; the livre-source is as it were coterminous with its modern derivative. Given this near identity of story and source, one might well imagine that the fictional book behind Robert’s history of the Grail is a key to understanding the literary project as a whole.

In outline, that project is clear enough (however obscure it is in some of its details). At some point (not necessarily at the outset), Robert apparently decided to create a three-part work, the culmination of which was to be a remanement of Chrétien’s story of Perceval. This conclusion he may or may not have
written; but he did compose the first two members of the cycle. Both can be understood as attempts to explain two of the most baffling mysteries of the Grail problem. The first "branch," the Roman de l'estoire dou Graal or the Joseph d'Arthurie, leaves no question that the Grail, dubiously Christian in the earlier romance, is a relic of the Passion, indeed the greatest relic of them all. The second branch, the Merlin, goes a long way toward clarifying how the Grail found its way to Britain and what its relationship is to the knighthood world of Arthur's court. In Chrétien's romance, Grail and Arthur belonged to two separate spheres, with only Perceval passing back and forth between them. In Robert's scheme, the two seem much more closely related; they are both parts of a single divine plan, and both look forward to their consummation in a knighthood figure who will also be a guardian of the Grail.

In thus "explaining" the Conte du Graal, of course, Robert transforms the tale utterly. He has placed in the foreground what in Chrétien's romance was background at best; he has brought in materials quite foreign to Chrétien's work. He has increased the scope of the tale, combining within a single narrative scheme widely varying times and places (the early Christian East, the Arthurian West) and seemingly contrary literary categories (chronicle and romance, Christian legend and Celtic). What had been a single tale has become something more like a world history. And this history, moreover, comprehensive and various though it is, has a very clear orientation (another difference from Chrétien). From the first, everything points towards an accomplishment that will take place near the end of the entire story.

Both the unity of the cycle and its forward momentum depend to a very large degree on what would have been the middle branch of the completed trilogy, the Merlin. This second romance recounts the founding of Arthur's kingdom and the stages that led up to it; recalled the origins of the Grail and explains how the Grail community has been transplanted from the East to Britain, where it exists in hiding; makes clear the unity of both through the device of the Three Tables (The Table of the Last Supper, the Table of the Grail, and the Round Table); and looks forward to the future accomplishment of both the Grail community and the Arthurian society in a single figure. To say that the Merlin unifies and gives direction to the whole is to say that the seer Merlin does so; never before has hero and story been more completely one. Merlin unites in his own person the opposites that are contained within the cycle as a whole. He knows all, or nearly all, about the Grail, yet he belongs fully to the Arthurian world; he is an instrument of God, but he operates in and on the secular world, and in his origins he is demonic. His mind embraces the entire cycle, for he knows both past and present (by his demonic heritage) and future (by divine gift). But he does not simply know the future; he prepares for it by disposing the present in view of it. Very little happens, after his arrival in Britain, that he does not initiate; and nothing takes place to which he does not give a meaning by orienting it towards the future.

The forward orientation of the cycle is of course already implicit in the Joseph. There we learn the Grail will have three guardians: first Joseph, then his brother-in-law Bron, and finally, at some unspecified time in the future, the as-yet unborn offspring of Bron's son, Allein; we also learn that this ultimate guardian will fill the empty seat at the Grail Table, image of the one at the table of the Last Supper deserted by Judas. Likewise at the end of this romance Joseph's Grail community is swept by an irresistible westward impulse: individuals and groups, and lastly the Grail itself, pass into the West, to await there the tiers hom whose coming has been prophesied. However, although concern for the future does make itself felt in the Joseph, it does so mainly in the conclusion of the romance; in the Merlin, in contrast, it is everywhere and involves everything. Neither the prophet himself, nor any other character, event, or achievement described in the story, is significant simply in itself, that is, simply in its present existence; everything is there to prepare for the next stage.

It is difficult not to think of this future-oriented history as evolutionary: what comes first serves what comes after, and what comes after is inevitably bigger and better. From the relatively small scale of its early-Christian beginnings, the story opens out into the West, into Christendom, into the ideal knighthood society represented by Arthur's kingdom. The completed cycle would thus have been a pseudo-historical glorification of chivalry, because not only Merlin's strivings, but also the more distant apostolic marvels of the story of Joseph, are all in preparation for the heyday of the Round Table. That earliest, religious phase, like everything that comes after it, would have existed in function of the final, fully developed phase of Arthurian splendor. To be sure, the religion is higher than the secular, whatever order it comes in; but the society of Arthur is not entirely secular. It is divinely willed, and those who work to establish and to further it have God's special blessing. That kingdom, or rather its flowering in the prodromes united at the Round Table, will in turn reach its summit in a knight greater than all the rest, who will include the guardianship of the Grail among his honors, as though to make clear the religious significance of the Arthurian chivalric enterprise.

Such a view of the cycle underscores even more strongly the central role Merlin plays, for it is he who brings the story into its Arthurian phase. Without Merlin, there could be no Arthur, and no consummation of chivalry. Not simply a bridge in a passive way, Merlin is rather the driving force (under God) that assures that the entire history reaches its goal. In one other way as well he serves the story: he makes sure it gets recorded. He not only orchestrates what happens; he has written down by the priest Blaise, his mother's confessor that he has drafted into his service. He is thus the "source" for his own story in two different senses, as its prime mover and as its "authority." Further, just as Merlin's awareness and even in a sense his activity seem to extend outward to embrace the entire cycle, so does this book he dictates appear to contain, not just his own adventures, but the whole history of the Grail, from the time of
Christ to the time of its final guardian. Called the Livre dou Graal, it is the ultimate source, we are apparently meant to believe, not only for Robert's cycle, but for the entire Arthurian matter (23.24-26, 52-55):

Et oeuve sera toz joiz mais, tant com le siecle durra, retraite et volantiers oie.... Et saiches bien que onques nuie de genz ne fu plus volantiers oie de fois ne de saiges que sera cele dou roi qui avra non Artus et des genz qui a ce tens regneront.

Given that the story of the Grail is one, with a single historical dynamism sweeping through it and drawing it together, it is fitting that the "Book of the Grail" should be one, and due to a single author. It is also fitting that that author should be Merlin, the central figure of the story who insures its unity and direction. Both as an actor and as an historian, the Welsh seer provides the complex adventure of the Grail with sense and structure.\(^\text{x}\)

Satisfying as such a conception is, however, it overlooks certain things. First of all, the passages referring to the livre are full of obscurities. It is not completely certain that Merlin and Blaise's book, though it is called the Livre dou Graal, covers the entire cycle in detail. Robert does not say explicitly, in the Merlin itself, that it will reach as far as the final adventures of the Graal.\(^\text{7}\) It does, apparently, tell the beginning, what corresponds to the Joseph, for Merlin first recounts to Blaise the early adventures of the Graal before starting in on his own story. But his account of the life of Joseph is incomplete at one crucial point: he does not relate (because he does not know?) the secret words Jesus spoke to Joseph at the time he made to him the gift of the Graal. Another book, in the possession of the Grail guardian, contains the missing passage.\(^\text{8}\)

That book or document will be joined to Blaise's, and the two will form a single book (16.108-14):

Lors si assembleras ton livre au lor, si sera bone chose provee de ma poine et de la toue, si en avront merci, sa els ples, et proieront Nostre Seignor por nos. Et quant li dui livre seront assemblé, s'en i avra .l. biau, et li dui seront une meisme chose, fors tant que je ne puis pas dire ne retraire, ne droit n'est, les privees paroles de Joseph et de Jhesu Crist.

The possible meanings of the passage seem to be: (1) Merlin and Blaise's book contains essentially all that is in the Joseph, save for the secret words which it needs in order to be complete; (2) the later book is essentially limited to an account of Merlin's activities. It resumes the story of Joseph for the sake of

convenience, but in itself recounts only the second stage of the entire history. It needs the first half, Joseph's book, in order to be complete. Thus, when in a later passage Merlin refers to Blaise's production as the Livres dou Graal (23.63-64), it is only by a kind of anticipation. That is what it will become when it is joined to the other equally necessary part of the story.

Making sense of these references to a book or books is extremely problematic for two reasons. First, the texts as we have them are less than completely reliable. The Merlin we possess, except for the initial 304 lines, only in a prose redaction. The Joseph we have in verse, but only in one copy; it is too much to hope that it has not lost some portion through scribal alteration. Second, Robert is anything but consistent in the use of his terms. Different names may be attached to the same subject, different objects designated by the same name, and at times one suspects the objects thus confusingly referred to are not even the same in themselves but can expand and transform and flow into each other.\(^\text{9}\) It is not altogether impossible that the Livre dou Graal should at one time be the work of les granz clerks (Joseph, 934), at another Joseph's handwork (Joseph, 3418), at another the result of Blais's efforts, and it might be worse than useless to try to distinguish and clarify the relationships of the different books and scribes that Robert mentions at one time and another.

Nevertheless, the following seems fairly certain. Merlin's and Blaise's book, even if it does contain much or all of the whole story, is placed in some kind of opposition to another book, the Livre Joseph, if only because of one passage it does not contain. On its own, it is incomplete, and the cycle as a whole rests upon two different authorities, two written traditions, "un livre de Joseph émanant des gardiens du Graal, un livre de Merlin émanant du prophète lui-même, exécuté par Blaise."\(^\text{10}\) Strange as it may seem in so wise a prophet, it is even possible that, like the book he dictates, Merlin himself does not know these august secrets (16.111-14):

Et quant li dui livre seront assemblé, s'en i avra .l. biau, et li dui seront une meisme chose, fors tant que je ne puis pas dire ne retraire, ne droit n'est, les privees paroles de Joseph et du Jhesu Crist.\(^\text{11}\)

Merlin's book does not cover everything pertinent to the cycle, and perhaps even his knowledge is not coextensive with it. Whether or not Merlin knows the secret words, however, the simple fact that his book does not contain them is perhaps significant enough.

Significant of what, however? The books form a unity, appear even largely to overlap (since the Merlin recapitulates the Joseph), and yet they remain distinct, with the later book decidedly inferior to the earlier in that it lacks a single, all-important passage. What Blaise produces may have more pages than the book preserved by Joseph's successors, but in one essential regard it is in
fact less comprehensive. Given this limitation, and given the close link, almost
the identity, between what Merlin dictates and what he does, might one suspect
that Merlin's role in the cycle, like his book, is less central than at first appeared.)
Indeed, the issue of Merlin's book cannot ultimately be settled apart from a
consideration of Merlin himself (and of Merlin). Actor, branch, and source
raise questions about each other and may throw light on each other. More
specifically, in order to understand better how Merlin's book is related to
Joseph's, it will be necessary to examine the seer himself in comparison with
the original Grail guardian, and the romance dealing with his activities in
comparison with the first branch of the cycle.
Such an examination confirms the suspicion that Merlin is not quite "up to"
the secrets of the Grail and works on a different level from that of Joseph and
his disciples. For Robert, Merlin is just as unquestionably God's servant as
Joseph was. Fathered by a demon, he is rescued from the control of evil by the
power of Baptism and the holiness of his mother's life. Thanks to his demonic
heritage, he knows the past and present; thanks to a heavenly gift, he knows
the future; both powers he makes use of in his efforts to bring into being the
divinely-willed society of Arthur. He has no other function than to serve as the
instrument of a divine plan; and he never fails in his vocation. His one ques-
tionable deed, the aid he gives Uther in gaining access to Ygerne, is something
he must apparently atone for (73.16-19), and yet apparently that too was a
necessary step in the bringing into existence of Arthur's kingdom.
Nevertheless, Merlin never completely shakes his unsavory origins. He is
not a conventional holy man, and indeed there is something downright distur-
bing about him. The saintly Blaise, cautious and sensible man that he is,
takes a good deal of convincing before he decides Merlin really is on the right
side and deserves his help. Blaise is only the first of many who need to be con-
vinced. Indeed, the central part of the story is given over to a description of
how Merlin wins the trust of the people that count. Merlin predicts as much to
Blaise on the eve of their departure for Britain:

Et je ferai et dirai tant que je serai li plus creuz
hom qui enques fuss creuz en terre fors Dieu.
(23.11-12)

Up to and including the feat of transporting the great stones from Ireland
to Salisbury (which immediately precedes the establishment of the Round
Table), Merlin is obliged to prove himself. To the very end of the romance he
is never accepted by some, and even for those who trust and love him, and
accept him as a divine messenger, he remains mysterious and unpredictable.12
How unlike Joseph, whose probity is never questioned by anyone, and who
lives almost from the very first in the greatest possible proximity with God.
Thanks to the Grail, Joseph has direct access to heaven; he can even hold

One could object to this devalorization of Merlin by pointing to the very
striking parallels between the two romances, as proof that the second branch
of the cycle is clearly meant to mirror the first and that what happens in it is
therefore at least as important as what has gone before. Both romances revolve
around single figures, who are important for the same reason: they function as
points of contact between God and the world, indeed as the chief means by
which he acts upon history. Realizing their importance, both heroes at some
point begin telling their own stories to others so that they can be handed down
to posterity. Structurally, too, the romances are similar. An introductory sec-
ion has the Harrowing of Hell as the principal theme;11 it is followed by a
short narrative part in which the hero has not yet come to the fore,12 and then
finally by the main part of the story. Such parallels imply, one might think,
that Merlin is at least on a level with Joseph, if not indeed greater, in view of
the later stage of history in which he is active and the wider influence he has on
the course of men's lives. They also seem to imply the essential continuity of
the story: the second romance builds upon the first, using the same structures
in a new and larger context.

The parallels are striking and unquestionably intentional. But they are far
from proving that the Merlin builds upon the Joseph in the above sense.
Indeed, if anything they imply discontinuity as much as continuity, and the
distinction of the two heroes as much as their harmony. Consider, in partic-
ular, the way in which the two romances begin. The first opens with a homiletic
introduction dealing with Christ's mission to rescue humanity from Hell,
where it had been imprisoned since the Fall of Adam and Eve. This sermonic
prelude is followed by a brief account of the preaching and Passion of Christ.
Both aspects of the Savior's activity refer back to the freeing of mankind from the power of the Devil—for the preaching deals exclusively with the sacraments of Baptism and Penance, whose purpose is to deliver souls (repeatedly if necessary) from the clutches of Satan, and Christ's death is the redemptive act which makes possible the original deliverance (Baptism, the Harrowing of Hell) and all subsequent ones (Penance). The prologue and the short life of Christ thus form a unit, after which the story moves on to other things: to Joseph and his special relationship with God. Like the Old Testament prophets in Hell, Joseph is imprisoned by the enemies of God and at length miraculously delivered. With Joseph, however, we seem to have gotten beyond the idea of deliverance from moral evil. From the point where he begins to play a central role, there is virtually no mention of Baptism, and stranger still none of Penance. One gathers that Joseph and his disciples are so far advanced in the Christian life that following again into the devil's power is for them hardly conceivable. They represent as it were a new kind of Christian who is definitively God's.

Surprisingly, we find ourselves, at the start of the Merlin, back where everything began, in Hell. Still reeling from the shock of having had their captives freed, the devils now take counsel as to how they can regain their lost dominion over mankind. (They are particularly worried about penance, which makes it possible for sinners to escape from them again and again.) In order to reverse the effects of the Redemption, they conceive of a super-weapon, Merlin, the offspring of a human woman and one of themselves, who thanks to his supernatural knowledge will be able to lead men astray. The plan misfires, of course, because Merlin is himself redeemed and goes on to become an indispensable instrument in the realization of God's plan. The parallels in the two openings, however, implies not that the Merlin takes up where the Joseph leaves off, but that it returns to the same starting point and begins the story anew. In spite of all the progress implied by the Joseph (Christ's Passion and death, the Harrowing of Hell, Joseph's deliverance and his founding of a community of perfects), the Merlin starts back before the Redemption as it were (or so it would be if the devils had their way). The business of another supernatural deliverance must be gone through before the devil's son can take up his divinely appointed task (just as Joseph must be freed before he can found the community of the Grail).

The parallels between the two romances, then, do not weaken the impression that Merlin, though involved with the same enterprise, is different from and not on the same level as the first guardian of the Grail. What they imply in terms of the structure of the cycle is that the Merlin constitutes no such a continuation of the Joseph as a break with it, or if you like a new beginning. Other aspects of the two romances imply that the second branch represents some kind of break or contrast with the first (and some of these, perhaps all of them when taken together, may imply a certain inferiority of the second with regard to the first). To begin with, a time lag occurs between the end of the first romance and the beginning of the second. Robert's chronology is anything but precise, and he makes no effort to distinguish early Christian times from Arthurian; presumably, two generations are sufficient to get from one end of the cycle to the other (Alein, Joseph's nephew, is the father of "Perceval"). In spite of this compression of epochs, however, some kind of temporal gap separates the Merlin from the Joseph. We are no longer in the stage of primitive Christianity; the faith must have had time to establish itself in some places and develop, in order to produce a man like Blaise. Even more palpable is the shift in geographical locale. The initial action of the Merlin takes place in the East, but not in Joseph's East (i.e., Jerusalem and its environs). As the Merlin proceeds, and the hero makes his way to the western lands, the difference in geographical center becomes all the more striking.

Joseph's disciples make the same journey as Merlin, but that is only at the end of the Estoire dou Graul; the romance as a whole is firmly anchored in the Holy Land, and the command to the disciples to leave their home in the wilderness must come to them as something of a surprise. Merlin belongs, from the very first, to the West; he is wedded to the fortunes of the British kings, and his childhood in the East is a mere prelude.

With the break in chronology and the difference in geographical centers, another significant contrast results from the different sources Robert used for his two romances. The Joseph belongs to the world of New Testament legend and apocryphal romance. It is a world partly mythical, first because of its attachment to the Gospel events themselves, with their universal religious significance, and second because of the place it gives to the marvelous and the fantastic. The Merlin has its marvels, but its chief concern is with the history of Geoffrey of Monmouth (or Wace). No matter that Robert may have given the material a new orientation; no matter that Merlin has a determining role throughout; the content of Robert's second romance is still largely the record of the reigns of a few British kings. Thus, whereas the Joseph partly inhabits a mythical world of Christian legend, the Merlin is intimately bound up with something more like ordinary history.

This difference of narrative type or interest would be of less importance, were it not connected to another which is perhaps the most important difference of all between the two romances (I have touched on it briefly already in speaking of the forward-looking character of the cycle). The Merlin is not a mere chronicle, of course; its purpose is not simply to record what has happened, but to show the direction of things and the goal towards which they tend. As noted above, the Merlin is radically oriented towards the future. Nothing in the story exists for its own sake. Everything leads up to Arthur, and Arthur in himself, together with his Table and his knights, points ahead to a future fulfillment. History is thus important not as history (the record of the past), but as preparation. The great mover of the story is likewise of no importance in himself. He exists only to point the way and to make sure that everything is
properly disposed for the far-off event. (Merlin’s "transparency" to the future may explain in part why he is such an elusive figure.)

The Joseph, in contrast, concentrates on its own present. There are a few hints of what is to come, particularly in the very last part of the story. Apart from that section, however, and a few allusions in Christ's words to Joseph, this romance, like most romances, is simply concerned with what is going on. And no wonder: the things that are happening, the hero's deeds, sufferings, rewards, are quite compelling on their own. Thus, along with the differences in hero, geography, and time period, the two romances can also be contrasted with regard to their temporal orientation: the Joseph sticks largely to the present, while the Merlin looks forward to the future. Furthermore, even at the end of the earlier romance, as we begin to get some glimmerings about the future stages of the cycle, we do not for all that lose interest in the adventures of the first guardian of the Grail. On the contrary, as he recedes into the past, the story continues to insist upon its importance—now not as present, but precisely as past. The various disciples who are sent off into the West are first carefully instructed in the details of Joseph's story, which they are meant to preserve faithfully as they wait for the arrival of the tiers hom. Thus, while Merlin's principal task is construction of the future, that of the Grail emissaries and guardians is the patient and faithful preservation of the past. His sphere of action is the public world; what they do, in the Merlin, is carried on in retreat from the world, and it is not really action at all, but almost a kind of contemplation.

Of course, the story of Joseph (which is the account of the first contacts of the Grail with human beings, and the formation of a "Grail community") is only one part of Joseph's legacy. There are other things as well he handed on for preservation (or "contemplation"): the Grail itself, the grail and the service that is performed there, the mystical experience of "enlacement de cuer," various moral and doctrinal instructions, and the assurance of God's protection. What it all adds up to, in my opinion, is this: Joseph bequeathed to his followers what he himself was the first of humankind (in Robert's fabulous account) to experience—a life of extraordinary proximity to God, the condition of which is the disciple's complete devotion, and the reward for which is divine favor and guidance and the frequent experience of mystical fulfillment. The Grail, which continues in the midst of the transplanted community, is the sign and vehicle of this singular commerce between God and man. That commerce itself is the true substance of Joseph's heritage, the "grace" of the Grail which he was the first to enjoy and which he has passed on to others; and one could say that the miraculous vessel, the story of Joseph, the secrets at the heart of that story, and the book that contains them, all of which are preserved by the servants of the Grail in Britain, are different ways of referring to the life of mystical perfection that Joseph handed on to his followers.

Along some such lines, I believe, one can best understand what the Grail guardian and his associates have as their mission to preserve. The point here, however, is not so much to determine the content of what they have been entrusted with, as more simply to emphasize how greatly their task of safeguarding what they have received differs from Merlin's mission of bringing into being what does not yet exist. It not only differs; it is also, in the Merlin, much less visible. The Grail society is in retreat, biding its time, and turned in on its own secrecy. The story alludes to it only from time to time, since it is mainly interested in the outer world and the construction of a larger Christian society. But the allusions suffice to remind us that another center exists—it is present by its absence as it were—which is of a completely different nature from Merlin's sphere. They make it clear that the preoccupations of Merlin and the Merlin are not the whole story of the Grail.

Now, if Merlin and his romance are "limited" in this way, is it not reasonable to assume the same of the book he dictates? Unlike the prophet who is its source, it would be concerned primarily with the establishment of Arthur's kingdom and would not touch directly on the innermost matters of the Grail. The distinction I am trying to make here is not so much one of material detail as of principal concern. How much Blaise's book tells of Joseph's story and the early days of the Grail is secondary; what I am suggesting is rather than this text, attached as it is to the seer who is so closely associated with the Arthurian enterprise, does contain the heart of the mystery of Joseph and the Grail.

But if there is such a distinction or even opposition between the Joseph and the Merlin, between the Grail community on the one hand and the prophet and his secretary on the other, and between the two books either group produces, what are we to make of it? There is no continuous, uninterrupted narrative flow from one romance to the other; the secret Grail society is not Arthur's kingdom; Joseph is very different from Merlin. Still, in Robert's cycle the two members of each pair would have formed a unity when joined together. Having distinguished, how do we now unite? The evolutionary view, which implies continuous development and continual improvement, is no longer satisfactory. It is better to say that the entire history has two separate starting points, and two lines of development, which remain separate throughout—there will be no amalgamation of Round Table and Grail Table—but which share a single point of convergence: the tiers hom, who will be a man of two worlds, final guardian of the Grail and a great one among Arthur's knights.

And how will the two realms be related in him? Would the prophesied hero first complete the company of the Grail Table and make good his claim to the guardianship of the holy object, then return to Arthur's court and yet greater glory as the first of the knights of the Round Table? Or would he, like Chrétien's Perceval, begin by making a name for himself in the secular sphere, and only then penetrate into the more mysterious realm of the Grail king, thereby adding a higher religious excellence to his outstanding knightly achievements? It is, of course, impossible to say. Nevertheless, the two romances that we know to be by Robert suggest the following disposition to me. The two realms
are separate and not quite equal, or let us say they represent very different orders of greatness. The kingdom Merlin succeeds in setting up is a Christian one—perhaps the ideal Christian one. The Round Table, which in Wace served to consecrate knighthood, has here become something like the apothecary of Christian knighthood. Those who are granted the honor of a place at this table—they are "des plus prudes hommes" of the realm (49.30–31)—are filled suddenly with an intense brotherly love (49.63–65). It is the more human, but still profoundly, equivalent of the "emplacement de cœur" granted to those seated at Joseph's Grail Table. And all of this ideal political order has been willed by God and its development directed by him through the agency of Merlin. The mystery of the Grail community, on the other hand, is less spectacular, especially in the Merlin where it is all but invisible; nevertheless it represents an ideal of Christianity which is incomparably higher, since it consists in a life of intimate union with God. We moderns may find the fraternal feeling that swells the breast of Arthur's knights more attractive than the seemingly more individualistic "emplacement de cœur" enjoyed by the adepts of the Grail, but there is no reason to suppose that Robert, for all his glorification of the knighthood order, would have valued things in quite the same way. In the Joseph itself, he paints the rewards earned by Joseph and his disciples so gloriously, that it seems unlikely the ones enjoyed by the knights of the Round Table could come close.†

Besides being higher, the mystery of the Grail community rests upon a firmer basis. As already noted, the earthly kingdom of Arthur is entirely orientated towards the future. In appearance larger, more massive, more substantial, it is in reality more ephemeral: it does not yet have in hand its raison d'être, the Grail knight. The Grail community already has the grace of the Grail. True, the followers of Joseph are also waiting to be completed by the arrival of their final leader. But they do not seem to be oriented towards the future in so radical a way as Arthur's knights. After all, they will have something more to give the "hiers homs" when he arrives than an empty seat; they will also be able to offer him as well the story of Joseph, the "secret words" attached to the Grail, and the experience of "emplacement de cœur." They will provide a consummation for him, as much or more than he does for them. So if Alein's son, when he arrives on the scene, proves to be the glorious summing up of Arthur's knightly splendor, its culmination and its raison d'être, the same is not likely to be true of his role in the world of the Grail. Keeper of the holy vessel and master of the human society grouped around it, he will nevertheless receive more than he gives. He cannot "surpass" the Grail; he cannot even surpass its first guardian, in the way he will surpass all the other knights of the Round Table. At best he will equal Joseph, having made himself worthy of the same grace.

Such, at any rate, is what seems to me a very likely projection of the rest of the cycle, based upon the two parts we know. In the scheme of the complete

trilogy, there would be two kingdoms, two spheres, both willed by God and impinging upon each other at certain points, but otherwise separate: one outer, public, and in the process of being constructed, the other inner, hidden, and given over to its task of preservation; the first a realm of knighthood excellence, good rulers, and ordinary Christian virtue, the second one of retreat, contemplation, and mystical perfection. Both find their completion in the tiers homs, but they do not fuse in him; even here there would be a distinction of different orders. Ultimately, one would have to say that the Arthurian realm is subordinate to that of the Grail, but only in the sense that, splendid as Arthur's Christian chivalry is, its accomplishments are intrinsically less valuable than the life of mystical union made possible by the Grail. Nevertheless, its values are not absorbed into those of the Grail community, just as, contrariwise, the Grail does not come to Britain simply to glorify Arthurian knighthood. Chivalry is glorified by its (remote) association with the Grail; perhaps the Grail even makes chivalry, in its perfect form, possible; but in the end neither Grail nor Arthur exists purely for the sake of the other.

Thus, in his complete cycle, Robert might well have left a considerable degree of autonomy to those independent worlds he found in the Comte du Graal (Châtenet's "Grail axis" and "Arthurian axis," as Rupert Pickens has called them*). The chief difference between the two representations might be that, in Châtenet, the Arthurian realm is ironically viewed, and bears the weight of a considerable negative judgment, whereas in Robert it has been elevated to the status of a divinely willed society. Highly as he values the Arthurian order, however, Robert places his world of the Grail more highly still; it is more inward, more difficult of access, and symbol of a higher achievement (or a higher grace). Something similar could perhaps be said of the fictional source for Robert's story, which is really, in spite of its single title, constituted of two separate authorities that never quite merge. The book of Merlin and Blaise is the venerable and authoritative account of the rise, and perhaps the consummation, of the Arthurian kingdom; the stories it tells, Merlin prophecies, will bring great profit and will be gladly heard by wise and foolish alike (16.39–41, 23.52–55). But the complete Livre du Graal contains something else in addition, which is yet more wonderful than any tales of Arthur, more valuable, and more elusive: the secret words which accompanied the original gift of the Grail.

NOTES

* The ideas for this paper were developed during an NEH Summer Seminar directed by Karl Ullt (Princeton, 1985).


5. Views like the one sketched here can be found in Jean Frappier, Le Graal et la chevalerie, Romantia 75 (1954): 181–90, reprinted in Frappier, Autour du Graal (Genève: Droz, 1977), pp. 89–128; Zumthor, Merlin, pp. 128–29; Alexandre Micha, “La Table ronde chez Robert de Boron et dans la Queste del Saint Graal,” in Les Romains du Graal dans la littérature des XIIe et XIIIe siècles (Paris: CNRS, 1956), pp. 122–26, reprinted in Micha, Chanson, pp. 183–200. Frappier lays particular emphasis on the fact that, in Robert’s version of the story, Josephine’s lineage is a knightly one. For both Zumthor and Micha (in this 1956 paper), the Round Table is not only the last but also the greatest of the three; it represents the culmination of the entire story and the full realization of the promises of the Graal. In his later Étude, Micha is less positive; he claims that the “sense of a convergence of values, still insisting however on the continuity and future orientation of the entire cycle” (Étude, p. 27).

6. For Zumthor, Blaise’s book is the trilogy itself (Merlin, pp. 168–69); see also Crist, pp. 206–7, for whom the book is considered part of the history of the Round Table. Micha recognizes the existence of a separate book originating from Joseph’s group, but which adds essentially only the secret words of Christ, otherwise Blaise’s book is the same Livre du Graal that contains the whole cycle (“Livre du Graal,” pp. 233–35; Étude, pp. 26–27).

7. According to the Didot-Percéval, Merlin keeps dictating to Blaise till the very end of Percéval’s adventures; the Merlin itself however does not say if the prophet will play that or any role in the final part of the story. Further, a passage which occurs in two manuscripts (one of which is Micha’s base manuscript) suggests that Merlin does not know the concluding episodes of the story (16:115–17): “Einsi diste mes sire Robert de Boron qui ceste conte retrait que il se redouble, et eissi dira Merelins, que il ne pot savoir le ceste conte.” Micha interprets the second “il” as referring, like the first, to “ceste conte” (Étude, p. 27). But it seems more natural to take it to refer to Merlin: “and thus Merlin dictated it, because he could not know the story of ‘Percéval.’”

8. See Micha, “Livre,” p. 324. The ultimate written source for the “secret words” is Joseph himself. He writes them down and gives them to Bron before the latter leaves for the West (Joseph, 3411–20). (There is also a letter from heaven given to Perrus, another disciple, which may have a similar content; Joseph, 3107–12, 2132.) Bron has presumably preserved this document throughout the years of waiting for the tiers hom. Were the secrets incorporated at some point into a larger account telling the whole life of Joseph (for which, again, Joseph would have been the source—see 501–38, 539–56, 3319–20)? That account, to which Robert gives the title Estoire du Graal (2604, 3487, 3493) is presumably what in the Merlin is called “le livre Joseph et le Bron” (16:10 5–06).

9. An outstanding example of this phenomenon occurs in lines 912–36 of the Joseph. The narrator refers to his source as:

    ... le grant livre ...
    Ou les estoires sunt escriptes
    Par les granz cers fieres et dites.
    La sunt le grant secré escript
    Qu’en numbre le Graal et dit.

Are the secrets really called the Graal (936)? Is the “grant livre” called the Graal? Is Robert simply trying to say that the book containing the secrets is known as the Book of the Graal?


11. Why is Merlin unable to tell the secrets? Micha (“Livre,” p. 324) sees this because to do so would be a sacrilege (“il droi n’est”) and refers (p. 324 n. 1) to lines 929–36, in which Robert speaks in very similar terms about the idea of revealing the secrets of the Graal:

    Ge n’ose conter ne retraire
    Ne je ne le pouourje feire,
    Nes se je feire le volete,
    Se je le grant livre n’avoie... 

Note, however, that Robert couches his inability to disclose the secrets in hypothetical terms (“il n’est”), in spite of its mood, to be taken as coordinate with “pourraire.” Robert does have the book, and does perhaps “conter.” (For another passage where Merlin seems to diminish the authority of the book he dictates, see 16:95–101.)


15. In the Joseph, this section deals with the preaching and final days of Christ; in the Merlin, it tells of how the prophet came to be born.

16. Is Robert referring to a break such as this one between the two romances when he speaks at the end of the Joseph of a “desseinance” (3514)?

17. There are many prophesies in Christ’s words to Joseph, but most of them have to do with either events that will occur in the Joseph itself or the future renown of the hero.

18. Cf. Micha, Étude, p. 28, for whom the third part of the cycle is “la convergence des deux systemes de valeurs.”

2658-2670). Is the former much more than Robert's way of describing the compagnonage that doubtless existed among Arthur's knights?

Gawain's “Anti-Feminism” Reconsidered

by

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In Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, the protagonist survives the return blow for which he had contracted with the Green Knight but finds to his dismay that he has unwittingly failed a more significant test. As the awareness comes to Gawain that the Green Knight and his Yuletide host share one identity, that it was upon Bercilak's instructions that his wife attempted to seduce him, and that Morgan la Fée had, in effect, master-minded the whole plan, Gawain reacts with bursts of anger which, when analyzed, speak not only to the Pearl-Poet's skill at characterization but also to the manner in which the poet feels revelation is given to man. The see-saw dialogue in which the Green Knight and Gawain engage, much like the original agreement for the exchange of blows and the subsequent commerce of hunting covenants, places emphasis on sequentiality, on one thing or event being countered by another, as well as on the more overt theme of testing, and what has been often overlooked is the fact that Gawain himself consistently reacts sequentially, throughout the tale and particularly in the final confrontation with the Green Knight, that is, according to the amount of knowledge he possesses, which is, of course, precious little at the outset of the challenge and not all that much more by the time he submits to the return blow. Bercilak, of course, responds to Gawain's statements and actions, but his reactions are tempered by his greater knowledge and, as such, do not exhibit the rashness of Gawain's responses. The result is that one sees Bercilak making the initial offers, with Gawain either eagerly, thoughtlessly accepting them because he does not know that they entail, or, having fulfilled his obligations as far as he can see them, reacting irately to his sudden awareness of failings which he did not anticipate. And yet the Gawain at the end of the poem is a visibly chastened man, stripped of his anger and fully aware not only of his own inadequacies but also of the nature of his test, despite the fact that his own court cannot comprehend the significance of the visible sign of his spiritual journey. It is precisely that process from ignorance
to knowledge, from wrath to sorrow, and from Gawain’s awareness of the part to his cognizance of the whole, that takes place in the Green Chapel, but it is by no means an immediate process, as Gawain’s successive reactions demonstrate.

Throughout the romance Gawain consistently makes statements based on his own limited knowledge, to which others more knowledgeable make corrections, and the Green Chapel scene hardly differs in this respect from the scenes which have preceded it. Gawain erupts in a series of tirades at learning of the test and of his failure, and the Green Knight proceeds to correct him. Each exclamation leads the Arthurian knight a little closer to the real significance of the test which he, as a representative of perfect knighthood, undertook, a test upon which the very fate of Arthur’s court hangs and a test particularly engineered to that end. The Green Chapel tirades themselves reveal an interesting pattern, as Gawain comes progressively closer to an awareness that is the source of his failure. Thus, before the Green Knight goes into the explanation of the intermingled covenants, Gawain is merely outraged at his opponent, who has nicked him, in effect, in the seat of pride, the neck. After the Green Knight’s explanation, Gawain transfers his anger to the green girdle, using it as a focus for his rage, so that it is said to be “pe falasyng” (1.2378): even before the wearer is pronounced “false” (1.2382). Finally, when the Green Knight mildly points out that Gawain has indeed “confessed so elcne, bekownen of by mysseys” (1.2391), Gawain directly contradicts the idea that he has spent his sin, by expending his venom, by flying into an even greater rage, at which point he delivers what has been called a “stock anti-feminist tirade.”

This Green Knight subsides into a request for the Green Knight’s identity, and it is at this point in the narrative, when Berceclak reveals his name and Morgan’s machinations, that many readers have balked, either brandishing the motivation for Gawain’s testing as lame and contrived, or feeling inadequately prepared for the unexpected and rapid détournement. The fact that Morgan la Fee is suddenly introduced as controlling events, with the poem’s other characters reduced to the role of pawns, appears to disconcert critics, who contend either that this aspect of the poem is not well-made or that Morgan’s role has not been fully understood. While we heartily agree with the opinion that Morgan’s importance has not been adequately fathomed, it would appear that the abrupt revelation of Morgan’s “myti” (1.2446) is hardly unsatisfying, but rather represents a technique characteristic of the Pearl-Poet, whereby the controlling deity—and recall that Morgan is “pe goddes” (1.2542)—is rarely the focus of the poet but rather directs events from a distance. The question is, after all, one of dominance, and Morgan dominates the poem in that he controls the action, in much the same manner as God exercises power over the characters in the Pearl-Poet’s other poems: Parce, Patience, and Pearl. In fact, one should note that, for example, in Pearl the jeweler spends as much time dealing with Christ’s intermediary, the Pearl-Maiden, as Gawain does in dealing with Morgan’s intermediaries. Yet, despite the mediation, there is never any question in all four poems as to controlling deity.

In Parce there is no doubt whatsoever as to the author of the destruction of the many sinfull and the salvation of the few pure men, although God intervenes directly in the narrative only once in each biblical exemplum. Similarly, Pearl’s Lamb is only viewed directly at that poem’s closing, at the point at which the Pearl-Maiden’s efforts to acquaint the jeweler with her celestial existence reach a standstill, because he continues to view heavenly reality in terms of earthly appearance. Only then is the jeweler accorded the actual vision of Christ in the New Jerusalem, the intent of which is to enlighten him. Even then he still clings to worldly preconceptions to the degree that his revelation is necessarily sequential and not simultaneous, proceeding by fits and starts, so that at the end of the poem he is, on the one hand, barred from Heaven but, on the other hand, given the message of Christ’s consolation. Patience’s process of revelation and the recognition of Divine manipulation is perhaps most like that of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, however, in that it is by no means an instance of simultaneous enlightenment, whereby Jonah suddenly fathoms God’s analogy of his withered “wodhynde” and the spared city of Nineveh. Rather, Jonah’s instruction carries him from the ship to the whale to the bower, as he is shown first that he must trust in Divine mercy as much as he relies upon Divine vengeance. In each case Jonah acts unwittingly and is subsequently corrected and chastised by God, whom he is bound to represent but whose nature he does not fathom, much as Sir Gawain is repeatedly corrected and bettered by Morgan’s minions as he attempts to play a game whose rules he does not understand. Thus, Gawain’s wrathful outbursts against women—among others—may be seen to be analogous to the angry tirade that serves as Jonah’s reaction to God’s correction, for, as Jay Schleusener points out:

The point [of 11.78-80, 93-96] is not that Jonah has accidentally fallen into profound irreverence, but simply that he does not know what he is saying. We know the meaning of these lines because we have a history that encompasses the figure and its fulfillment; God knows because the plan is His; yet Jonah, who knows almost nothing at all, is the man who must act. There is nothing shocking here, only the irony of human ignorance bent to the shape of history.

In fact, the Pearl-Poet consistently describes situations in which humans are either enlightened by the Divine prior to the events that will test them (Noah before his protection in the ark, Lot before the destruction of Sodom) or left in the dark throughout the test, like Pearl’s jeweler, Jonah, and Gawain, by the
deities which assay their worth before they tell them how they have been tested. In Pearl and Patience, as well as in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, the heroes are led by trial and error to a clearer understanding of their mortal situations, and it is by no means a painless process, since each protagonist reacts with anger or incredulity at comprehending the separate parts of the totality of the Divine message. Pearl’s jeweler verbally spars with a representative of a deity he cannot understand and eventually attempts to bolt across the stream to join the Pearl-Maiden, at which point God, who has accorded him his vision, cuts that vision short. Jonah, on his part, sulks and reproaches the Being “bat eres all made” (1.123) and “bat bigged yche yge” (1.124) before he is given the consoling message of “pacienc” which the audience received at the outset of the poem. In Gawain’s case one can see the same principle at work: as Gawain is gradually given the bits and pieces of the puzzle that explains the power that motivates his trials, he rages—in stages—at the fact that he cannot control neither his situation nor himself. The sequential revelation process calls forth reactions which, in turn, elicit the next step in Gawain’s progress toward understanding his test.

Thus, while one clearly sees the sequentiality of the process whereby the Green Knight gradually enlightens Gawain concerning the test and his own shared identity, to which Gawain reacts with anger, it would appear that Gawain’s wrathful “anti-feminist” tirade is just as integrally linked to Bercilak’s sudden and subsequent revelation concerning Morgan’s controlling hand in the affair. An understanding of the role of Morgan might indeed illuminate the purpose of the “anti-feminist” tirade, which has been viewed either as an off-track diatribe that has nothing to do with the tale or a valid emotional outburst that in some way reflects Gawain’s state of mind. Gawain, then, is held to be “driven off course by the prevailing winds of anti-feminism” or to have committed a lapse of courtesy. However, the outburst bears closer examination, for it would appear that critics have fundamentally misunderstood the function of the tirade.

The “anti-feminist” tirade that precedes the revelation of Morgan’s role contains four exempla and is centered around a series of men that moves from Paradise into the Old Testament time period:

I hal soinord saldy; sel yow bytyde,
And he yele hit yow yare pat sarkeze al menskes!
And comandez me to pat cortay, yor comlych fere,
Bope pat on and pat oyer, myn honourede ladyez,
at pris hor knygt wyth hor kest han konytly bigleyd,
Bot hit is no ferly pary a folc madde,
And pury wythones yowmen be wonen to sorye,
passage, as well as the implicit falls of the cities and countries of the poem's first stanza, speak directly to Gawain's fall, and, most importantly, to the implicit, subsequent fall of that society which Gawain represents. Camelot, too, will fall, and it will fall as a result of treachery and a chain of events that cannot help but reek back to the prophetic lines detailing the destruction of a mighty city:

Sipen þe sege and þe assault wæt seæt at Troye,  
þe bory brittenæd and brenæt to brondeæ and askæ,  
þe talk þe þæmmæsæ of tæÆææn þer wroþæ.  
Wætæ tried for his triceræ, þe treæwest æn æræhe.  
(1-4)

Camelot, like Troy, will fall, and it will fall, moreover, for the same reason that all the other exemplary men and cities fall and are succeeded by other men and cities, and just as Gawain is brought low by his very pride and reputation.

In likening himself to four men undone by women, Gawain effects a significant linkage that has not been fully explored. In so doing, he characteristically blames the object for the pain caused to the subject, rather than seeing guilt not in the perceived but rather in the perceiver. An act of displacement occurs, and Gawain sets the blame on someone or something else. One is, however, prepared for such an action, for Gawain has acted in such a manner previously to this point in the narrative. In this light, one might briefly consider the Green Knight's celebrated feigned blows and Gawain's reaction to them. For this will tell considerable about Gawain's technique of displacing anger.

Gawain's anger as the Green Knight goes through his feint is necessary not only to build up the tension so essential to the dramatic import of the scene, but also to establish a contrast to the Green Knight's calm willingness to "bide þæ... but" (1.290), a willingness which looks back to the poet's advice to his audience in Patience, when he states:

þæn is better to abyde þæ but wunde—stounds,  
þæn ay þrow forth my þro, þæ maturene ylle.  
(Patience, 11. 7-8)

Gawain, however, not only is unable to "abyde þæ but" but also proceeds to vent his "þro" at the slightest provocation. The very source of Gawain's anger proves telling in this respect and helps explain his reaction in the scene with the Green Knight, during the delivery of the blow, as well as during the subsequent revelation of Morgan's role. As Gawain awaits the Green Knight's blow he is intent on controlling himself, and his flinching and subsequent anger at that point speak to the fact that he is actually angry at himself, due to his very failure to control his own situation. In fact, it seems not at all unreasonable to suggest that Gawain is probably angrier at himself than he is at the Green Knight at the moment, and this paves the way for a similar act of displaced anger when it comes to the subsequent "anti-feminist" tirade. Gawain is actually angry at himself, and he places the blame on women, despite the fact that it is no more a woman's—or women's—fault that he succumbs to temptation than it is the Green Knight's fault that Gawain flinched.

'And alle ay were bewield  
With wumen þat þy ssed,  
þæ þæ 1 be now bigyled,  
Me þink me burde be excused.'  
(2425-2428)

In the play on "we," 14 which can denote "use," "having dealings with," or "practicing a virtue," the Pearl- Poet subtly reveals Gawain to be a man who abuses, rather than uses, beauty—in the Augustinian sense. St. Augustine is quick to point out that a beautiful object is neither good nor evil in itself but is perceived as good or evil by man and is, accordingly, either used as a conduit to Divine love or abused. 15 Thus, enjoyment of a woman's beauty can be understood in the in bono or in malo sense. 16 What Gawain fails to see but what the audience cannot see but recognize is that Gawain places guilt on women for a fault that lies in himself. 17 Since medieval writers readily conceived of females—and males—not necessarily as actualities but rather as representatives of attitudes or embodiments of temptations or virtues, it would appear that the Pearl-Poet chooses a list of so-called evil women not because he hates women, but because he recognizes that he can juxtapose symbolically in malo women to the men in the poem who are to be seen in in bono terms. For this reason, the subsequent revelation of Morgan's controlling hand gains added significance, since it is in a very real sense balances the examples of women who, through treachery, worked to destroy illusory men. While Morgan can be said to practice deceit, it is important to remember that Morgan's elaborate ruse is designed not to undermine Arthur's court, but rather

... to assay þere surquide,  
If his soth were  
þat rennes of grete renoun of þæ Rounde Table.  
Ho wayned me þis wonder your wyrete te reue,  
For to haf greued Gaynour and gart hir te dyse  
With glipnyng of þat ilke gome þat gostlych  
speked  
With his hede in his honde before þæ byzæ table.  
(2457-2462)

When one recalls the narrator's earlier statement that Gawain "wæt funden faulitæs in his fyue wyter" (1.2193) that his opponent was the Devil, it would
appear not only that Gawain’s “wytez” are directly responsible for his misperceptions concerning the nature of his test, but also that Morgan’s intent to take away the court’s “wytez” is not all at to be viewed negatively, since the court’s perceptions are similarly flawed, as is clearly demonstrated by the laughing reaction to the “token” (1.2509) brought back by Gawain after his encounter with the man who tests Camelot’s “surquidre” (1.24570) and who earlier mockingly inquired: “Where is now your sourquidre?” (1.311). Camelot, through Gawain, has been tested, and the court has been found wanting for reason of that very debilitating pride and reputation. As to the desire to drive Guenevre to her death through fear of “pat like gome pat goostly speked” (1.2461), one is tempted to reason that the queen’s death would indemnify the Arthurian court the type of fall suffered by the four biblical heroes whom Gawain had previously cited, since Guenevre’s traditional deception of Arthur is much more in keeping with the likes of Delilah, etc., than with Morgan’s ruse concerning Arthur’s nephew. In fact, although the outcome of the deception is similar in the cases of Gawain and the biblical heroes, the motivation behind the deception is different in Gawain’s case. Adam, Solomon, Samson, and David have all been deceived by evil women who hope to bring about their downfall, while Gawain has been tricked for his own good and has actually been tested by someone who hopes he’ll pass the test.13

What one sees then, is Gawain making a tirade at the point at which he realizes that he is wrong in his assessment of the situation, a tirade in which he places the blame on someone else, and critics have traditionally focused on the so-called “anti-feminist” elements of the outburst, without looking at the suddenness of Morgan’s name, which comes immediately after the stage directions for Morgan’s entrance: “Morgan, who enters” (1.2462). Morgan’s name, which comes immediately after the stage directions for Morgan’s entrance: “Morgan, who enters” (1.2462). Morgan’s traditional association with chastity tests bears out this assumption, for the chastity test devised by Morgan for Gawain will be replicated in the case of Lancelot and Guenevre, and Lancelot will not fare nearly as well as did Gawain. That Guenevre is to be seen as the implicit fifth woman in the series is supported, in addition, by the poet’s evident fondness for series of fives,24 and it should be noted that to medieval poets implicit quantification is equally as important as explicit numbering. If Gawain and by extension the Arthurian court and its King—is fifth in the series of deceived heroes, then the agent of that deception is the evil which woman in the malo sense represents, and the woman who brings men to harm is not Morgan, who after all torturously brings Gawain to good, but rather Guenevre, for with her comes the downfall of Camelot.

Moreover, this juxtaposition between Morgan, the woman in bono who tests in her attempt to aver danger, and Guenevre, who “tests” a man’s abilities in love-making, to the doom of the court of which she is queen, is borne out by other image complexes in the poem, one of the most important of which is established in the arming of Sir Gawain, where the Virgin Mary’s image is depicted on the inside of Gawain’s shield, while Solomon’s emblem, the pentangle, adorns the exterior (1.625). When one recalls Solomon’s ominous presence in the list of men undone by women in malo, one sees, first of all, that in choosing the pentangle Gawain has opted to present a face to the world that hardly bodes good. Moreover, the pentangle’s linkage to Solomon may be seen as a reflection of Gawain’s own faith in tokens, in magic, and in the literal charm which guarantees safety and success. Throughout the poem Gawain reveals a consistent trust in literalness and a related lack of faith in things he cannot see. Faced with something which everyone in the court senses is supernatural, that is, the Green Knight, Gawain opts for the magical to sustain him, as he does a shield boasting Solomon’s emblem. It is not merely that Gawain does not recognize that his test is more than a physical trial, but also that he essentially lacks faith. His own faith, symbolized by the Virgin, should in fact sustain him in the face of this test, but he is unsure and therefore gilds the lily, in effect, by hiding behind the seal of Solomon. The poet, of course, attempts to imbue the pagan symbol with Christian significance, in his enumeration of the beneficent significance of the five-pointed “endless knot” (1.630), but the fact remains that— to Gawain— it is as much a “token” as is the green girdle, that bit of face that Gawain lets take over where his own faith leaves off. Gawain simply does not recognize that his faith in the Virgin is indeed enough; if he trusts in her, she can effect his deliverance. To support this interpretation, it should be noted that Gawain rides through the forest, miserable and without succour, only until he casts his mind back to the Virgin, at which point his prayer for a place to hear mass is immediately granted (11. 753ff.). Moreover, as if to show that the Virgin is indeed the operational force for good, one notes that while Solomon’s sign does not save Gawain, the Virgin in fact does:

Gret peril in bton hem stod,
Nif Maré of hir knygt mynne.
(1768-1769)

Thus, in bono woman, in her avatars of the Virgin and Morgan, effect Gawain’s protection and eventually his enlightenment, while in malo women tempt him.

That there are certainly two aspects of the feminine at work in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight has long been recognized, but these aspects have traditionally been seen to be centered in the obvious juxtaposition between Morgan and Bercilak’s wife in terms of age and appearance.21 What critics have failed
Similarly, Arthur strives to maintain the honor of being "pe comolkest kyng þat pe court haldes" (1.53). And it is indeed this concern with fame or reputation which bears upon Gawain's inability to pass Morgan's test. In this light, it proves useful to recall some salient features of the Pearl-Poet's characterizations of the protagonists of his poems. Jonah in particular is a prudish, willful man, not unlike Gawain. It is not merely that both Jonah and Gawain laugh unwittingly at times when events are impeningly grave, but also that both are led into the sin of pride out of a concern for "professional" reputation. In the episode of the "wod bynde" in Patience, Jonah fears that the Ninevites' repentance will necessarily void the doom which he has spelled out for them and will, hence, damage his reputation as a prophet. In Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, the concern for "professional" reputation runs high, with the result that the Green Knight's first challenge ("wher is þe governour of þis gyng?"—1.1.224-25) calls into question the matter of professional competency in terms of Arthur and his kingship, as well as the chivalric capabilities of the "berdiez chyldren" (1.280) assembled at Camelot. Subsequently, during the temptation scenes, Bercilak's lady will likewise prey upon Gawain's ego, taking him to task for his courtliness and his attitude toward ladies. The irony is that Jonah is not a very good prophet, Arthur is not a very good king, and Gawain, whose reputation is based on his attitude toward ladies, does not in fact understand women: he fails to recognize that woman can lead astray but also can lead to wisdom. The romance thus becomes a tale about choosing the proper woman, and the four men in Gawain's "anti-feministic" tirade, as well as Gawain and his liege, did not choose the correct woman.

Since Sir Gawain and the Green Knight begins and ends with an historical overview, one must assume that the poem exhibits an essential concern with man's on-going actions on earth and specifically with the fate of Arthur's court and its representatives. In order to render any final judgment concerning the fate of the society at Camelot and its relationship to the history which frames it, one must of necessity come to a judgment concerning Morgan and her co-conspirators. Morgan's design is, as the Green Knight states, primarily directed in terms of striking out at Camelot's pride and at its queen. Since the first quality is obviously a flaw, the person with whom it is linked, that is, Guenevre, must also be viewed negatively, and in fact Guenevre is traditionally associated with the fall of Camelot, a fall which places Camelot directly in line as the next fallen city in the series of cities which opens and closes the poem. In essence, then, the fate of Camelot actually rests not on Guenevre, but rather by the end of the poem on the court's reaction to the enlightenment which Gawain has brought back to the court, a message which is clearly ignored and made light of, since the courtiers laugh at Gawain and turn his sign of "schame" (1.2504) into one of "renoun" (1.2519). The incomprehension signals that the inevitable fall must take place. Yet, the Pearl-Poet prepares his audience for the fall from the poem's outset, since the tale is cast in the past tense,

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Moreover, to recognize is the possibility that the whole poem may revolve around a basic contrast between women, but rather in terms of good and evil, and that this contrast between women, and that this contrast may be couched in varying terms and situations, all of which bear upon the judgment of Gawain, not only in the sense that he is judged, but also in the manner in which he makes judgments. Throughout the poem Gawain is constantly confronted with choices to be made along the same lines as a decision is to be made between woman *in bona* and woman *in malo*, and even between the options of using or abusing a given object, and his choices invariably reflect a lack of restraint, a potentially debilitating predilection for danger, and the literal. The most obvious of these choices is made, of course, when the Arthurian knight meets Bercilak's wife and the wizened beidame, and seeing surface beauty, elects to follow the former, rather than cleaving to the latter, which sets the stage for his subsequent failure. But even earlier in the narrative one sees the protagonist faced with a choice of behavior as he confronts a man, a virtual enigma, who enters a hostile court, bearing an axe in one hand and a holy bough in the other. Gawain, as inclined to strike as is his ruler, and equally quick to anger, responds to the offer of the exchange of blows with a characteristic and literal choice of the obvious weapon, the axe, but is unaware that there is, in fact, an implicit choice, in that the Green Knight comes in peace and only desires "a stork for an ope" (1.287) and offers him as a "gyft" (1.288) "pis ax" (1.288). The Green Knight makes the point that he only bears with him the holy ("pis braunch"—1.265) and the axe ("þys gysine rych"—1.288), having left his hauberck, helmet, shield and spear at home, and yet Gawain chooses the most warlike alternative—evidently, even though his opponent is not fully armed—as is to be expected, since the Pearl-Poet seeks to show how the nature of the subject shapes the reception of the object. And yet, such mistakes appear to be a necessary part of the evolution of Gawain, since it seems that he, like the jeweler in Pearl and Jonah in Patience, is only able to learn by trial and error and only then in stages. Revelation does not come to him as to Saul on the road to Damascus, but rather in sequential steps that allow him opportunity to react and a time for his reactions to be emended. He learns in the process that he has been guilty of confusing one aspect of woman for the other and that pride inevitably catches one short. Yet, in the standard Campbellian twist, Gawain returns to a court that is as hot-blooded and proudful as was he on his departure, and that has no comprehension that it is to be brought down, just as the proud row of kingdom men in the poem's secular and biblical *exempla* were toppled.

Gawain at the end of the poem is still a court preoccupied with its fame, people by knights and ladies who work hard to maintain their reputation of being

> pe most kyd knyhte <br> vnder krystes seluen, <br> And pe lovelokkest ladis þat euer lif haden. <br> (51–52)
Gawain’s “Anti-Feminism”

and from the very introduction to the story one is never allowed to forget that the choice of Guenevre and worldliness prevailed, and that Camelot has indeed fallen.

NOTES


3. Critics go to extremes to rationalize Morgan’s presence. See John Edie, “Morgan la Fée and the conclusion of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,” Neophilologus, 52 (1968), 299, who suggests that Morgan’s motives are introduced to remind Gawain of the pettiness of the real world.


5. ibid., p. 6. Carson points out that Morgan dominates the poem more than the Green Knight does.


8. David Mills, “The Rhetorical Function of Gawain’s Antifeminism,” Neophilologische Mitteilungen, 71 (1970), 635-640, suggests that the idol is to show Gawain’s intellectual fumbling and act as a bridge from anger to self-knowledge, with which we would agree, but we hope in addition to demonstrate that the idol bears wide-reaching implications for the interpretation of the poem.

9. Mills, p. 640, finds the four examples “hardly appropriate to Gawain’s situation.” P. J. Lucas, “Gawain’s Antifeminism,” Notes and Queries, 15 (1969), 324, holds Gawain’s outburst to be valid and divides critics’ reactions to that outburst into the two categories cited in the body of this article.


12. One notes in passing that the poem begins with an implicit example of a woman, Helen, who is clung to, to the destruction of a city, which is followed by an example of a woman, Didó, who is abandoned, for the founding of a city.

13. One should note that the first eight lines of Patience, which form a type of “introduction” to the poem’s prologue, move from a consideration of the heart from within to an exhortation to “suffer” rather than throwing forth “pro.”


15. On Christian Doctrine, 1. 33. 337.


17. Mary Dove, “Gawain and the Blasmes des Femmes Tradition,” Medium Aevum, 41 (1972), 20-26, by placing Gawain in a long tradition of victimization by women, fails to recognize that the idol in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight need not reflect this tradition and may indeed be interpreted otherwise entirely.


21. Carson, pp. 5-6, and Douglas M. Moon, “The Role of Morgan la Fée in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,” Neophilologische Mitteilungen, 6 (1968), 46, suggest that Bercilak’s wife and Morgan may be one and the same.

22. One sees, in effect, a single symbol being used in motto and in motto and in confusion in Gawain’s mind as to which one. One should also note that the poem’s beautiful and ugly women are not all unrelated to the theme of the Loothly Lady. It is no coincidence that the Wife of Bath’s Tale, the ballad “The Marriage of Sir Gawain,” and the romance The Wiffling of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell, which treat the theme of the Loothly Lady, appear to have been based on a common source. See The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F. N. Robinson, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), pp. 702-702, and Sources and Analogues of Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales, ed. W. F. Bryan and Germaine Dempster (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), p. 224. Also useful in this respect is Sigmund Freud, A Tale of Wonder: A Source Study of ‘The Wife of Bath’s Tale’ (Wexford, Ireland: John English, 1957), pp. 31-41, where he discusses the tradition of the Irish Loothly Lady.

23. Arthur’s predilection for strike is not only reflected in his heritage (11. 20-26) but also in his day-to-day actions, since he later is said to, strike on tales of knighthood exploits (11. 491-492) and even welcomes the Green Knight for that reason (11. 250-251), but also, at the outset of the tale, refuses to dine until he has either heard a tale that will shirk back in theme to the turbulence of the past or seen a battle engaged in his very court (11. 90-106).

24. The formula “wes as wroth as wynde” (1. 319) is employed to allude to Arthur in this poem, and when one considers this in light of Jonah’s reaction in Patience (“He wex as wroth as the wynde towards ene Lorde” – 1. 410), it would appear that Arthur’s quick rising anger is ominous.

25. A close examination of the Green Knight’s challenge is important because Gawain’s failure to comprehend the choices offered to him provides an important clue to his character. Gawain, like many of the poem’s critics, fails to understand that the challenge is one to exchange blows, and that the “ax” is merely a reward or token given to the man who deals it and is not necessarily the instrument through which it is delivered. The challenge, stated for the first time in 11. 285-290, indicates that the axe, the gift for striking the blow, is to be received “as hym lykes,” which implies choice or volition. The Green Knight promises only “to dele him an ojer,” presumably in kind. When Gawain accepts the challenge, the Green Knight specifically insists upon restating the terms of the agreement, which points out its nature as a test or riddle to be solved (11.
378-385). The choice of weapon is no longer implicit but is clearly explicit ("wyth what wepyn will pou wilt"—1. 384). In other words, Gawain could have chosen the holy bolt, symbol of peace, and struck the blow, but he did not.

25. Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, Bollingen Series, 17 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 36, note: "The return and reintegration with society, which is indispensable to the continuous circulation of spiritual energy into the world, and which, from the standpoint of the community, is the justification of the long retreat, the hero may find the most difficult requirement of all."

26. Jonah lewled as he lay in his bowre, totally unaware that the "woode trene" would be withered on the morrow (*Patience*, l. 461). Similarly, Gawain laughs nervously through the poem, but only when others have laughed their knowing laughs first; he clearly wishes to be in on the joke, as it were. The result is that Gawain, as though infected by the barrage of mirth at Bercilak's castle—which is often at his own expense, although he does not realize it—laughs gleefully (l. 1079) when he learns that he is only two miles from the site of his expected doom.

Adam's Dream: Fortune and the Tragedy of the *Chester* 'Drapers Playe'

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1.

In glossing a passage from his translation of Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae*, Chaucer provides a definition of tragedy which would have been familiar to any fourteenth-century reader and which, perhaps, still seems adequate to the twentieth-century reader: "What other thynge bywayven the cryenges of tragedyes but oonly the dedes of Fortune, that with unwar strook overturneth the realmes of grete noblesse? (Glos. Tragedye is to seyn a dite of a prosperite for a tyme, that endeth in wretchednes.)" The substance of this gloss is repeated in the 'Prologue' to the "Monk's Tale": "Tragedie is to seyn a certyn storie, / As olde bookes maken us memorie, / of hym that stood in grete prosperitee, / And is fallen out of heigh degree / Into myserie, and endeth wretchedly."72

Though the genealogy of Fortune can be traced back into Roman mythology and beyond,73 the immediate source for the characterization of this goddess for the Middle Ages was this passage from Boethius:

Swich is my strengthe, and this pleyn I pleyn continuely. I torne the whirlynge wheel with the turnynge socle; I am glad to chauenge the loweste to the heyeste, and the heyeste to the lowest. Worth up yf yow wolt, so yf yow be by this lawe, that ythow ne holden at that I do the wronne, though ythow desende adoun whan the resoun of my pleyn ayneth it (sed ea lege ne utique cum ludicri mei ratio posset, desendere initium putes . . .).74

This view, with its emphasis on the transitory nature of all human aspiration and accomplishment, and with its emphasis on the capriciousness of a fate that
destroys precisely those impulses which form the contours of any worldly life, has been taken by most modern writers to be an apt description of medieval tragedy, and it did, indeed, inform the creation of a vast literature de casibus virorum illustrium during the Middle Ages and Renaissance.6 Those modern scholars who have denied the possibility of Christian tragedy have also noted the element of fatedness, and the apparent suspension of free will implied by the existence of Fortune and her emblematic wheel.

A complexity, however, hides within the seemingly straightforward definition of tragedy found in Chaucer’s translation and gloss of Boethius, a complexity which makes it misleading to reduce the medieval genre to the simple equation of worldly good fortune with an inevitable, and capricious, fall. The purpose of this essay is to establish the existence of a type of medieval tragedy which does not invoke an intrusive and irresistible Fortune but which instead discovers the source of tragic action within the context of freely chosen human actions. In presenting this argument, I should like first of all to clarify what it was that the goddess Fortune signified in the Middle Ages and then to offer, in the form of a reading and interpretation of a particular dramatic text, what I take to be an especially effective example of a tragedy of character written in the fourteenth century. The connection between these two purposes is Fortune herself: her function and the extent of her powers are easily misunderstood, and the clarification of what she represented makes it possible to understand the way in which medieval tragedy reconciled the undeniable force of providence with individual moral freedom.

2.

First of all, the whole notion of an autonomous Fortune was deeply disturbing to a medieval theology and world-view which had always insisted on the freedom of the individual will. Beginning in the third and fourth centuries with the writings of Origen, Augustine, Prosper of Aquitaine, Hilary of Poitiers, Jerome and others, and especially within the context of the debate over the teachings of Pelagius, medieval theology fought a long and bitter war against any idea of predestination or any embodiment of fate.7 In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the resistance to theological arguments which were construed as denying the autonomy of the individual was extended to natural science as well, and in the propositions condemned at the University of Paris in 1277 one may find several bearing precisely on this question of individual freedom of action.8 The ancients, from whom the medieval West derived its notion of Fortune, saw this demi-goddess as a purely negative force, a force responsible for the fleeting blessings of material wealth and worldly fame. True goodness and enduring virtue were seen, as in the clear formulation of Aristotle’s Politics, as products of the will, “for no one is just or temperate by or through chance.”[9]
other tragedy, *Troylus and Criseyde*. This solution is discovered in the same way in both texts—through a spiritual awakening that has as its principal consequence the revelation that, for the philosopher as for the Christian, it is the decision to abandon the world that puts one outside the influence of the capriciousness represented by Fortune.\(^{13}\) The example of Troilus demonstrates the extent to which Fortune's power originates in the assent and adoration of those who willingly place themselves in her power: "Swich is this world! forthi I thus delyfne," Pandarus tells Troilus, "Ne trust no wight to fynden in Fortune / Ay proppretie; hire yftes ben commune."\(^{14}\) The ephemeral nature of Fortune's gifts is precisely the lesson that Philosophy teaches Boethius in book two of the *De consolatione*; indeed, as is well known, Boethius's text provides the surest explanation of Troilus's laughter ("And in himself he lough right at the wo / Of hem that wepten for his deth ... "). Boethius writes: "But if the soul, in full awareness of virtue, is freed from this earthly prison and goes to heaven, does it not disregard all earthly concerns and, in the enjoyment of heaven, find its satisfaction in being separated from earthly things?"\(^{15}\) Boethius also makes it clear that no one is naturally enslaved by Fortune and that each human being chooses his or her own destiny: "For who can force any law upon a person, except upon the body, or upon wealth, which is even less than the body? Can you impose upon a free spirit (num quidquam libro imperabis animo)? Can you ever take from a mind fixed in firm reason its state of equilibrium?"\(^{16}\)

Divine providence does not preclude free choice of the will—this is Boethius's central argument and it may be found deeply ingrained in medieval thought generally—and a sinner owes his suffering to incorrect valuations of heavenly and earthly things rather than to a Fortune who is herself subject to the same providence. Troilus's laughter, which is, of course, not the laughter of disdain but of awakening,\(^{17}\) is echoed by an allegorized Reason in one of the sources which, after Boethius, had the most profound influence on Chaucer—the *Roman de la Rose*:

The man who fears Fortune is not brave, for whoever knows both her strength and his own cannot be overthrown by her unless he cooperates ... Be careful, then; do not accept from Fortune either honor or assistance. Let her go on turning her wheel—the wheel she turns ceaselessly, the wheel in whose midst she sits, blindfolded—and, after she has deceived some with wealth and dignity, others with poverty, she takes back all that she has given, as it pleases her. He must be a great fool to find in anything either delight or grief because he could certainly defend himself through the power of his will alone. At the same time,

Fortune is said by many to be divine—exalted to the skies—but this is mistaken; there is no reason to give her a heavenly home, for her dwelling is perilous and not blessed.\(^{18}\)

Reason understands Fortune to be a blind force that merely cooperates in the overthrow of those who, through an irrational attachment to this world's pleasures and pains, have, in effect, caused their own downfall.\(^{19}\) What is tragic is not the world's mutability—what Chaucer called in his poem "Fortune," "This ... ever resteles travayle"—but the spiritual blindness and weakness of those who fail to recognize this mutability and to clinch instead, to the source of stability and order. For her part, Fortune merely occupies the center of a closed moral system, one whose gifts, once accepted, must not only be returned but paid for with suffering. Morally, Fortune evokes a harsh conception of human life, for it is irrelevant what one decides to do once one has chosen to take the circular ride offered on the cupiduous wheel—the only choice is the initial one, and it is binding. Once the sinner chooses Fortune's gifts it is inevitable that he will be hurled around, and off, Fortune's wheel. Such a binary depiction of the possibilities of moral life is Augustinian both in its absoluteness and its clarity: one says yes to the deceptive gifts of this world, to culpidity, or one says no. In either case, the life that follows is created by a decision that is molded by the burden of the flesh and a corrupted nature. In literary terms, the depiction of the tragedy of Fortune likewise assumes a fixed pattern, and examples of this genre typically reproduce the form of rise and fall captured in the iconography of Fortune's wheel. Thus, for example, the tragedies of the "Monk's Tale"—with notable exceptions—depict in formulaic terms the ascent and inevitable destruction of those individuals who cling to Fortune's illusive gifts. In far more graphic terms, the fourteenth-century *Alliterative Morte D'Arthur* depicts, through the vehicle of Arthur's dream of Fortune's wheel, the mechanism whereby a once-just king is overthrown by his corrupted will and his acceptance of the benefits offered by perilous Fortune.\(^{20}\) However, in both these texts, and in others as well, the action of Fortune is the consequence of the tragic choice of incorrect values; Fortune herself merely confirms the fact that those who foolishly step onto her wheel (in Jean de Meun's terms) must expect to be hurled off.

The confirmation of the individual's responsibility for his or her own fate is suitably climaxed in the course of Dante's *Inferno*, when Dante has Virgil affirm the value of Fortune's function within the moral order of the world (*Inferno* 7, vv. 91-96):

This is she who is so reviled by the very men who should give her praise, laying on her wrongful blame and ill repute. But she is blest and does not
hear it. Happy with the other primal creatures, she
turns her wheel and rejoices in her bliss.22

"[S]he that holds the world's wealth in her clutches" ("che i ben del mondo ha si
tra branche," vs. 69) is, in truth, the "minister and guide" ("ministra e dux,") vs. 78) whose necessary function is the maintenance of a mutability "beyond
the prevention of human wits" (vs. 81). Dante is using here the lessons of
Boethius in order to show that what appears to be an unmerited and irrational
misfortune is a meaningful part of a world order that can only be partially
comprehended by man.23 On this point, Dante is clear: "ali! splendor mon-
dani / ordinis" (vss. 77-78)—God has ordained Fortune's work for the splen-
dor of the world, not for its debasement.

By the end of the fourteenth century Fortune is seen as a divine intermedia-
ry whose continual undermining of human self-confidence connects the dis-
parate worlds of divine being and earthly becoming. Thus too are the limits of
de casibus tragedy drawn: it is the corruption of the will that causes the Monk's
protagonists to fall, not the malice of Fortune. Indeed, to equate medieval
tragedy with the figure of Fortune and with the simple image of rise and fall
symbolized by her wheel is a reduction analogous to the equation of Greek
tragedy with the Aristotelian notion of peripeteia—neither concept can, by
itself, explain the source or meaning of a particular kind of willingly chosen
human life. That medieval tragedy of a more complex kind exist can be
understood once the Boethian idea of the corrupted human will and the
Augustinian division between love of God and misdirected love of the world
are brought to bear on those texts which take as their subject the motivations
for fall. The remainder of this essay considers a single representative tragedy—the story of the Creation and the murder of Abel as reconstructed in the Chester cycle—in order to confirm the argument
that the depiction of individual choice rather than the capriciousness of Fortu-
ne informs a type of medieval tragedy which lies beyond the scope of the
de casibus tradition.

3.

The second pageant of the Chester cycle consists of two thematically orga-
nized parts of approximately equal length. The first part, extending to line 384,
depicts the creation of the world, the creation of man, and the temptation and
fall of Adam and Eve. The second part of the play, extending from lines 425 to
704, is the story of the murder of Abel, and it is structurally linked to the Cre-
ation by the speeches of the four angels who were sent to God to guard the
gates of paradise (Genesis 3:24). Another linking device, and one which pro-
vides the play with thematic unity, is Adam's dream (11. 137-140) and the
explication of this dream (11. 437-472). The playwright makes this transitional
device a source not only of structural unity but the foundation for the creation of
a tragic tone.

The Creation is depicted in the Chester play as the imposition of divine
order on chaos and the void—a depiction very much in keeping with the ac-
cepted cosmology of the fourteenth century as presented in commentaries on
Genesis and on Peter Lombard's Sentences.24

Now heaven and earth is made through mee.
The earth is voyde onlty I see;
therefore light for more lee
through my might I will liever. (11. 5-8)25

The first step in the establishment of the play's tragic tone is the presentation
of the conditions of the prelapsarian earth. As Augustine remarked in De Genesi
ad litteram, the perfection of the world before the fall was guaranteed by the
perfection of its cause; all things, emanating from Divine Love, partake of
that love which is their source and cause.26 The fact of creation's plentitude
("Heaven and earth ys wrought all within / and all that needs be therin"
11. 101-102) is enough to ensure that the results are "all of the best." (1. 100)
As in Genesis (2:20), Adam shares in this order through the power of naming
"beastes and fowles," and he is therefore depicted as both the goal of the world
and its caretaker. These prelapsarian conditions of harmony, inherent divin-
ity, shared creation, and meaningful purpose provide the context within which
the two destabilizing sins of the Chester "Creation" are presented.

To this point, the Chester depiction of the Creation adheres closely not only
to traditional theological depictions of this event but also to other drama-
tic representations of it. The version of N-Town (Ludus Coventriac) has
"Deus" summarize the actions of each day of creation in a line or two, pre-
sumably because the real focus of this version is the exchanges which occur be-
 tween Adam, Eve, and the "Serpenes."27 The York and Wakefield-Townley
versions are far more detailed than N-Town and present essentially the same
summary of the creation as Chester.28

The Chester "Creation" is unique, however, in introducing into the midst
of the prelapsarian vision of unity between God and man the suggestion of an
impending fall. In Chester, Adam sleeps as God creates Eve, and when he
awakens, he feels a momentary confusion:

A lorde, where have I longe bine?
For syntence I slepe much have I seene—
wonder that withouten weene
hereafter shalbe wiste. (11. 137-140)

The playwright uses the suggestion of Genesis 2:21 in order to link the Cre-
ation story with the story of the initial transgressions that will unravel the
primal order. Adam, as we learn in 11. 449ff., sees in his dream the course of salvation history; he sees his own fall and its consequence, and yet, given the fact that he is created without knowledge of good and evil ("De ligno autem scientiae boni et mali ne comedas," as Genesis 2:17 expresses the prohibition against the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil), Adam is powerless to understand what he has seen until the commission of sin has given him the knowledge that innocence could not give.37 In the second part of the play, Adam, who is now heir to an imperfect world, understands his earlier vision and the course of events that he himself has set into motion. The dream of Adam, therefore, links a play about order and tragic possibility to a play that actualizes this possibility; the fulcrum on which the drama turns is the dream, for when Adam experiences this intimation of tragedy he is accorded an insight into his own fate that he is nonetheless incapable of understanding. Adam is not thrown from the wheel of fortune; his error is not simply that he is human and therefore destined by original sin to fall—his, after all, is the primal sin. Adam's tragedy is that described by Philosophy in Boethius's De consolatione and by Reason in the Roman de la Rose: he opts for worldly prerogatives, for knowledge and the power it promises, and thereby condemns his progeny to a tragic yearning for the same things.38 Thus the creation in Chester is balanced not only by a fall but by an anti-creation as well—by the murder of Abel.

Adam, who may or may not see the exact fates of Cain and Abel in his dream, at least knows enough to realize that there is a movement of events that cannot be averted once knowledge subverts obedience. Thus he speaks to his sons of his dream:

Whyte that I slepte in that place
my goest to heaven banished was;
for to see I ther had grace
things that shall befall. (11. 441-444)

Unlike Trollos's awakened and enlightened "goest," Adam's soul-journey brings a baleful worldly knowledge rather than a heavenly joy. And in comparison to the dream of fortune presented in the Morte Arthure—a dream in which King Arthur, on his way to fight a war that will destroy him, sees the literal figure of Fortune and her Wheel—Adam's dream remains elusive and inexplicit:

To make you ware of comberous case
and let your deisinge from trespassse,
sonne, I will tell before your face—
but I will not tell all. (11. 445-448)

The ambiguity of this passage provides a heightened sense of the dramatic possibilities inherent in the moment. Is Adam saying that he will tell his sons of sin and its punishment, thereby attempting to prevent them from doing evil; or does he mean to say that in telling them some things (but not all) he will allow them to trespass, or not to trespass, of their own free will? I think that the playwright is using the ambiguity of line 448, and the dream of Adam in general, in order to stress the freedom of action accorded to Adam, to Cain, and to Abel. Everyone viewing the play knows what choices Adam and Cain will make; what they cannot know, what no one can know, is the extent to which the individual choices that comprise salvation history are freely made. In the de castibus tradition it is divine judgment and the fateful rhythm of human aspiration and failure that reigns supreme. In tragedy of a more complex sort, it is individual choice that is the central determinant of an individual's fate. In cultures where a sense of individual helplessness comes to dominate the worldview, the ascendency of fortune or fate indicates the extent to which the human will is subordinated to external forces. What the history of Fortuna indicates is that, in the course of the Middle Ages, her power as an embodiment of the capriciousness of human destiny gradually waned, to be replaced by a greater emphasis on individual freedom of choice. In the case of the Chester "Creation," I think that the playwright has Adam avoid any revelation of what he knows of the future so that Cain and Abel can act freely. Like the prelapsarian Adam, Cain has been made aware of the possibility of transgression but has been denied the exact knowledge of providential history which would negate his freedom to act. This circumscribed freedom exactly defines the theology of Boethian tragedy and the limited powers bequeathed to Fortuna by late medieval writers. The fall of mankind, or of a particular man, is the consequence of a freely willed act—this was a basic principle of medieval thought from the time of Augustine and is repeated by the majority of theologians throughout the Middle Ages—and role of Fortuna is merely to confirm the consequences of this act.

The conflict of individual will with historical destiny is clearly seen in the character of Cain as created by the author of the Chester "Creation." In Towneley and in York, Cain is too single-mindedly brutal to be a tragic figure; he is more like a force of destruction than a human being who chooses to commit a horrible act. In Chester, Cain's motives are explored and his violence is shown to be the unwished for by-product of a set of circumstances he feels that he cannot control. Like Adam before him, Cain's tragic flaw is pride, a pride that cannot understand the nature of the created world order nor his own place in that order. Here, for example, is Cain's blasphemous address to God:

I hope thou wilt white mee this
and send mee more of worldly blisse;
ells forsooth thou doest amisse
and thou bee in my debt. (11. 549-552)
Cain's pride sets things upside-down by causing him to deny the ordering hierarchy which holds the universe together; to ask God for more "worldly bliss" is, indeed, a sin that goes one step beyond the tragic choice of the ephemeral over the eternal made by such figures as Arthur (in the Alliterative Morte Arthure) and the medieval Alexander (briefly recounted in the Monk's Tale, more fully in Vincent of Beauvais), for what Cain's demand implies is a version of the "world upside-down" in that he claims that the eternal is subject to the ephemeral.

Furthermore, Cain is guilty of more than pride. He is guilty also of envy, and it is this particular sin that leads him to select Abel as the object of his violence:

His [Abel's] sacrifice I see God takes, and my refuses and forsakes. My semblant for shame shakes for envy of this thing. (11. 573-576)

Where pride is the sin that displaces the created order of the world, envy is the sin of self-destruction, an inverted pride that aims to reduce others rather than to exalt oneself. A layman's handbook, contemporary with the Chester plays, describes envy in this way:

O who art thou that has enuye of other mens hele? Spare hym, or elles at hardeste spare thy-self, for truly thou mayst not bothe have enuy and lyue.11

Adam's pride violates the cosmic order; Cain's envy violates the human order and the hierarchical ordering of nature. Cain wishes for a sovereignty over Abel that he cannot achieve within the moral realm, so he creates another order for himself, an order of violence, the ultimate perversion of God's world created in love, and, as every medieval man would know, without envy.12

In Genesis, God has told Cain that he shall "rule over" Abel because that is the proper relationship of elder sibling to younger. This natural condition is made a source of the tragedy presented in the Chester 'Creation' play:

But Cayne [God says], thou shalt have all thy will, thy talent if thou wilt fullill. Synne of hit will thee spill and make thee evel to speeche. Thy brother buxome aye shalbe and fully under thy possee; the luste thereof pertaynes to thee. Advye thee of thy deede. (11. 585-592)

Here is the core of Cain's tragedy and the clearest statement of the paradox of a human will both free to act and bound to failure. Undercutting the autonomy of the idea of fortune, God begins his address to Cain by affirming Cain's freedom of choice, but this suggestion is tempered by the last lines which, with their invocation of a singular "deede," remind Cain of the meaning of divine providence: one is free to act (as Lady Philosophy tells Boethius), but this freedom does not prevent God from seeing the whole shape of individual and human history. Cain seems to understand this—and I think this understanding is critical to enhancing the play's tragic tone—for his answer to God, "A, well, well, ys yt seie!?", makes it clear that all that remains is the working out of what must be.

Yet, we must ask, is it so? Hasn't Cain—if he is, as I suspect, accepting his fate—really misunderstood? "The luste thereof pertaynes to thee": what one does is one's own choice, not the automatic consequence of fortune, and Cain is free, at least in God's eyes, to decide how he will use his power over Abel. The emphasis in God's speech to Cain is on the latter's natural authority over his brother; Cain's victim, lacking both social and dramatic status, is truly helpless. Ultimately Abel is to be sacrificed to his brother's lack of understanding, as is clear in Cain's next speech:

God hath challengd me nowe heare for thee, and that in fowle manere; and that shalt thou abyde full deare or that thou wende away. (11. 605-608)

God, in reminding Cain that Abel is in his (Cain's) power ("fully under thy postee"), is not challenging Cain, nor testing him, but simply stating a fact. Cain not only misunderstands the meaning of "postee," he misunderstands the conditions of order that bind God to man, man to the world, and men to one another.

Yet God has also left something out, for he has not told Cain that in addition to this natural hierarchy of relations that govern the way a brother treats a brother, there is another hierarchy, a moral hierarchy, one that dates from, and owes its genesis to, the sin of Adam. Cain thinks that his sovereignty over Abel is total, yet God's acceptance of Abel's offering demonstrates that, in the world of moral relationships, Abel is superior to his brother. Cain chooses to reassert his "postee" through the only means he has fallen will allows. Murder, the ultimate expression of authority, inverts the creation, and in this instance too, the Chester "Creation" moves beyond the kind of tragic action described by the de casibus tradition as presented in Chaucer and Boccaccio. In tragedies of fortune, the primary effect of the hero's fall is personal—Sampson is betrayed, or Cresus falls—rather than social, and this fact is exemplified in the iconography of the Wheel with its dazed and proud "illustrious men" experiencing the
vertigo of fate. But the fates of Adam and Cain are filled with social meaning; Adam's tragedy distorts the relationship between God and man and God and nature, while Cain's tragedy destroys the natural authority that binds one human being to another.

The murder, once committed, is compounded by Cain's despair of grace, the unpardonable sin of "wanhope" which makes absolute, and therefore fully tragic, his damnation:

... and I have done so great a wrong, that unworthy am I to receive forgiveness to atone. (11. 641-644)

No sin is too great to negate God's mercy except, paradoxically, the sin of believing that one's evil is greater than God's goodness. Thus does Cain leap into an abyss of self-destruction from which he cannot emerge; thus is he "dampened without grace" beyond the world of men. Unlike the hero of a de casibus tragedy, Cain seems to fall off the edge of the world rather than off the top of a wheel. The linear recreation of salvation history that gives the Chester plays their overall structure explicitly denies the kind of circularity and formal repetitiveness of the de casibus tradition. The classical tradition out of which the figure of Fortuna grew utilized the concept of circularity to prove a point about the futility of worldly ambition and even of worldly action. When the Judeo-Christian tradition "invented" linear time, it invested actions with a significance created from the fact that history - both personal and collective - was going "somewhere" by progressing through a unique series of events rather than around a familiar cycle of fixed patterns.

Though Cain's actions are a part of salvation history, they are actions done "once and for all," irrevocably, and they are causally binding on all those others who come to bear the moral and physical mark he leaves on this history. Whether the Chester "Creation" is read by itself or as a part of the history of salvation as recounted in the Corpus Christi plays generally, its portrait of a freely chosen tragic destiny - that is, its portrayal of Cain's rejection of his position in the creation - is unusual.

Is Cain an example of an "illustrious" man brought to ruin by the inexorable rhythms of Fortune? The paradigm of the Wheel of Fortune hardly seems to fit the case of the Chester Cain. Unlike the heroes of Chaucer's "Monk's Tale" or Boccaccio's De casibus, Cain never "rises," nor does he fall simply on account of his having chosen the elusive gifts of Fortune. Unlike a figure like Arthur, who does experience the awful caprice of Fortune, Cain is wholly responsible for his own fate, and, furthermore, he receives no promise of resurrection. While the Cain portrayed in the other extant cycles is a brutal victim of Adam's crime, the playwright of Chester has used Adam's dream and its ambiguous reading to call attention to the extent to which Cain is allowed to choose his own fate. Likewise, Cain has for his foe God himself, and his murder of Abel is as much a reflection of his anger at God as his envy and hatred of Abel. Above all else, Cain is not a victim of fortune but a victimizer. The Canterbury pilgrims forced the Monk to cease his tedious tale because it presented so hopelessly a picture of the human condition: "... it is a great disease. / Whereas men have been in great wretched and ese. / To heereon of hire sodeyn fal, alas!..." is the Knight's comment). Cain's tragedy, while it warns of the dangers of pride and envy, confirms the existence of free will and individual choice, and presents a Boethian tragedy of incorrect values rather than of hopeless fate. Cain's story is not one of the "hundred" left lying in the Monk's cell, and it is for this reason that it expands our sense of the possibility of medieval tragedy.

NOTES


5. For the de casibus tradition see William Farnham, The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1936). Farnham argues that "Gothic" tragedy became possible only when medieval contemps mundi literature was influenced by the Boethian formulation of the possibility of meaningful action in this world (see pp. 64-68).

6. See, for example, Laurence Michel, "The Possibility of a Christian Tragedy," in Thought, 31 (1956), pp. 403-428 in which the impossibility of "fully articulated" Christian tragedy, and its absence in the Middle Ages, is discussed.

7. The literature treating the question of free will is immense; influential patristic statements include Hilary of Poitiers, De Trinitate, 1. 19; P. Migne, ed. Patrologia Latina (hereafter PL.) 221 vols. (Paris, 1844-64), vol. 9, Bk. 8, chap. 12. Also, Jerome, Dialogues contra Pelagianos, PL. 23, col. 118, Bk. 1, chap. 4. For a later medieval discussion, see William of Ockham, Tractatus de praedestinatione (Paris, 1889-1897), vol. 1, pp. 543-555; note especially the condemned proposition which reads: "It is an error to believe that nothing happens by chance, but that all things occur out of necessity, and that all future things will also occur out of necessity: ... This is an error because by definition a sequence of causes occurs by chance, as Boethius says in his book De consolatione philosophiae." [number 6]

9. Aristotle, Politics, 1323b 21-30; also Ethics, 1099b 20.


20. An indication of Fortune's limited power appears in the iconography of the goddess. See Lillian Randall, _Images in the Margins of Gothic Mss._ (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1966), plates 684 and 685. Fortune's precarious status and relative powerlessness is also a part of the literary tradition; see R. Bousset, _ed., Alain de Lille, Anicetisus, Texte critique_ (Paris, 1955), Bk. 8: "Fortune's house, clinging to a high rock and threatening to fall down...is subject to every wind and tempest of heaven."


24. A useful account of the history of Genesis commentary is Frank Egleston Robbins, _The Hexameral Literature_ (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1912); also useful is Nicholas H. Steneck, _Science and Creation in the Middle Ages_ (Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1976). Steneck's work is a detailed reading and commentary on Henry of Laggenstein's _Lectura super Genesis_ and provides an overview of later medieval accounts of creation.


26. Boethius, recalling the _Timaeus_ of Plato, describes the creation of the world in this way: "O quid...semper non externe populerant tingere causae... Materiae fluxantium opus, verum insti summi / Forma belli libere carennis..."


32. See Bernardus Silvestris, _De mundi universitate_, ed. C. S. Barach and J. Wrobel (Innsbruck, 1876), Part I ("Megacosmos"), 11. 1–10, which describes how God was free of "the miserable agitation of envy" when he created the world.

Belief, Justification, and Knowledge—
Some Late-Medieval Epistemic Concerns
by
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Introduction

It has become a commonplace in contemporary analytic philosophy to offer a contextual definition of knowledge in terms of the following statement of necessary and sufficient conditions:

\[ a \text{ knows that } p \text{ if and only if } \]

(i) \( a \) believes that \( p \)
(ii) \( p \) is the case
(iii) \( a \) is justified in believing that \( p \)

An enormous amount of literature on various aspects of this statement has been produced and the discussion continues.1

The epistemic/doxastic logic, as we understand it today, arose primarily as a reaction to the seminal work by Jaakko Hintikka, *Knowledge and Belief*.2 This branch of logic may be characterized as a formal or quasi-formal theory of verbs of propositional attitudes such as ‘knows’, ‘believes’, ‘is convinced’, and the like.

Until very recently it has been thought that epistemic logic— together with another special branch, deontic logic— had no precedent in the history of ideas. However, it has been noted during the past six or eight years by students of obscure medieval texts entitled *De scire et dubitare* as well as of several other genres of logical writings3 that these texts seem to be concerned in a quasi-formal way precisely with the verbs of propositional attitudes. Furthermore, some counterexamples used by medievals were strikingly similar to the counter examples used by modern epistemologists and logicians against the various formulations of the statement of necessary and sufficient conditions for ‘\( a \) knows that \( p \)’.

My present discussion is based primarily on the following sources: William Heytesbury, *De scire et dubitare*; Cajetan of Thiene, Exposition of Heytesbury’s
De scire et dubitare; Peter of Mantua, De scire et dubitare; Ralph Strode, Consequentia; John Wyduif, Logica, ch. 21 and Logica Continuatio, ch. 3 and ch. 13; Alexander Sermoneta, Commentary of Strode's Consequentia; Paul of Pergula, Dubia on Strode's Consequentia; Antonius Frachiantius' Questions on Strode's Consequentia; Cajetan of Thiene, Clarification of Strode's Consequentia; Paul of Venice, De scire et dubitare and his Logica parva, ch. 3; and Blanchelius Menghus' commentary on Paul of Venice. Most of the authors flourished in the second half of the 14th century and in the first half of the 15th century. Except for Paul of Venice, De scire et dubitare, critically edited and with translation by Patrici Clark under the title On Knowing and Being Uncertain in 1978, these texts were printed only as incunabula in the last two decades of the 15th century.

Plan of Presentation

My paper is divided into five sections. In the first I present various distinctions between scire which apparently were quite current at least from the times of William Heytesbury (d. 1372/73) through the 15th century. In the second I present a reconstruction of several late-medieval elementary epistemic theses. In the third section I point to those medieval discussions of epistemic and doxastic principles which anticipate Hintikka's consideration of the so-called KK-thesis. In the fourth I discuss a Gettier-like counter example to a popularly accepted broad sense of scire and also point out the use of Peter of Mantua (d. 1399) made of this counter example. In the fifth and last section I attempt to show how epistemic logic, like the syllogistic theory earlier, was absorbed by the general theory of consequentia.

Section One

In what appears to be a ripe stage of development of medieval logic we find in Cajetan of Thiene (1387–1465) a distinction of four senses of 'to know' (scire). These and other distinctions seem to have circulated before and after Cajetan's time in various forms and were used for various purposes.

(1) Scire communiter: 'to know is to believe firmly, without hesitation, together with the fact that
it is so'.

Using 'B,p' as an abbreviation for 'a believes weakly that p' (or perhaps for 'a conjectures that p'), 'B,T,p' for 'a believes strongly that p' (or for 'a believes firmly without hesitation that p'), or for 'a is convinced that p'), 'S,T,p' for 'a knows that p' (using superscripts 'S', 'T', etc., to reflect the various senses of scire) we could proceed to represent the definitions given by medievallists in more familiar, schematic forms. Thus, the definition expressed in sentence (1) just given can be rendered as

\[ Df_1 \quad S,T,p = \neg B,s,p \]

This definition amounts to the claim that knowledge is true belief.6 Cajetan says that knowledge in this sense is "a mental grasp (scire) of anything, without a danger that the opposite be the case". And he adds that it is in this sense that contingent propositions are known, e.g., that Rome is a large city, or that the pope is a priest.6 One can view this first sense of scire to be closely related to the definition given much earlier by William of Heytesbury, in whose De scire et dubitare we find the following passage: "Hence, speaking about knowing in the broad sense, 'to know' is nothing else than to grasp truth without hesitation that it is so, and in addition that it is so in fact".12 On the surface, the two formulations seem to specify the same necessary conditions for knowledge: firm belief and truth. However, we should follow the wording of Heytesbury more literally and take seriously his location 'to grasp truth'. For 'to believe p' and 'to believe that p is true' may not always be taken to be synonymous, the reason being that 'to know that p' and 'to know that p is true'—which they are invoked to help define—also are not always taken to be synonymous.11 For a person not knowing Latin may conceivably know that Socrates is running without knowing that 'Socrates currit' is true. Furthermore, there were many views on the question of what is a proposition and what are the objects of knowledge.12 Thus we should perhaps schematicize Heytesbury's definition by Df1, S,T,p = \neg B,s,p \land p, discuss the relevant differences between 'p' and 'T,p', and only then answer the question whether the two definitions really amount to one and the same claim.

The next sense of 'knowing' given by Cajetan of Thiene is

(2) Scire proprio: 'a mental grasp of anything true, and necessary without a danger that the opposite be the case'.13

Schematically,

\[ Df_2 \quad S,p = \neg B,p \land \neg T,p \]

Here, as well as in the next two definitions the phrase 'a mental grasp' is used, instead of 'a believes' or 'a believes without hesitation', which was used in conjunction with scire communiter, and one may well question the wisdom of our transcription in terms of the most general doxastic attitude represented by 'B,p'. Initially, one might be tempted to suggest that 'having a mental grasp' is simply making explicit the general presupposition which seems to be left out in most contexts, namely, that in order to know that p in any sense, one must understand (intelligere, comprehendere, percipere, etc.) p. For some purposes, for example, in their examination of iterated modalities14 it was seen to be
essential to include $\iota p' (a$ understands $p$, or a grasps $p$) together with further claims that $a$ believes $p$ or that $a$ knows $p$, etc. And if we were not allowing any elliptical way of speaking—omitting what is automatically taken for granted or what is too obvious to be stated—we should reconstruct the first definition as
\[
Df_{\iota} S'p := Lp & R \forall p & p.
\]
Now the second definition, on that model, should be rendered as
\[
Df'_{\iota} S'p := Lp & \Box p.
\]
However, there seems to be no good reason for insisting on the explicit statement of the general presupposition here. More importantly, it seems that this would obliterate the distinction between understanding the sense of a proposition and knowing that it is so, as claims, or knowing that what it claims is necessarily so. It seems to be not unreasonable to suggest that in these contexts having 'a mental grasp' means the same as 'to believe' or 'to accept'. Furthermore, I venture to offer one plausible reason why Cajetan did not use 'believe' in these contexts, and it is this: While it is quite natural for me to say that I believe that Rome is a large city (or any other contingent proposition) if I am ever able to say that I know that Rome is a large city (that is, in the case this proposition happens to be true), it is less natural to say that I must believe that $2 + 3 = 5$ in order ever to be able to say that I know that $2 + 3 = 5$. In the latter case the very 'mental grasps' of the object "implies", or is tantamount to, a concomitant belief or conviction that it is so.

In $Df_{\iota}$, the proposition known must be in some sense a necessary and not a contingent truth. Of course, this still leaves room for distinctions between various kinds of necessity, but the drawing of these distinctions is a job for metaphysics and natural philosophy. His own illustration of a necessary $p$ is the "common principle", 'Of anything, being or not being is predicated, but of nothing both', i.e., the logical principle of excluded middle, $(\forall x) (Fx v \sim Fx)$ & $\sim (\exists x) (Fx & \sim Fx)$.

The next sense of knowing is

(3) Scire magis propri: 'a mental grasp of any thing by means of a demonstration, be it demonstratio-quid or demonstratio-propter quid, be it universal or particular'.

Schematically,
\[
\]

$Jp$ is used here as an abbreviation for 'a has a demonstration, weak or strong, for $p$ available', or simply as an abbreviation for 'a is justified in believing that $p$'. Also, $p$ itself may or may not be necessary, since it is possible to demonstrate a contingent fact as well as a necessary theorem of logic, arithmetic, or same quantitative science. We may call this the weak justified-true-belief doctrine.

The last sense of knowing recognized by Cajetan in this particular classification is

(4) Scire propriissime: 'a mental grasp of anything acquired by the most powerful demonstration, which is in some way different from a quiplus demonstratio',

Schematically,
\[
Df_{\iota} S'p := B \forall p & p & Jp.
\]

I.e., the demonstratio propter quid is available. This is a demonstration not only that $p$ is the case, but also why it must be the case; i.e., it lays out reasons or causes of $p$. $Jp$ is used as an abbreviation for 'a has a strict demonstration for $p$ available'. Although problematic, this sense of justification could perhaps be rendered by the following equivalence:

\[
Jp := (\exists q_1, ..., q_n) (q_1 & ... & q_n & (q_1, ..., q_n \sim p) & (Bp_1 & ... & Bp_n)).
\]

We may call this the strong justified-true-belief doctrine.

Section Two

That the most important laws of basic epistemic/doxastic relations were in fact known by medieval could be shown by appeal to various texts. I want to stress here that these laws were not presented en bloc in a deductively organized way; but, on the other hand, they were not simply principles which we must assume to have been in the back of their minds in order that we may anachronistically reconstruct their system. My claim is that these laws were in fact stated, as needed and where needed, in the medieval analyses of natural language and its epistemic/doxastic uses. I label these principles as $E$-principles and number them for possible reference.

\[
E_1, S'p \rightarrow Bp, \ldots \text{ the consequent will not be known by you because it is not believed by you}.\]

Directly from the text we have, of course, $\neg Bp \rightarrow \neg S'p$, but since any system of consequences contains the transposition rule, $(p \rightarrow q) \rightarrow (\sim q \rightarrow \sim p)$ and conversely, we get $E_1$ in a single step.

That credere is implied by (any definition of) scire is stated by Peter of Mantua independently of his definition of scire in the following passage which has to do ostensibly with the question of composite and divided senses of propositions: "You know that no man is an ass $[S_1 (\forall x) \neg (\neg A_1 x \rightarrow \neg A_2 x)]$, therefore
each man you know not to be an ass \((\forall x) (\text{Man}_x \rightarrow \text{S}_x \sim \text{Ass}_x)\). From which it follows that each man you believe not to be an ass \((\forall x) (\text{Man}_x \rightarrow \text{B}_x \sim \text{Ass}_x)\).

We have already seen in Section One Heytesbury's and Cajetan's statement of necessary and sufficient conditions for \textit{seire communiter dictum}. These and other definitions\(^\text{23}\) imply that to know \textit{communiter} presupposes a belief, or at least a firm belief, or a belief without hesitation, or a belief that something is true, and so we may add to our list of epistemic principles

\[
E_2 \quad S_\varphi \rightarrow B_\varphi
\]

and

\[
E_3 \quad S_\varphi \rightarrow B_aT_p
\]

In Peter of Mantua we find an explicit statement that "nothing is known unless it is true"\(^\text{24}\) and thus a foundation for the thesis

\[
E_4 \quad S_\varphi \rightarrow T_\varphi
\]

or possibly for

\[
E_5 \quad S_\varphi \rightarrow p,
\]

since it is not clear whether he is using here 'true' as 'what is the case' or as a semantic predicate as applicable to propositions.

Another passage from Peter of Mantua brings in the idea that if I can be said to know a proposition, I must have some sort of justification. It is the kind of question which may have stimulated formulations of definitions such as \(D_p\) or \(D_p\). However, the context from which it is taken and the examples used suggest that it concerns itself with knowledge of contingent propositions. What it says is that a firm belief of a proposition which happens to be true does not yet constitute knowledge, and that something else is needed. Peter writes:

You believe firmly without hesitation that Socrates is running; and Socrates is running; therefore you know that Socrates is running. This consequence is clearly valid from the definition of what to know means. And yet you do not know that Socrates is running, because you have no evidence on the basis of which you know that Socrates is running, therefore you do not know that Socrates is running.\(^\text{25}\)

We can gather that in view of this case \((B_\varphi & \varphi) \rightarrow S_\varphi\) is to be rejected and therefore that one could never set up \(D_\varphi\) as a viable definition of knowledge even of contingent propositions. At least one more necessary condition has to be fulfilled. We might state this necessary condition as a further epistemic thesis

\[
E_5 \quad S_\varphi \rightarrow E_\varphi
\]

or perhaps as

\[
E_6 \quad S_\varphi \rightarrow I_\varphi
\]

reading '\(E_\varphi\)' as 'has appropriate evidence for \(p\)', and '\(I_\varphi\)' as 'has a justification, but not necessarily any demonstration or proof, available for \(p\)'.

As we already saw in the preceding section, medievals generally presupposed, but in some contexts insisted, that the epistemic or the doxastic subject consider \(p\), or understand \(p\), before he could be said to know that \(p\) or before he is obliged to reply to \(p\) in any way in an \textit{obligatio}. Thus we find in Alexander Sermoneta's critical exposition of Strode the clarification that "the Master [i.e., Strode] must be understood in the light of two suppositions which he had made explicitly, one of which is this, 'The antecedent is known, therefore it is understood' is evident'.\(^\text{26}\) Thus, a thesis not known to our epistemic logic is clearly endorsed by medievals, i.e.,

\[
E_3 \quad S_\varphi \rightarrow I_\varphi
\]

and its transposed version

\[
E_8 \quad \sim I_\varphi \rightarrow \sim S_\varphi
\]

Furthermore, one should not forget that one of the twenty-four consequence-rules of Strode governs propositions logically determined by the epistemic operator \(I\) (\textit{intelectum}). This is, of course, Rule 23: "If the antecedent is understood by you, then the consequent is also understood by you".\(^\text{27}\) Like many other rules of this set, this one too is most likely stated elliptically; we should probably have \(I(p \rightarrow q)\) rather than simply \(p \rightarrow q\) in the schematic representation of the rule

\[
E_9 \quad (p \rightarrow q) & I(p \rightarrow q) & I \models I_q
\]

Several other epistemic/doxastic concepts, e.g., \(a\) considers \(p\), \(a\) perceives \(p\) (but this perception is not to be confused with sensory perception) are in vogue and they play an important role in the realm of higher order and iterated
modalities. Reading through this incunabular literature, one realizes that
medieval semantics was in a certain sense much richer than our own, and any
symbolic logical machinery which we have available will have to be improved
upon to reflect the kind of problems which were raised by the late-medieval
philosophers and logicians.

Section Three

I can touch only very briefly the topic of higher-order epistemic modalities
and, in particular, the specific iteration which occurs in our own time in the
KK-theorem proposed by Jaakko Hintikka in his *Knowledge and Belief*. The
KK-theorem states that if an epistemic subject *a* knows that *p*, then he knows
that he knows that *p*. Using *S* (suggested by *scire*) instead of *K* as the logical
functor, the thesis may be stated as a further epistemic principle

\[ E_{10} \quad S_a p \rightarrow S_a S_a p, \]

One might say that this is the weak version of the thesis. The strong version
would be a biconditional,

\[ E_{11} \quad S_a p = S_a S_a p, \]

i.e., *a* knows that *p* if and only if *a* knows that he knows that *p*.

Perhaps some existantialists, too, or at least J.-P. Sartre among them,\(^2\)
may be seen as endorsing this thesis; however, if they indeed do so, their pri-
mary epistemic concept would be 'being conscious of' rather than 'knows', and
the corresponding iteration thesis would be stated as

\[ E_{12} \quad a \text{ is conscious of } O \text{ if and only if } a \text{ is conscious of being conscious of } O. \]

The thesis has been, and continues to be, hotly debated in our present-day
philosophy. But it has also been proposed, discussed, endorsed, as well as
questioned in late medieval philosophy. Thus, William Heytesbury endorses,
among others, the following principle involving iterated modalities:

\[ E_{13} \quad (S_a p \land C_p p) \rightarrow P_a P_a p, \]

i.e., if *a* knows that *p* and *a* considers whether he perceives *p* then *a*
perceives that he perceives *p*. He offers an indirect proof for this thesis and also
deduces from it the thesis

\[ E_{14} \quad P_a P_a p \rightarrow P_a S_a p, \]

arguing by way of example that "you perceive that you perceive with certainty
and without hesitation that the king is in London, therefore you perceive that
you know that the king is in London".\(^3\)

Peter of Maintua considers *S_a S_a p* and the like to be well-formed expre-
sions, just as *S_a p*, *P_a p*, etc., are, but he does not yet offer any epistemic
principles of iteration; the principles that he does offer are all of the sort we en-
countered in the preceding section; which are principles that directly follow
from his definitions of *scire*, *credere*, *dubitare*, *considerare*, *intelligere*,
and other basic epistemic/doxastic concepts.\(^4\)

We do find, however, an actual endorsement of the (weak version of) KK-
thesis, *E_{10}*, in the *Questiones in Consequentias Rudolfi Strodi* by Antonius Franchi-
tianus Vicentius. And Cajetan of Thiene in his *Questiones in Consequentias
Rudolphi Strodi* not only states the thesis but also attempts to provide a proof
for it.\(^5\)

Section Four

The longer passage of Peter of Maintua quoted above suggests that there is
some epistemic basis for believing, or for accepting, that *p*; but that is not
introduced to us as a special condition as yet. Perhaps there is a good reason
for Peter's not giving the basis or the evidence-condition as yet, since he has an
ax to grind. What he wants to do is to show that *Df_\text{f}*, as stated above is not
satisfactory. He does that especially vividly by presenting the following case:

Let it be assumed that Plato is next to you and you
know him to be running, but you mistakenly
believe that he is Socrates, so that you firmly
believe that Socrates is running. However, let it be
so that Socrates is in fact running in Rome; how-
ever, you do not know this.\(^6\)

This case certainly resembles the Gettier problem\(^5\) of 1963 and its pur-
puses are the same. Both attempted to offer a counter example to the claim that
if *a* (strongly) believes that *p* and *p* is the case (or that *p* is true), then *a*
knows that *p*. And both succeeded in showing that while the truth and the belie-
fection might be necessary, it does not seem to be sufficient for *a* 's knowing
that *p*. What seems to be lacking is a justification or evidence-condition. Or,
perhaps, we are hesitant to say that *a* knows that *p* because we suspect that the
evidence for the knowledge claim is sort-of misplaced. Our observation of the
individual here (who is not Socrates) who is running is in no way relevant to
the fact that Socrates is running (in Rome). We have the feeling that *Df_\text{f}*, of
knowing should be discarded and that we should insist on some stronger defi-
nition, e.g., a definition of *scire communiter* of contingents such as

\[ Df_{\text{f}} \quad S_a p := B^* a p \land p \land J a p. \]
or perhaps

$$Df_4 \quad S^*\varphi p = \Diamond^* \varphi p \land p \land E_p \varphi p.$$  

Our case does not meet the third condition, that of being justified in believing that $p$ or that of having evidence for $p$. Thus, Peter's counterexample is rather fatal to $Df_1$.

One might think that Peter would be satisfied with the force of his counter example, stimulating as it is the proponent of $Df_1$ to construct a more adequate definition (such as $Df_1$, $Df_2$) of knowledge. Certainly, in our times, "Gettier's counter example" served as a stimulus for such further elaborations. However, Peter was in fact making a much stronger use of his counter example; he uses it as a standard reductio ad absurdum proof that the definition of $S_p$ is logically incoherent, on the ground that it implies a contradiction. For he continues the passage cited above as follows:

Given this, you both know that Socrates is running and also know that Socrates is running, and thus, by the same evidences what is known is unknown to you.  

To Peter, this conclusion is self-contradictory and entails the falsity of $Df_1$ by the general principle $p \rightarrow (q \land \neg q) \rightarrow \neg p$, i.e., if something entails a self-contradiction, it must itself be logically false or incoherent.

Peter obviously thinks that known and doubtful are logically incompatible. That he was entitled to do so can be shown by observing the usual definition of 'doubtful proposition':

$$Df_7 \quad D_p := \neg S_p \land \neg S_\neg p$$

or

$$Df_8 \quad D_p := \neg S_p \land \neg S_\neg p \land \neg S_\neg p.$$  

Meeting the two versions of definition for $D_p$ again brings me to the observation that the medieval authors were remarkably sensitive to various knowledge situations and our accounts of them. A very important difference was drawn between 'knowing a proposition' and 'knowing a proposition to be true' (as well as the parallel distinction between 'knowing a consequence' and 'knowing a consequence to be sound'). Given such a distinction, Cajetan can allow that there is some proposition which is known by you and yet you cannot know it to be true, e.g., 'This proposition is not known by anyone to be true',—it itself being pointed out. These distinctions are vital not only in dealing

with self-referential propositions or propositions which in some way reflect upon themselves, but are also useful in accommodating knowledge and belief on the strength of a worthy authority; for in this latter case we might not even adequately understand a proposition and thus not know it (see above the principles $E_p \rightarrow \neg p \rightarrow \neg S_p$ and $E_p \rightarrow \neg S_p$, and yet know it to be true, or believe it to be true, relying on the strength of an authority).

Section Five

Among the famous twenty-four consequence-rules of Ralph Strode we find nine which belong to the classical propositional logic, four which belong to the theory of obligations, six which belong to alethic modal logic, two which belong to as yet undeveloped logic of quality, and three which belong to epistemic/doxastic logic. These are Rules 13, 14, and 23 on the list of Strode and are identified by those numbers by commentators (Alexander Sermoneta, Paulus Pergulensis, Cajetan of Thieme, Franchantianus Viccentius, and possibly others).

Rule 23 has already been stated, Rules 13 and 14 are stated as follows:

$$R_{13} \quad \text{If the antecedent is known, the consequent is also known.}$$

$$R_{14} \quad \text{If the consequent is doubtful, the antecedent is also doubtful or known to be false.}$$

The rules are stated elliptically, and, as they stand, cannot be admitted as valid. But Strode himself in his own discussion of these rules, and certainly his commentators emphatically insisted that there should be a valid amendment to the antecedents of these rules, i.e., that the epistemic subject $s$ should not only start with a consequence but that the consequence should be known by him to be sound. Thus, Rule 13, for example, should read:

If a consequence is sound and known by you to be sound, then, if the antecedent is known by you, the consequent is also known by you, i.e.,

$$(p \rightarrow q) \land S_p \rightarrow S_q \rightarrow (S_p 

and correspondingly to 14th rule,

$$(p \rightarrow q) \land S_p \rightarrow q \rightarrow [D_p \rightarrow S_q \rightarrow S_{\neg p} \rightarrow S_{\neg p}].$$

To accommodate counter examples, a still more refined definition is offered by Cajetan of Thieme in his commentary on Strode:
Conclusion

There can be no doubt that there exists an interesting medieval predecessor of our own epistemic logic developed only three decades ago. Just like in other areas of logic we have here a case not of a continuation of development but of a total break and, after four centuries, a re-invention. And just like in other areas of logic, so here in the epistemic realm the re-discovery and appreciation by the 20th century historians of logic went one step behind the development of the appropriate formal tools by modern logicians. We seem to become interested in old texts when we recognize something familiar in them and eventually realize that the old logical-philosophical worries are not completely alien to our own. Indeed with some effort and sensitivity we may come to realize that we can learn a lot from our medieval predecessors.*

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NOTES


3. I have in mind here primarily the treatments of officiating words (termini officiales) of the probatioes terminorum doctrine, certain portions of treatises on composite and divided sense, some passages in treatises de suppositionibus terminorum, several rules of consequences, and some passages in the treatment of modal syllogisms. Cf. I. Boh, "Elements of Epistemic Logic in Later Middle Ages", forthcoming in the Philosophes Médévaux, 1985.

4. In my transcriptions I keep the Latin spelling as it is, except for capitalizing names and places.


6. Cf. Expositio tractatus Henrici de scire et dubitare by famosum doctorem Gestnium complete, which is printed as part of Chapter Three of the Regule solvendi sophismata. Venice, Bonetum Locoscelli, 1494 (fol. 16r-20A), immediately following the text by Heytesbury (fol. 12r-16A). The various senses of scire are distinguished by Cajetan in the very beginning of his exposition: "Scire multis modis dictum: committer, proprium, magis proprium, et proprie... Scire committere sic definitur: Scire est firmiter credere abaque hesitacione cum hoc quod ida sit ex parte rei." (16r)

7. One might recall, Plato had rejected this view as inadequate in his Theaetetus when proposed as the first attempt to answer the question: What is knowledge?

8. "Communitas quidem sanctorum pro cunctis ipsis veritatis sine formidini de oppo- sitio, cuitosmodi sciantur contingentia, ut quod Roma est magna civitas, vel quod papa est sanctus" (16r).

9. By "much earlier" I do not mean, of course, much earlier in the text but chronologically, given that Heytesbury died in 1375 and that Cajetan of Thiene lived from 1387 to 1465. All references here to Heytesbury are from Regule solvendi sophismata, which starts with the following treatises of great logical and philosophical interest (or chapters): (1) De sensu compenso et diviso Henrici, without commentary (fol. 2r-4b); (2) De insinuabulis, with a commentary by Cajetan of Thiene (fol. 4a-14b); (3) De scire et dubitare, with a commentary by Cajetan of Thiene (fol. 12a-20A); and (4) De relative, with a commentary by Cajetan of Thiene (fol. 20a-23b). An excellent study of the first of these, in its historical context, was recently made by Norman Kreitmam, "Sensus Compositus, Sensus Divisus, and Propositional Attitudes", Medieval - Rivista di Storia della Filosofia Medievale 7 (1981), pp. 193-229. Professor Kretzmann also graciously made available to me a revised draft, as yet unpublished, of an English translation of this tract, for which I am very grateful, since epistemic/doxastic words figure prominently in the Eighth Mode of that work. A translation and a critical study of Heytesbury's second treatise was published by Paul Spade, William Heytesbury: On "Insoluble" Sentences, Medieval Sources in Translation 21, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, 1979. On the transmission of Oxford logic to Italy one should read William J. Courtney, "The Early Stages in the Introduction of Oxford Logic into Italy", in English Logic in Italy in the 14th and 15th Centuries, (Ed. by Alonzo Maier), Bibliopolis, Naples, 1982.

10. Heytesbury, De scire et dubitare: "Unde commemor loquendo de scire sicut community sciatur contingentia, scire non est alii quam sine hesitacione apprehendere
Belief, Justification, and Knowledge

veritatem, idest, credere sine hesitazione quod ita sit et cum hoc quod ita sit ex parte rei". (12'B)

11. For example, Alexander Severine (d. 1486) discussing Strode's 14th century rule of consequence, makes the following remark: "Aliud est scire propositionem et alidum scire eas esse veram. Si enim aliqua propositione esse vera non intellecta et auctoritate praecipue ad predictam credere esse veram, tunc eoque scire illam esse veram: et tamen non scire illam, quia non intelligere illam". He adds that it makes a big difference in obligations to concede a proposition and to concede it as true: "Prenuntiatur secundo quod alidum est concedere propositionem et alidum est concedere illam esse veram. In caso enim priori non concedere illam propositionem eo quod non est intellecta; concedere tamen illam esse veram". Cf. Excellus Monsignorium et medicinae doctrinis Magistri Alexander Sermonis de consensu Strodi commentarium, Venetiis, 1488 fol. 88'B.

There is a helpful study of more general nature on Sermones and the historical context of his intellectual activities by Edward N. Dukes in the form of a Ph.D. dissertation at Columbia University, N.Y., 1973, under the title, Alexander Sermones's Commentaries on Heyesbury and Strode: A Contribution to Late Medieval Logic in England and Italy. This work also contains some very important biographical data.


13. Cajetan, Expositio: "Seire proprium est cucurbit verit et necesitari nostisia sine formidina ad oppositum". (12'B)


17. Cajetan, Expositio: "Et hoc modo ponuntur principia communia; ut de quilibet dicatur esse vel non esse, et de nullo eorum". (16'A)


19. Cajetan, Expositio: "Scire autem propriisima sumptum est cucurbit noetitia per demonstrationem potissimum acquisita, quae qualiter a demonstratione quae distinguitur." He adds: "Et utrum omnis demonstratio propriet quid sit potissima demonstratio ex primo Principio est colligendum". (16'A)

20. See Wolfgang Lenzen, "Zum Problem des Fundamentalismus aus der Perspektive der epistemischen Logik" (Grazer Philosophische Studien 22 (1984), pp. 15-25) for this and two other definitions of 'lp'. In the name of accuracy I should point out that Lenzen's D1 utilizes in the last part of the formula U(a,p) (which is his abbreviation of 'a lat' dono verbo, dass 'p') where we have merely 'BP' (a believes that p). Although Peter, like Gaetan, does recognize at other places the stronger idea, 'a believes firmly and without hesitation', which would be closer to the idea of 'a' being convinced that p, he does not use that precise phrase in the present context and so 'BP' rather than 'BP' was used.

21. Cajetan of Thiene, Questions in Consequentia Strodi: "Consequens non erit scium a te quia non est credendum a te". (15'B). The fact that in the context the consequent is not believed for the simple reason that it is not understood does not underline in any way Cajetan's thesis that if a proposition be known, it must be at least believed.

22. Peter of Marsena, Logica, Venetiis, Simon Bevilaqua, I.xi, 1420, De scire et dubitare (33'-34'). The translation into natural English is a bit awkward, but there seems to be no smooth way to preserve for an E proposition the logical distinction between the composite and the divided sense brought about by epistemic and doxastic functions such as 'scire and credere' which is reflected in the formulas 'S(x)(V(x) (F₁, x) → G₁)' and 'V(x) (F₂, x) → S₁ (G₂)'. The formulas are, of course, not equivalent, just as the two statements, 'Scio quod quilibet homo non est asinus' (scio compositus or de dicto sense) and 'Quin etiam hominem scio non esse asinum' (sensus divisus or de re sense), were not equivalent for medievalists. Many puzzles centered around these two senses of proposition, as can be illustrated by this passage from the Logica of Peter of Marsena: "Item sequitur quod aliquid credis esse asinum et idem credis non esse asinum. Quis posnetur quod aliquid homo apparenti tibi asinus, et bene scias tu quod nullas homas est asinus. Et arguerit sii. Tu scis quod quilibet homo non est asinus, igitur quin etiam hominem scio non esse asinum; ex quo consequienti sequitur quod quin etiam hominem credis non esse asinum, et tamen aliquem hominem credis esse asinum; qui sii Socrates; igitur aliquem hominem credis esse asinum et eundem credis non esse asinum". (15'A)

While Peter is using this fallacious reasoning as a case to refute, the inference expressed in the underlying passage is not questioned by him at all.

23. The definitions in question that I have in mind are all definitions of knowing contingent events.

24. This principle is embedded in the following passage from his Tractatus de scire et dubitare: "Item arguir et contra illud quod dicere rem esse vel rem scire, et non propositionem ut proposio est. Quia sequitur quod tam operation falsa scire quam propositione vera; quia proposio falsae tam cognoscit aut tam cognosci potest per complexa quae sunt propositiones quam propositione vera. Consequens falsum, quia nihil scire nisi verum". (Logica 15'B)

26. In Consequentiis Strodi Comentariolum: “Dixisse premittit Magister [i.e., Strodi] supponiciones. Prima est una talis: Antecedens est sicut, ergo intellectum... Secunda supposition: Ista propositio est bona, ‘Tu scis hoc consequens sequi ex antecedente intellecto a te, ergo scis hoc consequens principaliter significat scis significare sive hoc consequens est intellectum a te. Patet, quia aliter starat quod scis aliquid quod non est intellectum a te sequi ex intellecto a te; quod est impossibile.” (6b 8b)

27. “Si antecedens est intellectum a te, ergo et consequens est intellectum a te.” Consequentia Strodi were printed with or without commentaries many times, yet no critical edition has appeared yet in print. There is a useful modern edition of the first part included in Lorenzo Pozzi, Le Consequentiae nella Logica Medievale, Collana di “Testi e Saggi”, Liviana Editrice, Padova 1978. Pozzi’s book also contains, in addition to the analytic study of medieval logic-literature on the subject (pp. 1–132) significant excerpts from the writings of Abelard the Great, Robert Kilwardby, William Ockham, Pseudo-Scot, Walter Burleigh, John Buridan, Albert of Saxony, Richard Ferrybridge, Peter of Manutia, as well as Ralph Strode. There is, however, a doctoral dissertation containing an edition and English translation of the complete Consequentia Strodi, i.e., the general as well as the special rules of consequences, available through University Microfilms. This dissertation is by Seaton W. Knight, An Edition and Translation of the “Tractatus de Consequentia” by Ralph Strode, Fourteenth-Century Logistician and Friend of Geoffrey Chaucer, University of California, Berkeley, 1973.


31. I cite a passage simply to illustrate that Peter considered iterated modalities to be perfectly legitimate, even if they present problems of their own: “Ad octavum concektor quod in casu tu dubitas te scire Socrates curatum et negatur ista consequentia: Tu scis Socratcurum et consideras sufficienter an Socrates curatum igitur percipies certitudinaliter te scire Socratcurum. Sic ut non sequitur: Tu dubitas Socratcurum et consideras sufficienter utrum dubitas Socratcurum, igitur percipies certitudinaliter te dubitare Socratcurum. Nec per eandem evidentiam omnino dubitas an scis Socratcurum, et scis vel dubias te dubitare vel scire Socratcurum.” (Logica k1 pB)

32. Cf. Franchianus, Questiones in Consequentiis Strodi: “Tu scis sic esse vel sic, ergo tu scis te scire sic esse vel sic”. (17a); and Cajetan of Thiene, Expositio: “Et igitur scis sic esse vel sic, ergo tu percipies sic esse vel sic et consideras utrum percipies sic esse vel sic, ergo tu percipies te percipieres sic esse vel sic. Patet consequentia, quia ex eo eadem evidentia quibus percipies sic esse vel sic te percipieres sic esse vel sic. Ex quo sequitur ullius insue, quod tu scis scire sic esse vel sic.” (17a)

33. See n. 24, the first part which is not italicized and which provided the setting. We might mention here that a very similar case is entertained by Cajetan in his Expositio... De scire et dubitare: “Contra descriptionem datam de scire committeri dicitis instaur. Et ponere quod Plato sit coram te, quem scias curatum et etiam si sit Sortes iia quod credas Sortem curatum. Sit tamen Sortes Rome, te necesse, et curat. Tunc patet, quod tu credas firmiter absque hesitazione Sortem curatum, et etsi est quod Sortes curatum, et tamen tu non scis Sortem curatum, qua nullas habes evidentias propter quas sic scias. Habes enim evidentias de Platone currente coram te, que non faciunt ad hoc quod tu scias Sortem curatum.” (16b)


35. Cf. n. 24.

36. Thus, we find the following sentence as the very opening of Heyesbury De scire et dubitare: “... Nil habi scire ab aliqua quod edem est dubium”. We could represent this as $D_{p} = \sim S_{p}$; i.e., if $p$ is doubtful to $a$, then it cannot be the case that $a$ knows $p$. Just a little further down, Heyesbury makes a stipulation: “Primo supponarum quod igitur propositio de quae considerat aliquid quam ille nescit esse verum, nec scie esse falsam, sit dubia edem”. (12a) This latter entitles us to a more complete definition, i.e., $D_{p} = \sim S_{p} \land \sim S_{a} \sim p$ or better, $D_{p} = \sim S_{a} \sim T_{p} \land \sim S_{p} p$. We are still not explicitly given enough information whether the converse implication also holds. However, from the subsequent discussion of problems one can see that $(\sim S_{p} \land \sim S_{a} \sim p) \rightarrow D_{p}$ or $(\sim S_{a} \sim T_{p} \land \sim S_{p}) \rightarrow D_{p}$, and that our definition equivalences are indeed justified. Thus, Heyesbury himself a few paragraphs below allows the following argument: “Et igitur sub: Quia tu scis illud esse unam propositionem quam non scis esse verum nec scis esse falsam, igitur ista est tibi dubia”. (13a) Occasionally, $D_{p}$ seems to be equated simply with $\sim S_{a} \sim T_{p}$.

37. Consequentia Strodi: “Si antecedens est sicutum, ergo consequens est scitum”. (Cf. n. 26 above)

38. Consequentia Strodi: “Si consequens est dubium, ergo et antecedens est dubium et scitum esse falsum” (Cf. n. 26 above)

39. Questiones: “Si aliqua consequentia est bona affermativa denota aut a y si, ergo, vel igitur, et significans ex compositione suorum terminorum, scita esse bona et intellecta, et cius antecedens est scitum, et bene scitur quod ex vero non sequitur falsum, nec reputat consequens scit, consequens etiam est scitum; que [regula sic] limitata est vera”. (15*)
Latin and Vernacular in Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century Italy*

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The subject of this essay concerns Dante only indirectly and in part. Nevertheless I hope to be able, among other things, to explain Dante's historical position and his influence on the Italian Renaissance. I cannot avoid partially repeating what I wrote in some of my previous studies, especially in my early article on the Italian prose language. Some of my prior observations, which seemed new to me at the time, have since been widely accepted; but some new sources and literature have been added in the meantime, and on some points I have changed my opinion or paid attention to new points of view. The subject is too broad and complex for one essay. But while many studies may pertain to my topic, no comprehensive reference works or bibliographies could serve as a firm basis or starting point. I must, therefore, select and emphasize a few facts, not all of which are generally known, and refer occasionally to manuscripts or rare editions.

It is not easy to formulate and divide our subject in a clear way. We must deal not only with the difference between Latin and vernacular, but also between medieval and humanist Latin, between Tuscan and the other Italian dialects, between poetry and prose, and between the various literary genres of poetry and especially of prose. A survey of the entire literary production of Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is impossible; even many specialists have a very imperfect idea of its true extent. I shall merely emphasize a few particular aspects: the mutual influence of Italian and Latin literature upon each other; the simultaneous use of both languages by the same authors and for the same literary genres; and the influence of Dante, as well as of Petrarch and Boccaccio, on the literature and culture of the late fourteenth and of the fifteenth century, including Latin humanism.

I should like to start from a basic fact which nowadays is not widely recognized: the literary culture of the various countries of Western and Central Europe from the Middle Ages to about 1800 was bilingual and found its
expression simultaneously in Latin and in the respective vernacular languages. The number of books and pamphlets written and published in Latin down to 1600 or even to 1700 was greater than that of the vernacular writings of the same period, and the number of works written in Latin after the end of classical antiquity was many times larger than the total volume of Latin literature to 600 A.D. — including early Christian and specialized literature—that has come down to us. From the high Middle Ages, the vernacular literature has steadily increased in volume and quality, and Latin has gradually declined in importance. From the period of Romanticism, this development has often been treated as if political or ideological contrasts were involved and as if Latin were an artificial language that was doomed from the beginning. Such treatment ignores the fact that every literary language is artificial when compared to the spoken language and that the methods and conclusions of modern linguistics based on the spoken language cannot be immediately transferred to literary languages. As long as it is possible to write and publish in Latin as well as in the vernacular (I myself have occasionally published in Latin), the choice of the language depends on the linguistic abilities of the author, on the public of listeners and readers which he or she wishes to address, and on the literary genre and models which he or she is trying to follow. Vernacular literature begins almost invariably with poetry and narrative prose and becomes only much later an instrument of learned prose. Latin literature — and especially Latin learned prose — was written in the Middle Ages by and for clerics, and later for an international public of professors, students and learned professionals. Latin was the language of instruction of most universities and advanced schools down to the eighteenth century. Vernacular literature, on the other hand, was written for listeners and readers who had literary and intellectual interests, but no academic learning: for princes and noblemen, merchants and artisans, ladies and nuns. Thus we can easily understand why many authors, including Dante and Milton, wrote in both languages.

The history of the vernacular in Italy differs in several respects from that in the other European countries. The literary use of the vernacular begins much later than in England and Germany, France and Spain. Almost nothing survives from the twelfth century, and fairly little remains from the thirteenth. It is only from the fourteenth century that the vernacular literature of Italy quickly came to equal and even surpass that of the other countries in volume and importance and soon to exercise a strong influence upon them. At the same time, Latin literature flourished in Italy and was equal to vernacular literature in volume and influence, though perhaps not in literary quality.

The late beginning of vernacular literature in Italy has probably more than one reason. The language spoken in Italy was much closer to medieval Latin than anywhere else, and a Latin text recited in local pronunciation could also be understood by the ordinary people. If in Italy in the fourteenth and in part during the thirteenth centuries a distinction is made between litteraliter (per lettera) and vulgariter (per volgare) and if the documents speak of a latino volgare, this reflects the situation of an earlier period in which both languages were perceived merely as two forms of one and the same language, and in which the vernacular was used for oral discourse, whereas Latin was as a matter of course preferred for written use. When Latin was often called a grammaticus, this means that Latin was admired for the uniform and firm structure of its vocabulary and grammar, a view that was still held by Dante in his De vulgari eloquentia. Another factor was the early development of French and Provençal literature which was often imitated in Italy, and from the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries we have examples of Italian authors who wrote in Provençal or in French or in a hybrid language that was half French and half Italian. Moreover, there were in Italy as elsewhere many different dialects, and it took several centuries until the language of Tuscany was recognized as a common literary language for all of Italy. In the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the Tuscan dialect still had other dialects as its rivals. The Sicilian dialect which had been the language of the earliest poets (a language often Tuscanized by later copyists) was occasionally used by Northern Italians as a prose language; and the Bolognese dialect, which was the second poetic language, appeared as early as the thirteenth century in form letters and form speeches and in rhetorical treatises, and in the early fourteenth century in the commentary of Jacopo della Lana on Dante.

The later predominance of the Tuscan dialect was based not only on its phonetic beauty and on its closeness to Latin, both in vocabulary and grammar, but above all on its rich and important literary production which extended from the late thirteenth to the late fifteenth centuries and which included, besides Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, a vast body of writings in both verse and prose. This is no doubt a matter of talent (Florence was and is still a city blessed by the Muses); but we must also consider the fact that Florence, in contrast to Bologna, had until the middle of the fourteenth century no university with an old Latin tradition, only a large upper and middle class which had strong intellectual interests and was eager to read, or to hear recited, poetry and prose literature written in its own vernacular.

The masterpieces of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio were soon diffused outside of Tuscany; this was favored by Dante's and Petrarch's exile and by Boccaccio's travels. Beginning with the fourteenth century, many other Tuscan works in verse and prose were also read and imitated outside of Tuscany. The Tuscan poetic language was adopted in many cases as early as the Trecento; also in the vernacular prose writings by non-Tuscan authors, the local dialect of the author was often adapted to Tuscan usage. Starting with Sanmazzaro and Bembo, all major non-Tuscan writers wrote in Tuscan; Tuscan language and literature of the fourteenth century ("il buon secolo della lingua") was taken as a model, and the Tuscan of the fifteenth century which had undergone some changes was rejected. The codification of early Tuscan corresponds to the
codification of classical Latin (both Sannazaro and Bembo were humanists and Latin poets), and it was completed in the sixteenth century by the Accademia Fiorentina and the Accademia della Crusca. The result was a phonetic, orthographical and grammatical regulation of the Italian literary language and a stabilization of its vocabulary, as it had not existed before, and a legitimation of this language for all forms of literature, including learned literature. Thus the vernacular attained an equal status with Latin. The complete disappearance of Latin as a literary language, and especially as a learned language, occurred at a much later date. Romanticism and nationalism played a role in this development; it is only recently that we have come to understand that we have lost, as a consequence, an international learned language that had served for centuries as a means of easy communication between philosophers, scientists and scholars of different countries.

Tuscan poetry began with the *dolce stil nuovo* and with Dante. The stilnovistic lyrical poems and Dante's *Commedia* spread quickly all over Italy, were read and interpreted throughout the peninsula, and were widely imitated in their form and language. In studying this subject, we should not overlook the close links of this vernacular poetry with the Latin culture of its age. Guido Cavalcanti's *canzone Donna mi prego* is as difficult as it is because it presupposes the philosophical and medical literature of its time. We have a Latin philosophical treatise, written by a philosopher and physician who taught at Bologna, Jacopo da Pistoia, that is dedicated to the poet Cavalcanti,11 and we have several Latin commentaries on Cavalcanti's poem, one of them composed by another professor of medicine at Bologna, Dino del Garbo.12 Also other vernacular poets received Latin commentaries: for example, Niccolò Rossi and Cecco d'Ascoli.13 Dante's *Commedia* is not only the first large poem in Tuscan, but also the first attempt to discuss in this language the philosophical and theological doctrines of medieval scholasticism. Dante's sources and models are almost exclusively Latin. The dense and difficult intellectual content of the *Commedia* gave rise to a large literature of commentaries as early as the fourteenth century.14 These commentaries are partly in the vernacular and partly in Latin. The vernacular commentaries of the fourteenth century, with the exception of Jacopo della Lana, are all written by Tuscan;12 the Latin commentaries, all by non-Tuscan.15 This shows that the language of Tuscan prose, in contrast to the poetic language, was not yet used outside of Tuscany and sometimes not even understood, as we learn from several testimonies. The jurist Alberico da Rosciano from Bergamo translated Jacopo della Lana's commentary into Latin in order to make Dante's philosophical and scientific doctrine available to those who understand Latin but not Tuscan; it is characteristic of the stubbornness of Romantic prejudices that great scholars such as Savigny and Burdach claim that Rosciano translated Lana's commentary from Latin into the vernacular.16 For the literature of commentaries it is also important that from 1373 on there were chairs and public lectures on the *Divina Commedia* first in Florence and soon at Pisa and Bologna.17 The first Dante lecturer at Florence was Boccaccio,18 and his incomplete commentary on the *Inferno* is based on his lectures. The same is true of Francesco da Buii at Pisa and of Benvenuto da Imola at Bologna. Both were experienced professors of grammar and applied to the *Commedia* the tested methods of interpretation, as they had been developed in lectures and commentaries on the classical Latin poets.

Among Dante's other writings, the *Vita Nuova* and the *Convivio* are commentaries on his own poems and are among the earliest examples of learned prose in Tuscan.19 These two works, and especially the *Convivio*, apparently had no wide diffusion; for further examples of learned Tuscan prose we have to wait, except for the Tuscan commentaries on the *Commedia*, until the fifteenth century. On the other hand, it is important to note that Dante himself wrote some works in Latin. The *Quaestio de aqua et terra* is a typical scholastic treatise; the *De vulgari eloquentia* is a comparison between Latin and vernacular and a defense of the vernacular; and the *Monarchia*, a political treatise, had some influence for a long time. Dante wrote these works for a learned public. He did the same with his letters, most of which are now considered authentic and which belong to the tradition of medieval rhetoric, the so-called *ars dictaminis*. The two Latin eclogues which Dante wrote in imitation of Vergil and at the request of his contemporary Giovanni del Virgilio have a special significance.20 Giovanni was professor of rhetoric and poetry at Bologna and one of the main representatives of the so-called protohumanism. Dante's poetic correspondence with Giovanni del Virgilio (who also wrote a famous epitaph on Dante), the imitation of Vergil in the eclogues, and the ancient element in the *Commedia* show that there was in Dante, the *Commedia* and the *Convivio* a strong element of classical and scholastic which is always emphasized, a classical and humanistic strain which should not be overlooked if we wish to understand his historical position and his influence in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.21

Petrarch owes his modern fame mainly to his vernacular poetry. The *Canzoniere* presupposes the earlier Tuscan poets, but it attains a variety of content and a formal perfection and phonetic beauty which greatly surpasses that of his predecessors. Thus his collection of poems became for centuries the model of Tuscan, Italian and European lyrical poetry. His *Trionfi* are indebted in their form and in occasional allusions to the *Commedia*. But Petrarch was above all a great humanist scholar and author. He wrote Latin poems, in which he imitated Virgil and Horace, and a large number of Latin letters, treatises and sonnets, which by far surpassed in volume his Tuscan poems and which for some time had an equally great influence. It seems significant to me that Petrarch who spent most of his life outside of Tuscany composed nothing in Tuscan prose, a language in which he did not feel at ease. Only one Tuscan letter is attributed to him, but its authenticity is subject to doubt. Petrarch's coronation as a poet was prompted by his Latin and not by his Tuscan writings,
as can be shown from many documents. The concept of poetry then prevailing was very different from the one we have inherited from Romanticism. Petrarch also made a Latin translation of the novella Griselda from the Decameron of his friend Boccaccio, and thus set an example that was followed by several humanists of the fifteenth century. Boccaccio, unlike Dante and Petrarch, spent most of his life in Florence, and he also wrote in both languages. His Latin production includes several long learned works which were widely used, and some letters and poems. In Tuscan he wrote a number of longer poems and, above all, the Decameron which presupposed a rich tradition of prose literature and also of Novelle. But it became in turn a classical model for Tuscan narrative prose, just as the Commedia was for epic and didactic poetry and the Canzoniere for lyrical poetry. From this time on, the "three crowns of Florence" dominated the entire vernacular tradition in Italy and influenced Neo-Latin literature as well as the vernacular literatures of the other European countries.

We should not forget, however, that the Tuscan literature of the Trecento was not limited to the three crowns. It included a large number of other poems and prose writings, and at the same time a large Latin literature flourished in all of Italy and to some extent in Tuscany. Especially important for our purpose are the numerous Tuscan translations from the Latin. Besides some popular and religious writings, some Latin classical authors were translated, for example, Vergil and Ovid, some orations and rhetorical writings of Cicero, and also Seneca, Livy, Boethius and the Ethics of Aristotle. There were, in addition, Tuscan translations of some medieval and contemporary works that had been written elsewhere in Latin, such as the influential writings of Albertino da Brescia, Guido de Columnis, Petrus de Crescentibus, and some of the literary works of Petrarch and Boccaccio. On the other hand, prior to the fifteenth century a few vernacular prose writings and a few translations from the Latin originated outside of Tuscany. There are but a few interesting exceptions, such as the translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus by Vivaldo Belcalzer of Mantua. Hence we may assert without exaggeration that Tuscany—thanks to the quality of her three great authors and to the quantity of her other poets, prose writers and translators—had gained by the end of the fourteenth century an advantage in terms of vernacular production over all other parts of Italy, whereas the contemporary Latin literature was shared in more or less equal portion by all regions of Italy, including Tuscany.

The fifteenth century to which we must now turn is in its physiognomy very different from the fourteenth, though many traditions of the fourteenth century were continued and no real break occurred. The fifteenth century itself is not uniform in its character; the second half is different in many ways from the first, and the difference between Tuscany and the rest of Italy continues to be notable. We must distinguish again between poetry and prose, between Latin and Vernacular, between medieval and humanistic Latin, and between Tuscan and the other dialects. Moreover, the rise and diffusion of humanistic studies and the direct and precise knowledge of classical Latin and, for the first time, of ancient Greek literature is apparent in all areas of literature. The vast number of extant texts, many of which are not yet published or studied or even inventoried, is hardly known to the layman or even to many specialists who are not concerned with manuscript research. Moreover, the understanding of the Quattrocento is still hampered by some old or new prejudices. The purists of the sixteenth century who enshrined the Tuscan language of the fourteenth, while often working with normalized texts and unaware of the orthographical, linguistic and grammatical irregularities of the manuscript texts, condemned the Tuscan language of the fifteenth century which had deviated in some traits from that of the fourteenth. The Tuscan literature of the fifteenth century which usually followed the language of its time and not the model of the fourteenth century was often dismissed as uncultivated, making a silent exception for Machiavelli and Alberti because one did not wish to do without them. Furthermore, the fifteenth-century dialect literature, far larger and more interesting than that of the fourteenth, is dismissed by labeling it as hybrid, as if such a label could be a substitute for a precise study of this language and for a careful distinction between its local and Tuscan features. Humanism later proceeded to proscribe Latin altogether, and I am afraid this attitude is responsible for the fact that the modern study of the Romance literatures pretty much ignores the learned Latin literature of Renaissance Italy and takes note of its Latin poetry but reluctantly and selectively. As an outsider who is not a specialist in Romance literature I may be permitted the heretical remark that in this respect the literary history of Tiraboschi is better and more balanced than that of De Sanctis and of many of his successors. I must add that the Neo-Romantic aesthetics of Benedetto Croce, which recognizes only the great and creative poets, rejects the literary genres (in which the smaller writers might have found a refuge), and thus forces the scholar either to ignore the smaller poets and writers altogether or to overrate them beyond their true value in order to justify our concern with them before the throne of literary criticism. From this perspective, the entire Quattrocento has been dismissed as a "secolo senza poesia," only because it did not produce a Dante or Petrarch, an Ariosto or Tasso. In contrast with all these preconceptions, I maintain that it is the task of the intellectual historian and of the bibliographer, if not of the literary historian or critic, to register the entire volume of the literary production which has been preserved, and to study both great and small poets, poets and prose writers, popular and learned writings, pure and impure Tuscan and other impure dialects, vernacular and Latin. Seen in this perspective, the Quattrocento offers a rich panorama of intellectual and literary production and material for many investigations and surprises.

I cannot mention in detail the rich literature of the humanists or the equally rich vernacular and in part popular literature of fifteenth-century Tuscany.
However, I should like to emphasize that just during the fifteenth century the Tuscan prose language conquered many areas that had previously been a Latin monopoly, and that during the same century—especially during its second half—the vernacular prose literature made great advances outside of Tuscany. During the fifteenth century the vernacular was used for the first time to a significant extent in the court and chancery records and internal correspondence of various regions, whereas the external correspondence continued in Latin. This has been well documented for Florence and Milan, whereas the other chanceries have not yet been studied in detail, as far as I know (although the papal curia continued to use Latin without exception). Another area in which the vernacular made considerable progress, especially in Florence, was public oratory. The sermons were for the most part recorded in Latin, although San Bernardino and later Savonarola undoubtedly delivered their sermons in Tuscan when they preached in Florence. A Florentine specialty are the public speeches given on special occasions before the people or before the Signoria; some of these discussions are called Protesti. They are without exception in Tuscan, and among their authors we encounter famous Tuscan humanists such as Bruni and Manetti. Especially popular were the public speeches given by the Roman humanist and later conspirator Stefano Porcari when he held office in Florence (many scholars believe that he used the Tuscan Buonaccorso da Montemagnolo as a ghost writer). The text of these dicerie is found in numerous miscellaneous manuscripts copied during the fifteenth century in Florence. These manuscripts usually contain a letter of Boccaccio, translated letters of Petrarch and Bruni, translations of Cicero and Sallust, and some spiritual letters. These manuscripts which have a slightly varying but on the whole similar content are typical commonplace books for merchants and artisans who had a popular Tuscan but no learned scholastic or humanistic education. Typically Tuscan and Florentine are also the sermons preached on holidays in one of the lay religious fraternities. They have been preserved mostly in three miscellaneous manuscripts, one of which has recently come to this country. The authors are young Florentine patricians who enlisted perhaps the help of their tutors, but also some famous humanists such as Landino and Scala; two pieces of this type appear also among the writings of Poliziano.

Many humanists wrote only in Latin, but we should not forget that many other humanists—especially Tuscan humanists—wrote not only in Latin but also in the Tuscan vernacular. There was a literary debate about the relative value of the two languages, in which also Bruni participated in his Dialoghi ad Petrum Hostiam, and another interesting debate between Bruni and Biondo in which Bruni defended the view that even in Roman antiquity there was, besides literary Latin, a different popular language. Among the authors of Tuscan poems from the early fifteenth century, we find scholars who are otherwise known only through their Latin writings, such as Salutati, Francesco and Benedetto Accolti, Antonio degli Agli, and Cyriacus of Ancona who visited Florence at the time when he wrote his verses. The Venetian humanist Leonardo Giustiniani wrote many vernacular love songs and religious hymns which show a few traces of his dialect, and we know that he acquired Tuscan manuscripts in Florence in order to have some models for his poetry. Leonardo Bruni wrote several poems, orations and letters in Tuscan, and his lives of Dante and Petrarch are in Tuscan, as are many important works of Palmieri and Alberti, Landino, Facio and above all Poliziano. Some scholars composed the same work in Latin and in Tuscan, or translated their own Latin works into Tuscan, or had friends translate them. We have entire collections of Tuscan poetry by authors otherwise known to us primarily through their Latin works. Those typical collections composed in praise of a deceased person often contain, besides Latin verses, a few in Tuscan. Typical humanist genres as the description of tournaments and other feasts, the praise of a city, or the consolatory dialogue on the death of a person, were also cultivated in Tuscan. Authors continued to write historical works in Tuscan, as well as treatises and dialogues, and, above all, biographies. There were many Tuscan translations of Latin and of Greek authors, the latter usually translated on the basis of an intermediary Latin translation. These translations, however, could not compare in volume and diffusion with the numerous humanist Latin translations from the Greek. In many instances, Latin writings of the humanists were translated into Tuscan by other humanists, as was Brunis's history of Florence by Donato Acciaioli and Poggio's son Jacopo Bracciolini. Lorenzo de'Medicis Alterazioni originated as a verse translation of two Latin letters of his teacher Facio. Some non-Tuscan humanists who lived in Florence, especially during the Council of 1438-39 and during the long Florentine stay of the curia under Eugene IV, took an active part in Tuscan literary culture. In addition to Porcari and Cyriacus whom we have mentioned, we should cite Aurispa, who made while in Florence a Tuscan translation of the well-known treatise on nobility by Buonaccorso da Montemagnolo, and especially Francesco Filippo, who was a professor at the university, learned Tuscan, held lectures on Dante and delivered several speeches in Tuscan or had them delivered by his students. Another development of the fifteenth century which has not yet been sufficiently explored is the increasing use of the vernacular in the prose literature outside of Tuscany, especially during the second half of the century. We find a number of North Italian authors who wrote only in the vernacular or wrote in both Latin and the vernacular. The extent to which the language of these authors followed their native dialect or tended to imitate the Tuscan literary language is still a subject for further investigation. In some cases an author proudly asserts that his Ferrarese Italian is as good as any other, and in one case when the work of a Lombard humanist was copied in Tuscany, the scribe claims to have translated the text from the Lombard dialect of the author into
Tuscan, thus following a tradition of Tuscan and Tuscanizing scribes which we may trace back to the thirteenth century.

A special place in the non-Tuscan prose of the fifteenth century belongs to the vernacular translations from Latin and from Greek. Some of the translators are humanists, and it clearly appears from the prefaces and dedications that these vernacular translations were intended for princely patrons who knew little Latin and preferred the vernacular. This tendency begins with Filippo Maria Visconti in Milan and continues during the second half of the century not only with the Sforzas in Milan, but also with the Este in Ferrara, the Aragonese in Naples, the Bentivoglio in Bologna, and still later with the Gonzaga in Mantua (the immediate pupils of Vittorio da Feltre knew their Latin too well to need vernacular translations, as did Federico of Urbino, Leonello d'Este, the pupil of Guarino, or Alfonso of Aragon). Pier Candido Decembrio translated for Filippo Visconti both Caesar and Curius into an Italian whose form is still in need of investigation. To Ferrante of Naples many vernacular translations were dedicated, including the Isocrates of Bartolomeo Fazio (who refers in his preface to his Florentine experiences and models) and the Pliny of Landino. The same Landino dedicated to Ludovico Sforza his Tuscan translation of Giovanni Simonetta's history of Francesco Sforza and to Ercole d'Este a formulary of Tuscan letters and speeches. Borso and Ercole d'Este are responsible for a large number of vernacular translations of classical and humanistic writings. Among the translators we find Boiardo, Ludovico Carbone, Nicolò Leoncino, and the court scholar Carlo di S. Giorgio called Pelmisagna. A manuscript in Berlin contains a translation of Petrarch's De vita solitaria by Tito Vespasiano Sforza whose family, although of Tuscan origin, had resided in Ferrara for several generations. Vice versa, the Duchessa Eleonora of Aragon, who reportedly knew no Latin, had a vernacular work dedicated to her by the Neapolitan Diomede Caraffa translated into Latin by Battista Guarino.

Landino states in one of his prefaces that the Tuscan language by his time had conquered not only all of Italy (a development to which he had contributed through his dedications to the rulers of Milan, Naples and Ferrara), but also foreign countries and especially France and Spain. I have no evidence for France from this period, but there are several interesting testimonies for Spain. A Spanish nobleman, Nuño de Gúzman, who spent several years in Florence and learned Tuscan rather well, had Cicero and Bruni translated from Latin into Tuscan for his own use, and Decembrio dedicated to him a translation of Plutarch. Inigo Davalos, an Aragonese nobleman at the court of Alfonso of Naples, owned Decembrio's Italian translation of Polybius, and this translation survives only in this copy and in a Spanish retranslation. The same Marqués de Santillana had a rich library which has been largely preserved and which contains many Italian texts and many Spanish translations of classical and humanist writings. His son, Cardinal Pedro de Mendoza, donated to the Colegio de Santa Cruz in Valladolid an important collection of manuscripts which contains, among other literary works, Petrarch's Canzoniere. In other words, the Tuscan literary language had penetrated by the end of the fifteenth century all of Italy as well as Spain, and only one more step was needed to make it the official literary language for all of Italy. This happened, as we said before, only during the sixteenth century.

In conclusion, I should like to describe briefly the influence of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio during the fifteenth century, for they were by no means neglected, as is often believed. I mentioned the Florentine debate early in the century which culminated in Brunacci's Dialogi et Petrum Histrum. The second book, perhaps written at a later date than the first, contains a praise of the Tuscan language and of its three great masters, attributed in the dialogue to Salutati. The fifteenth century left us many biographies of the three great authors, some in the vernacular and some in Latin. The authors include Filippo Villani, Sicco Polenton and Giannozzo Manetti, all of whom wrote in Latin, but also Leonardo Bruni who wrote his lives of Dante and Petrarch in Tuscan, and Pier Paolo Vergerio the Elder who wrote a Latin life of Petrarch. There is also a vernacular life of Petrarch which usually has been attributed to Antonio da Teramo but probably belongs to Pier Candido Decembrio. Lectures on Dante's Commedia were given intermittently in Florence, and the lecturers include Filippo Villani, Francesco Filippo and Cristoforo Landino (who lectured also on Petrarch). We have a voluminous Latin commentary on the Commedia by Giovanni da Serravalle; a vernacular commentary on the Inferno alone by Guidofredo Barzizza who wrote it at the request of Filippo Visconti, and the famous commentary of Landino, dedicated in 1481 to the Signoria of Florence. Landino often follows in his textual interpretation the earlier commentaries, but he also tries to give an allegorical interpretation of Dante in accordance with the Platonism of his time. There were also several attempts to translate the Commedia into Latin. The Monarchia was twice translated into Tuscan, the second time by Marsilio Ficino who in his preface praises Dante as a Platonic philosopher, imitates him in a brief poem of his youth and later gives his blessing to Landino's commentary with a Latin preface. There are also some imitations of the Commedia, especially the Città di Vita by Matteo Palmieri, a didactic work in terza rima which was made the subject of a Latin commentary by Leonardo Dati. Lorenzo de Medici's commentary on his own sonnets follows the model of the Vita Nuova and Convivio, as does Pico's commentary on Girolamo Benivieni's Canzone d'Amore. Lorenzo's Raccolta Aragonese, with a preface often attributed to
Poliziano, shows a new interest in the dolce stil nuovo; Ficino and his De Amore, a commentary on Plato's Symposium, cites Guido Cavalcanti, partly in order to please his friend Giovanni Cavalcanti; and also Antonio Manetti wrote a biography of Guido for Giovanni. The Olivetan monk Antonio da Barga repeatedly praises Dante in his unpublished writings.

Petrarch found several biographers in the fifteenth century, as we have seen, and a few commentators. Filelfo's commentary on the Canzoniere is dedicated to Filippo Visconti, and that of Bernardo Ilcino on the Triomph of Boso d'Este. Jacopo Bracciolini wrote on the Triomph della fame, and Barboniamaeus Fontius explained a few selected passages. Occasionally we encounter some Latin elegies that were free translations of sonnets by Petrarch. Also Boccaccio's Decameron was often used as a literary model. There are Tuscan novelle by Bruni, Alberti, and Antonio Manetti as well as Latin novelle by Giovanni da Ravenna, Bartolomeo Facio, Francesco Tedaldi, Benedetto Colucci, Luigi Passerini and above all by Enea Silvio Piccolomini. Several humanists followed the example of Petrarch's Griselda and translated individual novelle of the Decameron into Latin.

The widespread admiration for the three great poets also explains the devotion with which their tombs were maintained. Boccaccio's tomb was renovated by Lattanzio Tedaldi and Dante's tomb in Ravenna by Bernardo Bembo. Furthermore, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, an attempt was made by an Academy whose members included Francesco da Diacceto and Michelangelo to transfer Dante's bones from Ravenna to Florence.

In the sixteenth century, the Tuscan language assumed the role which it had not attained in the fourteenth century, except in the imagination of many historians: it became the literary language used in all of Italy and for all forms of literature. The poets and writers of the fourteenth century served as models, but all too specifically local and idiomatic peculiarities of the Florentine dialect were intentionally avoided. The language was subjected to a kind of regulation that it had not received at any previous time (from the fifteenth century we have one short grammar which has been attributed to Alberti), and this regulation followed in many ways the model of Latin, as was natural. In the establishment of an accepted vocabulary, Latinisms were avoided as much as possible. Yet the language had absorbed many Latinisms long before, even in the work of Dante; and this was inevitable if a popular language which in its origin hardly had any abstract words was to serve as a vehicle for learned, philosophical and scientific prose. Above all, spelling and grammar, which fluctuated a good deal during the fifteenth century, and also syntax and sentence structure, which are quite loose and unclear even in Boccaccio, had to be normalized; finally the composition of a speech and of a treatise had to follow the rules of ancient rhetoric.

The Italian language of the sixteenth century had great poets and many important and influential prose writers who were admired and imitated also in other countries. The Italian language, under the influence of the Italian court, became the language of the Italian court, as we have shown, before, became in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century an elegant international court language as French did at a later time. The French court under Catherine de' Medici and her sons had a strong Italian orientation, and Queen Elizabeth knew Italian. An otherwise little-known Englishman, George Rainford, dedicated Philip II of Spain, who for a short time was also King of England, two political treatises. One of these was apparently translated from English into Italian, whereas the other was composed in Italian. Rainford had both works copied for Philip's Burgundian chancellor Cardinal Granvelle. In the seventeenth century, the great Rubens who had spent no less than eight years in Italy, conducted his entire correspondence, even with his French friends, in Italian. The Italian influence lasted in literature as well as in painting, architecture and music down to the eighteenth century.

We should not forget, however, that in the sixteenth century and later Latin continued to be cultivated both in Italy and in other European countries. There was a flourishing tradition of Latin poetry in which Sannazaro and Bembo participated, and poets like Marcellino Fiaminio and Girolamo Vida enjoyed a great European fame down to the eighteenth century. At the same time, Latin flourished as an international language of science and scholarship, of academic instruction and of the learned professions, and as the language of diplomacy down to the eighteenth century, and as the language of the Catholic Church and of classical scholarship far into our own century. In Italy Giovanni Paccioli (d. 1512) still wrote poems in Latin.

In a comprehensive history of Italian culture, if not in a history of Italian literature, the despised Tuscan of the fifteenth century, the works written in the various dialects, and above all the Latin literature in all its forms, including learned prose, should find a place. Many texts are preserved only in manuscripts or rare editions and are not even mentioned in the leading literary histories. Not all of them deserve a printing, let alone a critical edition; but they should at least be inventoried and recorded, and if they seem to deserve it, studied and perhaps edited. Many of them are quite mediocre (which is also true of many which have been edited), but many of them are interesting because of their form, language or content; all of them are important if we wish to ascertain the diffusion of particular authors and writings, literary genres and themes. In some instances the title or mere existence of a text is sufficient to refute a conventional or fashionable theory or to enrich the total picture by a new facet. In the present climate of opinion, we might argue that the limitation to famous authors is elitist and undemocratic and that not only popular documents or the opinions of illiterates, but also the works of literature written by modest authors deserve our attention.

From this perspective, we may also better understand Dante and his historical position. He was not only a great and perhaps the greatest Italian poet--
NOTES

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5. The final notes of the volgarezismi state frequently that the text was translated into Italian from the grammatica.

6. The Venetian Marco Polo dictated his work in French to a Pisani in Genoa.


13. Sandkühler, Die frühen Danekommentare, pp. 70-73. An anonymous Latin commentary on Coccio’s Acerba is found in Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, ms. 1533 (Iur Instinctum, II, 102).


15. Sapegno, ibid.


22. Nancy Lenekeith, Danie e the Legend of Rome (London: Warburg Institute, 1952).
30. Kristeller, Studies, p. 105. One manuscript, previously a part of Principe Ginori Conti’s collection, is now in the Stanford University Library, ms. 308 (cf. Ilhe Italianum, I, 228). The vernacular texts often have Latin titles. This same phenomenon may be observed in the case of many poems and of Machiavelli’s Il Principe.
32. Francesco Flaminii, La trica toscana del Rinascimento anteriore ai tempi del Magnifico (Pisa: Nistri, 1891).
38. I refer to the following examples: Leonardo Dati (Vittorio Rossi, II Quattrocento, ad indici), Tomaso Baldiniotti (DBI, 5 [1963], 493-98, by Armando Petracchi); Alessandro Braccesi (DBI, 13 [1971], 602-08, by Angelo Notar), Bartolomeo della Fontina (Trinkaus, op. cit.), and Bartolomeo della Fontina (1973), op. cit.)
40. On descriptions of tournaments see Kristeller, Studies, pp. 437-50. A description of a town and a consolatory dialogue, both composed in Tuscan by Francesco Bandini, are also published there (pp. 395-435).
43. Donato Acciaiuoli's Tuscan translation of Brun's *Historia Florentina* was published in 1476 (GW 5612), as was Braccesi's translation of Poggio's *Historia Florentina* (Hain 13172-73). The two translations were released together in 1482 (GW 5613). Brun's *De primo bello Pentico* was also translated (GW 5604), Andrea Cambini translated Biondo's *Decades* (*DBI* 17, 132-34, cf. *Iter Italicum*, I, 114), Alberti's *Canis* and Donato Acciaiuoli's speech addressed to Sisutus IV were translated by Piero Parenti (*Iter Italicum*, I, 113-11, also *Dizionario Horne*, ms. 2790, cf. *Iter Italicum*, II, 518).
52. See Landino, *Scritti critici e teorici*, I, 77-93 for the text of the preface.
56. On Diomede Caraffa, see *DBI*, 19 (1576), 524-30 (by Francesco Petrucci). Battista Guarino's translation is found in Modena, Est. int. 679 (*Iter Italicum*, I, 381). At the direction of the author, Diomede Caraffa, Colombini Lentulus translated the same text into Latin (De luxus manuscript in Leningrad, Ermitage, Ordenele Risuukov, ms. 78159), as well as another work dedicated to Beatrice of Hungary, Eleanor's sister (De luxus manuscript in Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, ms. Parm. 1654, *Iter Italicum*, II, 49). Nymeyers Comitibus translated the Italian tract on immorality by the Dominican Jacopo Cambra in Latin for Eroli I of Ferrara (British Library, ms. Add. 22225).
57. "nello fiorentina lingua, la quale è comune non solo a tutte le genti italiane ma per la nobiltà d'alcuni scrittori di quella è saporà e per la Galizia e per l'Espagna" (Landino, *Scritti critici e teorici*, p. 190).
himself translated a speech of Manetti from Tuscan into Spanish for the Marqués de Santillana (British Library, ms. Egerton 1688, f. 146v-149v, cf. Schiff, pp. 364-65).

60. Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, ms. 1001, with the note "est mei Ucchi di Davalos" (cf. Schiff, pp. 37-39. The Spanish version is in ms. 8822 in the same library.


62. Schiff, op. cit. He also owned the Dante manuscripts Madrid Vitrinas 23.2 and 10116, the latter with a Castilian translation by Enrique de Villena (Schiff, pp. 275-303, cf. p. 326). As to his knowledge of Tuscan, cf. Vespasiano da Bisticci, Le vite, i, 205-06.


64. Valladolid, Biblioteca Universitaria, ms. 332. The manuscript includes poems by Dante and Cavalcanti as well as two of Dante's letters translated into Tuscan.

65. There is much more to be said about the Spanish translations of Italian writers, including the Latin writings of Italian humanists. Dr. Christoph Stroezyki has kindly drawn my attention to a Vocabulario de las dos lenguas Toscana y Castellana by Cristóval de las Casas printed in 1516 in Venice; a copy is owned by the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. The preface to the book contains a warm praise of the Tuscan language and literature.


67. Solerti, 289-38, indicates as author Antonio da Tempo (fsc. "Francesco Petrarca fiorentino per nazione"). The writing is attested for Decembrio and is expressly attributed to him in two manuscripts: Var. Barb. lat. 3954 (iter Italicum, II, 453) and Gotha B 239, f. 85v-92v (iter Italicum, III, 390).

68. Cf. Gherardi (see note 18 above). On the commentary of Serravalle see note 70 below.


75. The article about Antonio Bargasini will appear in the forthcoming second volume of my Studies.


79. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, Historia de duobus amantibus. This novella was printed several times and translated into several languages (Hain 213-40). Alamanno Donati translated the novella into Tuscan (Hain 246-48) as did Alessandro Bresciani (Copinger 77-78).

80. Leonardo Bruni translated the tale of Tancred (Decamerone, IV, 1) under the title De duobus amantibus Cistacordo et Sigimonda. The novella was printed a number of times and appears in many manuscripts (GW 5626-42). Antonio Luchi translated the fabula Capelleti (Decameron, I, 1), Ambr. C 141 inf., f. 53v-60v (iter Italicum, I, 319). Bartolomaeus Facius translated the fabula Rogerii (Decameron, X, 1.), Magl. XXV 626, f. 76-77v (Iter Italicum, I, 140), ed. Carlo Braggio, Giornale Ligure, 1 (1884), 379-89 and Valladolid 227, f. 1-2v. Francisca Diedaus translated the tale of Tito and
Rites of Passage in Leonardo Bruni’s 
Dialogue to Pier Paolo Vergerio 
by 
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The Dialogues to Pier Paolo Vergerio are a fairly brief, rather unassuming, yet much defamed work by Leonardo Bruni (c. 1370-1444), the Italian humanist from Arezzo who lived most of his life in Florence, the hub of early Renaissance civilization.1 Composed of two parts, the second of which is, apparently, a retraction of the first, and dating probably from the years 1401 and 1405–06, respectively, the Dialogues constitute, because of the contradictions contained in them, a puzzling text that has elicited a variety of interpretations from critics in the historical as well as the literary fields. Although much research has been done in recent times on Bruni, his writings and his times, most notably by Hans Baron,2 a fresh reading of the troublesome Dialogues can be derived, perhaps, by casting on them the light of some basic truths taught by social anthropologists. This seems especially applicable now that historians are making us increasingly aware of the importance of ritual in Renaissance culture, and literary critics are finding ritual patterns in the writings of the period.3 Bruni’s text deals with a number of major Renaissance concerns: an optimal educational program, reminiscent of theories advanced by many humanists; praise of the dialogue genre, a literary form that was to be utilized frequently by authors like Castiglione; and the much-disputed question in the field of literary criticism as to the relative merits of modern Italian writers—that is, the three crowns, Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio—vis-à-vis the classical tradition. In its discussion of these issues, the work offers a lively picture of the learned individuals who composed the scholarly world of early fifteenth-century Florence. The most eminent among the characters is Coluccio Salutati (d. 1406), the author of, among other things, brief epistolary tracts in which he exalts the studio humanitatis, especially the verbal arts of the trivium, and praises the achievements of the trecentisti, who distinguished themselves for their wisdom and eloquence. Master of a whole generation of humanists, he is generally recognized as having provided the link in the development of humanism from

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Petrarch to the scholars of the Quattrocento. It is this historical role which he plays in Bruni's Dialogues. Several of Salutati's followers also appear in the text, namely, Niccolò Niccoli (d. 1437), a zealous classicist; Roberto Rossini, noted for his expertise in ancient languages; Piero di Ser Mini, a young student; and, finally, the author himself, Bruni, who was eventually to win considerable fame as a writer for his contribution to the field of historiography. His History of Florence of 1415–44 has been hailed as one of the first pieces of modern historical writing. Furthermore, on the basis of his active political commitment as chancellor of Florence from 1427 to 1444, Bruni represents fully the phenomenon of civic humanism.

The Dialogues, Bruni claims in the dedication to the educator Vergerio (d. 1444), are a faithful transcription of a debate that took place in Florence among several scholars, specifically between the two chief interlocutors, Salutati and Niccoli. In this "disputation about disputation" (p. 31), as the author terms it, Salutati receives a visit from his disciples and, after a period of ambiguous silence, reproaches them for not cultivating the art of dialogue adequately. He proceeds to deliver a full-fledged oration in praise of dialogue whose utility, he stresses, is manifold: it is invaluable in the search for truth, it sharpens the intellect, it polishes the practiser's speech and prepares him for effective relations with his fellows. Recalling perhaps a proverb from the Bible condemning idleness (Proverbs 24: 30–31), Salutati warns his listeners not to be like the farmer who ploughs barren woodlands and neglects the richest part of his land (p. 22).

The second to Salutati's scolding and with another example epitomizing the art of disputation is Niccoli, who takes up the defense of the younger generation of humanists. He places the blame for their possible shortcomings on the "wretched" (pp. 25, 27) times in which they live—an era characterized by ignorance, cultural confusion, a dearth of books and, on the other hand, a plethora of modern Aristotelians, who know nought, and of men of letters, who are ignorant of Latin and Greek and whose smearing consequently, is more pleasant than their speech. This distaste recalls the polemical stance Petrarch took with regard to the culture of his day when, in a letter to Boccaccio, he bemoaned the dark ages in which he was born, since men of letters, having lost the books of the ancients, had become like blindmen groping in the shadows of their errors.

Defamatory as it is, Niccoli's speech allows him to delineate, albeit indirectly, a comprehensive program of humanist studies, in which, as he points out, all disciplines are connected and must be pursued: philosophy, mother of all liberal arts, letters, eloquence, dialectic, grammar and rhetoric. Disappointed, however, by the modest attempts made in modern times in each of these branches of learning, Niccoli excoriates the ancients who distinguished themselves for their excellence, especially Cicero and Aristotle. At the outset of the exchange of views, the two disputants are fully in agreement as to the value of liberal studies since Salutati too stresses that one must strive for distinction in every aspect of culture.

A first discordant note is sounded in this harmony, though, when Salutati voices his considerably more optimistic outlook: he is unreservedly confident in the ability of the moderns to reach the level of culture achieved by the ancients. For Niccoli, instead, their "greatness" (p. 29) could never again be matched. The true controversy between the two adversaries heats up when Salutati, although admitting there has been a slight fall in the liberal arts, states that it is fruitless to wish for the impossible past and that one must learn to appreciate what the present has to offer. As proof of the worth of modern culture he cites the example of the three crowns of Florence, writers "who," he says, "by the consensus of all are exalted to the heavens" (p. 34). This assertion is refuted by Niccoli as reflecting the opinion of the populace and, echoing once again Petrarch's arrogant and polemical attitude, this time toward the popular author of the Divine Comedy, he breaks out in that negative judgment on Dante that was to gain longlasting notoriety for Bruni's treatise and to tarnish the reputation of humanists in general. He states: "I shall remove that poet of yours from the number of the lettered and leave him to wool workers, bakers, and the like" (p. 36). However, when the discussion is resumed the next day, as recorded in the second book of the Dialogues, Niccoli, who had scandalized his colleagues, changes his mind and he now says of Dante: "This man, then, so elegant, so eloquent, and so learned, I yesterday removed from the number of the lettered so that he should be not with them but above them" (p. 46). He goes on to praise Dante, and also Boccaccio and Petrarch, that latter principally because he had opened the way to the cultural formation of subsequent generations, concluding that, in actual fact, the triumvirate was to be rightly judged at least equal and probably even superior to the ancients.

As might be expected, criticism on the Dialogues has concentrated precisely on this perplexing retraction by the main speaker and on the relation between the two books that comprise the work. Since in the text itself the characters insist on the "stratagem" and "disimulacion" (pp. 42–44) used by Niccoli, and since Niccoli himself admits he had condemned Dante simply in order to provoke a reaction in Salutati who, he expected, would have defended the poet with all the force of his eloquence, interpreters have often sought to explain Niccoli's recantation as a simple recourse to rhetorical techniques. The most obvious literary precedent would be the Ciceronian one in which a polemical pose is feigned at first and then negated by the same character. This rhetorical solution to the contradictions in the text—a reading advanced quite staunchly by Jerrold E. Seigel—is not lacking in foundation if we recall that Salutati himself points out the ambiguity inherent in Niccoli's derogatory comments: by attacking present times which have seen the death of eloquence, Niccoli in fact offers proof, through his carefully designed invective, that the art of oratory is alive and well.
which has not received sufficient attention, proves to be, at close observation, richly evocative of symbols of sacredness. The frame is used by Bruni first to describe the setting for the conversations. He begins in the dedicatory Introduction with praise of the city which is flourishing with human culture, where the seeds of liberal arts grow, and from which the light of culture is to shine. This page to Florence, Bruni’s adopted patria, is based on a contrast with other less perfect locales, especially the one now inhabited by the addresses Vergerio who, Bruni laments, has returned to Padua and abandoned Florence. Insisting on Vergerio’s absence (p. 20) and on the fact that his ex-colleagues who have remained in Florence miss him a great deal, the author suggests that Vergerio is indeed in exile and that he has been excluded from a place of privilege, a veritable intellectual paradise.

This celebration of Florence as the ideal habitat for man intensifies at the beginning of Book II (perhaps for the historical reasons adduced by Baron) when Bruni quotes another of his works, the Panegyric to the City of Florence that he had composed in the meantime (in 1403–04), and in which he similarly compares the city to her counterparts of antiquity, only to conclude that Florence outshines them all. Strategically located at the umbilical center of the region and described as a true Eden for her natural beauties, Florence can also boast of having perfectly harmonious systems of politics and justice. In the Dialogues the specific backdrop for the characters as they engage in their discussions changes, however, from the first to the second book. In the first, the elite company arrives at Salutati’s house and this dwelling acquires an almost sanctified atmosphere when the disciples enter, are seated and, after exchanging the usual small talk, they keep what is in essence a reverential silence in the presence of their mentor, to whom they attribute almost divine qualities. If Salutati’s home cannot be designated a true temple, it may be fitting to recall the description Garin gives of it when, on the basis of comments made by the author’s contemporaries, he calls it “un sacro di studi” (a sanctuary of studies).

The company of scholars, grown slightly in number, moves the next day across the Arno to the villa owned by Roberto. Here they admire the fine garden for a few moments before resuming their discussions. Significantly, Niccolò pronounces his cantata in the portico of Roberto’s “realm” (p. 43), in a natural setting, that is, which may recall man’s complete self-realization in the earthly paradise. Again, the preparations for the talk indicate formality and stylization: the disciples stand in a circle around their teacher, who is seated and rapt in himself for a short time. Then, following Bruni’s orders, they sit down, in a manner that suggests the performance of a ritual.

Through this change of setting the author presents his characters dynamically as they walk from one area of Florence to another: from the center of town they move centrifugally toward the suburban villa and then at the end of the treatise they proceed again toward the center. In granting his characters
this freedom of movement, Bruni expresses his civic pride in Florence and its surrounding territory and he also exhibits his more accommodating and open-minded attitude toward cultural values. He does not confine the interlocutors to an elitist contemplative retreat, as the traditional structure of dialogic treatises might have demanded; rather, in this work that truly stresses dialogue, not dogma, he widens the spatial and intellectual horizons enjoyed by his personages.

At both ends of the path or radius these individuals move along, at both the center (Salutati's house in Florence) and the circumference (Roberto's villa), figuratively speaking, there is evidence of ritualizing and paradigmatic sacredness. Even more transparent is the symbolism evoked by the references to the time in which the dialogues take place, namely when “the feast days for Christ's Resurrection were being celebrated” (p. 20). This periphrastic but nevertheless clear reference to Easter is not likely to have been a casual one. In all probability it has the value of a “hierophany” — that is, according to the terminology of the anthropologist Mircea Eliade, it manifests the sacred; the mention of Easter recalls, I think, the Biblical accounts of the passage from servitude to liberty (Exodus 14), of the Lord's passing over the houses of the Israelites (Exodus 12), or, in Christian terms, of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ and the liberation from sin as told in the Gospels. Through the reference to this important feast in the liturgical calendar, a sense of recurrence, of ritual and myth is created, since at Easter those Biblical events are reactualized. The essential typology is always the same: a transition from evil to good, from death to life, a celebration after fasting, all taking place, of course, in conjunction with springtime in the natural landscape. In one of the poems that the poet finds himself and from which he can view the sleepy present and the brighter times of the future, these symbolic frontiers serve the purpose, explains Eliade, of separating the profane world from the sacred world.

According to some anthropologists and psychologists, crossing a river is an archetypal act of transition. This transition can be represented equally well by movement across a doorway similar to the one Machiavelli traverses when, as he narrates in his letter to Vettori, he executes rituals of purification, removing his daily mud-stained clothing and donning regal and courtly robes suitable for entering the ancient courts of ancient men. There is also the limen or threshold the ancient peoples have to step over when they come to commune with the god. In his modest study in Vergil's Eclogues, the poet finds himself and from which he can view the sleepy present and the brighter times of the future. These symbolic frontiers serve the purpose, explains Eliade, of separating the profane world from the sacred world.

Interestingly enough, it is from this category of symbols that Renaissance writers often draw when they wish to exalt the world of humanism; it is a kind of topos that points to a feature of humanism that has been singled out by the contemporary philosopher Georges Coudert, namely that the sacredness of ecclesiastical things, typical of an earlier age, gives way, in the early Renaissance, to the sacredness of culture.

Bruni's particular brand of river symbolism might appear to have been inspired by the Dantean model since Dante, on his Easter journey, passes over "un bel fiumicello" (Inferno IV, 108) en route to the "nobile castello" (v. 106) where he is welcomed by a circle of the "spirito magni" (v. 119). Yet there is a basic difference between the two texts: whereas Dante's visit to the world of the ancient pagans is a temporary stopover, and will be superseded by a literal passage to the heavenly spheres, the transit made by Bruni's protagonist brings him to his ultimate goal of cultural self-fulfillment.

In the very last words of his work, Bruni refers to the Arno for the third
time when he relates that the group left the villa and was accompanied by Roberto "as far as the Ponte Vecchio" (p. 52). Bruni thus closes his work with a stress on the dividing river. Yet, now the divivinity has been overcome and here Bruni speaks of the "ponte" (bridge) rather than the body of water itself, probably to underline the bridging or harmonious reconciliation that has been accomplished.

From these observations one can deduce that Bruni's text depicts fundamentally an archetypal situation, the experience of initiation, indeed a true rite of passage, as it was studied earlier this century by Arnold van Gennep. According to this social anthropologist, human life is made up of a series of transitions, all following a basic pattern. This philosophical concept is shared by more recent theorists like Eliade who writes:

when brought to birth, man is not yet completed; . . . he becomes complete man by passing from an imperfect, embryonic state to a perfect adult state.

In a word, it may be said that human existence attains completion through a series of 'passage rites,' in short, by successive initiations.

According to van Gennep and his followers right up to Victor W. Turner, the basic modalities of this transition are arranged in a tripartite diachronic pattern. Passages (including the feasts of Easter and Passover) consist of a first phase of separation (the preliminial stage) in which the novice dies to the profane; in the second, or liminal phase the transition takes place through the crossing of a *limen* or a river, for example, and the third or last stage brings about incorporation or aggregation through communal rites, whereby the individual is accepted by the community.

This theory of the rites of passage helps elucidate Bruni's text which, clearly, insists just as much on the change that occurs in Niccoli as on the specific opinions he voices. In the first stage Niccoli is an outcast since he repudiates the opinions of what he calls "the multitude" (p. 34) but, before being able to go beyond this phase of detachment, or to elevate his status, he must undergo a form of degradation. In fact he is treated like an ingenuous neophyte when on the second day Salutati remarks that even a "clumsy" (p. 42) person would be able to refute his assertions. The rites of self-mortification he enacts correspond to the anthropological pattern: the aberrant Niccoli attempts to overturn the normal order of things making pronouncements that are radically polemic, "at variance" (p. 52) with those of the rest of the group. He admits openly that by criticizing the three writers he must "bear the attacks of the whole people" (p. 36). Yet, like all liminal *personae*, he not only invites danger but he himself is a menace to the order prevailing within the humanist establishment.

Niccoli's actual transition occurs during the interval between the two books, as Roberto explains at the end with the statement: "The night has returned you to us, Niccoli, for the sin of thing you were saying yesterday was clearly at variance with our company" (p. 52). This declaration can be compared, as many critics advise, to a similar phrase in Cicero's *De Oratore* referring to Antonius's conversion during the night to a belief in the value of studying rhetoric; but, it might also fit the paradigm of the Christian Easter in which the passage from fasting to the celebration of the Eucharist takes place at daybreak after the night-long vigil. The reminiscences are, then, not necessarily rhetorical ones; they may very well be sacred ones.

Before he can be accepted by the learned community however, Niccoli must in a certain sense justify himself. In these circumstances he has recourse to the face-saving artifice of rhetoric—a pretext that is generously accepted by Salutati whose kind and discreet words might conceivably veil an underlying reproach. Niccoli also uses the Ciceronian excuse of dissociation when, to exculpate himself he states that the day before he had expressed not his own true opinions, but those of others, whom he terms "silly fools" (p. 50). At this point the character Bruni, who at the beginning was introduced as a friend and equal of Niccoli, but who has been acting as a judge albeit a neutral one, in this latter capacity pronounces his sentence: Niccoli who has accused the triumvirate must now be their defender. In this court-like situation Niccoli becomes a criminal who must be punished and also a sick man who must be healed, for Salutati lauds the "remedy" Bruni has prescribed, an antidote that will cleanse "opposites with opposites" (p. 43). Accepting the "decree" (p. 43) and carrying out the punishment with his unconscionable triad, Niccoli can finally proceed to the communal status. The tension of the drama is now defused and the group is pervaded by a sense of relief that Salutati expresses when he exhorts that "the doors . . . be opened, for we can now go forth without fear of calumny" (p. 52). After Niccoli's palinode, Piero, the last to join the company and the supreme judge of the case, absolves him and praises the great oratorical ability of the former rebel who now submissively and humbly accepts the words of commendation. As Baron has observed, Niccoli must gain pardon from the whole party.

Through this elaborate ritual a new culture is proposed that will keep its ties with the Trecento tradition as well. In this connection the repeated citing of masters of the past and present is of signal importance. Salutati and Niccoli were inspired, they admit, by Marsili; Niccoli remembers his Greek professor Chrysoloras, and the whole circle, including Bruni, exhibits its deference towards Salutati. Niccoli who had tried centrifugally to detach himself from this strong center of influence is made to reenter the hierarchical scheme. The dialectic of "structure and anti-structure," as Turner defines the social process, is controlled again. Yet, if order is re-established, it is probably only temporary. Bruni's work is, in fact, open-ended since the characters speak of meeting
on the following day. Moreover, as already shown, dynamic movement is allowed for in the setting, and the questioning of values is part and parcel of the ongoing debate.

For the moment, though, Niccoli's passage from expulsion to reincorporation in the company of humanists will be accomplished at a dinner to be "celebrated with a convivial discussion" (p. 52) scheduled to take place the next day. The invitation to dinner is made by Roberto but, because of hierarchical law, it is filtered to the others through Salutati, who thus preserves his role as leader of the collectivity. Some sacred overtones are evident in this last part of the framework too as Salutati asks Roberto to prepare "a twofold banquet" (p. 52). What is being celebrated here, as indicated by means of this traditional food image used elsewhere in the text too [p. 27] to describe Cicero's sweetness is not a spiritual rebirth, but more properly an intellectual purification. A human mind not soul has been saved. The climax of the event will take place at the communal meal of resurrection. This rite will have the function of establishing stronger links between the participants and it is, of course, in perfect union with the Paschal season evoked in the text.

According to this analysis, then, Bruni's Dialogues portray an initiation rite of passage to be carried out in three days, each one corresponding to a fundamental phase of the experience. The initiam enacts his rites of contrariety and mortification and, crossing a liminal river at Easter time, he renews himself by carrying out the sentence and ultimately wins acceptance at the communal supper. This reading is in line with the interpretations of the Dialogues offered by Baron and Garin, both of whom have stressed that the basic structure of the work is one of progression. Past interpreters have argued concerning what Bruni's proposal for a renewed form of culture is linked to the author's own situation at the time.18 Baron, for example, notes that the two parts of the treatise mark the evolution of Bruni as he passes from being a "junior member and mere observer" to becoming an equal member with full rights in Salutati's intellectual society.19 An approximately thirty-year-old student of ancient letters, Bruni was beginning to emerge as a scholar in his own right. At the time he composed the Dialogues he was translating classical works, and in 1465 he embarked on his first career as Secretary in the Papal Curia. Therefore, it is possible that the author of the Dialogues, as he reaches a turning point in his own life, reveals in his composition an acute awareness of passages and translations.

Bruni's mature thought is generally characterized by a tendency toward syncretism and reconciliation of differences. In an introductory letter to his translation of Aristotle's Politics (1438), as an illustration, Bruni states that the moral ideas expressed by both Christian and pagan philosophers are essentially the same.20 A similar attitude prevails in his political ideology as well. He believes that factional struggles are inevitable but that they must be resolved internally, without the intervention of external arbiters and without resorting to the expulsion of the city's enemies.21 In the text of the Dialogues the pronouncements, or lack thereof, on the part of the judges confirm this point: Rossi reserves judgment in Book I and Piero offers the final absolution in Book II, but it is the adjudicator Bruni who decides upon an internal solution when he has Niccoli redress himself in order to bring about harmony in the community.

Concerned as previous critics have been, though, with identifying the rhetorical models Bruni may have utilized or, in Baron's case, with establishing the chronology of the works and measuring the influence of political events on them, some of the allusive particulars of the Dialogues have been overlooked. What the analysis presented here is intended to add is a deeper appreciation of the imagery and symbolism which serve to establish an unsuspected unity for the text. The sacred nuances found repeatedly in the description of the time and place of the debate and in the portrayal of the characters suggest that it is not an anomalous and disjunctive work but one that has inner coherence and necessity. Furthermore, Bruni presents his cultural program through a precise anthropological structure—the archetypal notion of liminality—by examining the experience of a specific individual as he moves in sequential order through the various ritual phases of his passage from one form of culture to another and as he attempts to fuse novelty with tradition. Thus Bruni's Dialogues prove indeed to be man-centered, as humanism in general purported to be, and they lend concrete proof to the affirmation, made by Charles Trinkaus, that the ideas of the humanists constitute the basis of the first modern discussions on man and of modern anthropological thought.22

NOTES

1. The original Latin text and an Italian translation of Leonardo Bruni's Ad Petrum Paolum Hostium Dialogi are to be found in Proemti latini del Quattrocento, ed. Eugenio Garin (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi, 1952), pp. 44—99. The English version used here is included in The Three Crowns of Florence: Humanist Assessments of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, ed. and trans. David Thompson and Alan F. Nagel (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 19—52. Only the spelling of Vergerio's name in the title has been altered to read Paolo, rather than Paulo. (Page references to the latter edition will be given in parentheses in the body of the text.)


3. See, for example, Richard C. Trexler, Public Life in Renaissance Florence (New York: Academic Press, 1980); Ronald F. E. Weissman, Ritual Brotherhood in
13. See Note 2 above.


16. Baron, I, 208-209.


19. Baron, I, 203, and Marsh, pp. 36-37, both note this unusual feature of Bruni’s treatise.


22. Prosatori, p. 50.

23. Eliade, pp. 130-131, discusses the symbolism of water.

24. Howard Rollin Patch, *The Other World According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature* (New York: Octagon Books, 1970 [1958]) deals with rivers in otherworldly landscapes. There is one infernal image in Bruni’s Dialogues (p. 29). It is used by Niccolò when he says the barbaric philosophers from the North seem to have emerged from Rhadamistus’s school. This underlines the division between the two cultural viewpoints envisioned in the text.


32. Eliade, p. 181.
34. According to Gaster, p. 66, in the Middle Ages, the Jews opened their doors during the Paschal feast to prove the innocence of their celebrations.
35. Baron, p. 212.
37. Baron, p. 204.
39. Wilcox, pp. 73-80.

Great Black Goats and Evil Little Women: The Image of the Witch in Sixteenth-Century German Art

by

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Witch imagery in German Renaissance art may strike the modern observer as something incongruous in an age noted for interest in humanism, reformation, science, appreciation of beauty and the like. Nonetheless, it existed. Further, we find a number of prominent German artists who depicted witches. The operative point here is probably an interest in realism. Renaissance artists, north and south, were preoccupied with reality. To this end, their art stressed optical accuracy, factual anatomy, convincing natural details and so on.

We may not be able to accept the literary descriptions of witches from the sixteenth century as reality, but Germans did and we must also presume that the German artists did as well. In this sense witchcraft themes in art are just as much a study of everyday human activities as are any other works of genre. The German artists who depicted witches stressed the reality of witches by showing what were perceived to be accurate descriptions of the activities of witches, witches’ paraphernalia, their demon associates, and witch physiognomy.

If we wish to consider the image of the witch in German sixteenth-century art, we cannot do so without placing this image in the context of contemporary literature on the subject of witchcraft. Almost every aspect of witchcraft iconography was derived from printed sources or from sermons based on such books. Only in a few cases does one see artists using their own imagination when depicting witches. A major, although not the only literary source, for what became a standardized popular artistic conception of the witch was the Malleus Maleficarum of Institoris and Sprenger.¹ The justly famous (or it notorious) Dominican inquisitors outlined in this work of 1487 the blueprint of what witches were and how they functioned in their realms of evil. The Malleus was not illustrated (interestingly enough it never was even in later editions), but it contained numerous detailed descriptions of activities of witches. Institoris and Sprenger spoke graphically of night rides on pitchforks and broomsticks, of persons turning into beasts by sorcery, of sexual excesses, of
maleficia such as bewitching cattle, causing storms, ruining grain, milking axe handles, and the like, and of the so-called witches' sabbath. In short they used all the imagery which appeared in art thereafter. Because the descriptions in the Malleus were so detailed, and because they were believed to be authentic and factually accurate, they were easy for artists to adapt into further "accurate" depictions of witches' activities. The imagery becomes remarkably uniform. Just as one would not add features to the face of a well-known public figure today, one would not then change around the images of what witches did. One did not tamper with facts. This uniformity is carried to the extent that one finds the exact same images being used from book to book or print to print. However difficult it may be now for a modern observer to accept, we must try to understand that these illustrations and other art works had the same effect as newspaper photographs have on us today. They represented truth. And, this "truth" most often represented the activities of women as witches. The Malleus did note that there were male witches. These will appear to a lesser degree in the art depicting witchcraft.

The Malleus Maleficarum is a notoriously misogynous piece of writing. While Insitoris and Sprenger did note that men also became witches, they believed that women were far more likely to fall into the traps of Satan. This they held to be fact because women were inherently more evil, less intelligent, more talkative, more sensual, and of less value as human beings than were men. To prove their point they quoted Scriptural passages and Apocrypha, such as Ecclesiasticus xxv. In Part I Question 6, they state, "... what else is a woman but a foe to friendship, an unescapable punishment, a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic danger, a delectable detrimen, an evil of nature, painted with fair colors. . . .\"

The Malleus went into great detail when describing the sexual urges of women and the deleterious effect on male sexuality which a witch could cause. It went so far as to state that witchcraft stemmed from the unbridled sexual nature of women. It was no wonder then that artists immediately selected the female witch's sexual deviance and licentious behavior as a fit topic for study. This was also a part of the set of known "facts" about witches. And of course it was also a component of the Renaissance style to seek out reasons to depict the human nude. This lent itself nicely to showing examples of witches' sexual activities. So, our picture of what a witch is and what she does was well established by the beginning of printing, as the Malleus was both an early printed book and an early treatise on witches. The Malleus contributed much to this image, but did not create it entirely. Insitoris and Sprenger drew upon the works of many other writers and religious theoreticians. Perhaps the very popularity of the book and its images came from the fact that it was a printed book. The Malleus was well-written and quite readable and this must account for part of its impact. It was reissued frequently throughout the late fifteenth and the sixteenth century and went through many subsequent editions in later centuries.

When Johannes Trithemius, the Benedictine abbot, wrote of the Malleus in the early sixteenth century as, "a volume against malevolent little women," he was merely echoing what had already become a prevalent idea. Witches were nearly always women. Since women were the witches, one would naturally expect to see art depicting witchcraft which contained women. One might also expect to see men depicted as the Malleus did note that men could be witches, but the general thrust was that women were the witches. This becomes all the more interesting to consider when one notes that one of the earliest illustrated books on witchcraft contained a male witch as well as females. Ulrich Molitor's De lamis et pythonicus mulieribus, in spite of its title, contained an image of a male. Molitor's book was first published in Constanze in 1485 in Latin. It was dedicated to Archduke Sigismund of Austria and was an immediate success. De lamis was reissued in 1489, 1494, 1495, 1496, 1498 and in two editions dated about 1500. Later editions appeared in the next century as well. All fifteenth-century editions were in Latin except one German edition printed in 1493 entitled, Von den Hexen und Unholden.

All editions of De lamis contain the same illustrations. There is a series of woodcuts of male and female witches and demons repeated from book to book. These illustrations remained the same in illustrated editions until 1545. Then a new German edition was published with new prints of more elegant renaissance style. Even these new illustrations depicted the same scenes made famous in earlier editions.

The illustrator of the fifteenth-century editions of Molitor was directly guided by the descriptions of witch activities in the Malleus. In these illustrations one finds a witch who is shown as an ordinary peasant woman embracing her incubus who has assumed for the most part the shape of a man. His animal feet show the reader that this is the demon, for they are a visual reference to the well-known dictum of Thomas Aquinas that a demon may mimic nature, but not imitate it perfectly. Only God could create perfection. This lack of creative perfection in demons becomes a useful iconographic tool for artists.

Another Molitor illustration shows a male witch riding (probably to a sabbath) on the back of a bewitched beast. This beast could also be a demon, as demons frequently transported witches in this fashion. A third illustration depicts the flight to the witches' sabbath of three witches who have transformed themselves into beasts and who have also mounted a forked stick. The Malleus commented that witches flew by various means of locomotion: millstones, pitchforks, and brooms, but it was the pitchfork which these early German artists usually used when showing flying witches.

Hundreds of books dealing with witchcraft were published in Germany in the sixteenth century. However, there are only a relatively small number of these which were illustrated. The number of illustrated books increased as the end of the century approached and the witch craze expanded. But, the iconography of witchcraft remained quite uniform throughout the century.
One of the earliest sixteenth-century German treatises on witchcraft is Die Emeis (The Ants) written by Johannes Geller von Kaisersberg, the cathedral preacher of Strassburg (Strasbourg). Die Emeis was published in Strassburg as a posthumous work in 1517. Contrary to what Rosell Hope Robbins has written concerning this book, it was not the first German treatise on witches as Von den Hexen und Unholden predates it by twenty-four years. Die Emeis is a series of Geller's Lenten sermons dealing with various topics including witchcraft and lycanthropy (people turning into werewolves). It was illustrated by several hands.

A woodcut in a rather crude style from Die Emeis depicts witches preparing for a sabbath. (Plate 1) This particular illustration has been frequently compared with similar prints by the contemporary Strassburg artist, Hans Baldung (Grien). This scene of a preparation for a sabbath is based on works by Baldung, but not by his hand. We should note however that Baldung had produced illustrations for other Geller books published before Geller's death in 1514. As with the witch and demon scene in Molière, these witches are not shown as anything but ordinary human women. This is all the more remarkable in an age in which persons studied physiognomy and at a time when some writers were going to great lengths to describe the peculiar physiognomy (such as ugly features) of witches as one of the "indications" (indicia) or guideposts to identifying a witch.

The witches in this scene are preparing for flight to their sabbath. They are accompanied by a male demon who urges them on from his perch in a tree at the left. The witches have with them two pots of flying ointment—a necessary element in flight to a sabbath—a concoction of poisonous herbs, dead animal flesh or, especially prized, unbaptized baby fat, and the like. They also have wine and more palatable food as the sabbath usually consisted in part of a feast and all the food served was not necessarily fetid. One witch has a pitchfork, but another is apparently going to ride to the sabbath on her stool which she has charmed. It is literally walking into the scene. Women of several ages are shown here. This is iconographically correct as older witches were always trying to recruit younger members for the sect. This seemingly lively illustration is actually rather tame when it is compared to some of Baldung's works from which it was derived.

The Die Emeis illustration most closely resembles a chiaroscuro woodcut by Hans Baldung. (Plate 2) The Baldung print is inaccurately titled Witches' Sabbath, as it actually depicts a departure for a sabbath with witches preparing their flying ointments. The print exists in several states; a grey toned and orange toned chiaroscuro are known. It bears Baldung's monogram and the date, 1510. Witches of several ages are shown with their pots of flying ointment and foods, notably the phallic sausages draped over a witch's pitchfork and a wine vessel. Present are also two male goats and a familiar (demon) in the form of a cat. Male goats frequently symbolize Satan, but these are more likely to be lesser demons since there are more than one of them.
One witch is flying on the smoke and vapor issuing from the ointment pot. This vapor itself is a fitting symbol of the magic qualities of the ointment. Another witch rides a male goat and carries with her a pot of food supported by a pitchfork. Baldung has depicted witches with their hair flying out from their heads. This iconography denotes the evil being engendered by the witches and also may depict the generally vile atmosphere of the place. In later witchcraft writings, sabbaths are often portrayed taking place in stormy weather.

Most of the Baldung witch scenes are also erotic art. A drawing from the Louvre, dated 1514, is such an example. The drawing is on green tinted paper and most likely also depicts a preparation for a sabbath. It is also traditionally titled, *Witches' Sabbath*. Witches are seen with a familiar demon, again a hellish cat, in a setting not unlike that of the previous print. They engage in sexual excesses so often the concern of contemporary writers. These witches are shown using pitchforks and sausages as phalli. An evil cupid, his foot pressing on the pitchfork, seems almost reluctant to continue his role of symbol and participant in the scene. Baldung seems to have used his depiction of witches as a vehicle for erotica and vice versa. A drawing related to the previous work is entitled, *Three Witches*. This drawing is actually a New Years design and bears the inscription, "To the clergy, a good year." Still another Baldung drawing from 1514 of a *Witches' Sabbath* also has sexual overtones. Here the imagery is more complete in the sense of showing witches cooking their feast and consorting with demonic beasts—activities part of witches' sabbaths.

Baldung's *Weather Witches* from 1523 is an elegant and erotic painting of two voluptuous nude witches and a male goat. One witch has disrobed and the other is being undraped by a cupid. She holds aloft a flask likely filled with urine. The fluid is urine-colored and not viscous. It cannot therefore be ointment, because the ointment, made of baby fat, was of necessity greasy in consistency. To influence weather, the witch usually urinated into a hole or furrow in the earth. Then, she might dip a broom into this and shake the broom at the sky as she spoke her incantations. While the *Weather Witches* is iconographically correct, it is also the artist's interpretation of the story as these witches are actually more nude studies than anything else.

A final Baldung witchcraft theme appears in the woodcut, *The Bewitched Groom* from about 1544. This is an enigmatic print. The witch is certainly depicted as a malicious being, but we do not clearly understand what Baldung is stating in this print. Perhaps the witch has caused the groom to fall into a stuporous condition, that is to say in the parlance of the day, she has "fascinated" him. Or, she may have bewitched the horse and made him kick the groom. It may also be that the groom himself is a witch and has caused himself to become unconscious by having used a drug-laden ointment. We may be witnessing a "flight to a sabbath" induced by drugs.

Hans Baldung was not the only German Renaissance master to use the theme of witchcraft in his works. A drawing by Albrecht Altdorfer from 1506...
depicts a similar scene of witches leaving for a sabbath. Again, as in the Baldung works, these are elegant and sensuous female nudes. The witches mount demonic beasts to ride to the sabbath and at least one has changed her form into that of an animal. The witch at the extreme lower right sits beside a sieve. It was frequently stated in the literature and popular lore that a witch could carry water in a sieve. Again, like Baldung, Altdorfer has been faithfully guided by literary sources.

There are two engravings by Albrecht Dürer which depict witchcraft. The earliest is the Four Witches from 1497. A second Witch dates from about 1500. (Plate 3) The Four Witches contains iconography similar to the Baldung Weather Witches in that Dürer was essentially studying the female nude form. The Witch may be identified by her flying hair and by the male goat on which she is seated. She carries a broom as well to further identify herself. She is not especially horrific, but we should note that her hair flies outward from the back of her head in contradiction to the laws of nature as the goat is flying in the same direction as her hair.

A pattern emerges in sixteenth-century German art of very exact and faithful iconographic representations of witches. The artists who worked as illustrators were extremely careful to closely follow the dictates of the printed word. Artists like Baldung and Dürer may at times have felt free to use the image of the witch as a study of the nude, but even they did not invent magical paraphernalia or show deeds of witches that could not be found in the contemporary literature. This close adherence to what was known to be “true” about witchcraft is one of the best examples of how seriously most Germans took the idea that there were witches in their midst. It is interesting that the book illustrators generally depict their witches doing more awful acts like engaging in sex with demons and cooking baby corpses. One does not find such titillating scenes in the works of the better known artists. Again, in this connection, we should note the question of the physical appearance of the witch in sixteenth-century German art. We have already mentioned that witches generally do not appear with extremely distorted features. The artists again seem to have adhered to the literary “reality” of the situation showing witches as real men and women, just as people believed witches to be. German Renaissance artists seem to have been very dependent on what we might characterize as the eyewitness approach to witches. This approach is clearly seen in illustrations from Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus written by Olaus Magnus bishop of Upsala.12

In this book we have detailed literary descriptions of what witches do. Following the text, the illustrators show readers male and female witches engaging with demons in a variety of acts. This book was published in Rome, written by a Swede, and dedicated to the Archbishop of Cologne. It had a great influence on German witchcraft art. The first edition of his Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus (1555) contained illustrations of the activities of witches and demons.
Christlich Bedecken und erinnerung von Zauberer

Woher was und wie viel faltige felsen, wem sie
schaffen können oder nicht? Dass dieser festigkeit und die
so damals behauptet zu beleichen oder doch zu
strafen gebe.

Von

Augustin Hercheimer von
Sonnefeld.

Ds. in den Jahren 1592 und
1593. beider.

Gedruckt zu Basel

vom

Sebastianum Henricpetri.


which were then copied in a second edition published in Basel in 1567. While we do not know which artists illustrated the 1555 edition, we do know the Basel illustrator only by monogram. Master C.G. based his illustrations directly on those of the earlier book. Later, he would use the Olaus Magnus illustrations in another work of an entirely different character.

The illustrations of the first and second editions of Olaus Magnus, contain matter-of-fact depictions of witchcraft. For example, one illustration shows a male witch providing favorable winds for sailors. He is shown holding a rope which is knotted in three places. This rope was an essential item for doing weather maleficia, such as causing storms or influencing the winds.

In another Olaus Magnus illustration a female witch has raised a dreadful tempest causing a ship to founder. She is exercising a variation of the weather making acts already described in connection with Baldung's Weather Witches. She has also bewitched beasts which are shown foundering in a nearby field. All the scenes in this illustration are ordinary maleficia, the doing of evil to one's fellow humans. Yet another illustration shows a witches' sabbath. This print, used to illustrate a chapter entitled, "De Eluarum spectorum nocturna chorea," depicts demons dancing with a male witch in a magic ring. These rather playful satyr-like demons are unusual for their neoclassical connotations and we probably should attribute them to Italianate influences in view of the fact that the book was published and illustrated in Rome. It is unusual to see a male witch dancing with male demons, although male witches were poited by Olaus Magnus and appeared in other illustrations in this book as has been noted above. This print stresses sexual imagery and the deception of demons as one holds a flower while another holds a serpent.

As noted before, these illustrations from the first edition of Olaus Magnus were copied by Master C.G. in the 1567 edition of the book published in Basel by Sebastian Henricpetri. Master C.G. also provided a frontispiece for Hermann Witekind's Christliche Bedecken und erinnerung von Zauberer (sic) (Plate 4) published again by Henricpetri in Basel in 1593. In this frontispiece master C.G. again depicted witches and demons dancing in a ring. The engraving seems obviously derived from the original in the 1555 Olaus Magnus, as it contains almost exactly the same imagery. We see the same musician demons and the same satyr-demons dancing. Some more specifically German elements are added here so that we now have a female witch included in the scene. This made it more iconographically acceptable to the German reader, as Germans would have been expecting to see female witches—more traditional depictions rather than the more neoclassical satyrs. One must wonder whether Master C.G. was acquainted with the contents of the book he illustrated for his illustration served essentially as a smokescreen for the book's central thesis. Witekind discussed witchcraft according to rather traditional sounding chapter divisions, but his point was that of criticism of the beliefs prevalent at the time. This work has been described by the historian George Lincoln Burr
as "a bold and startlingly eloquent protest against the worst features of the (witch) persecution."\(^3\) Witekind was a professor at Heidelberg and a close friend of Melanchthon. Most likely the illustration is a foil designed to mollify the reader into thinking that probably after all Witekind was pretty orthodox in his views on witches. We are not saying that Witekind did not actually believe in witches, but he certainly did not succumb to all the credulity generally found in sixteenth-century German religious texts on witchcraft.

This credulity is wonderfully illustrated by the writings of the suffragan bishop of Trier, Peter Binsfeld. Binsfeld himself was responsible for the condemnation for witchcraft of probably hundreds of individuals. There has not been an exact total determined, but Binsfeld was one of the major persecutors at the height of the witch craze. In 1591 Binsfeld's *Tractat von Bekannts der Zauber und Hexen* was published in Munich by the well known press of Adam Berg. This was not the first edition of this book, but it was the first to be illustrated. Rossell Hope Robbins has called the *Tractat*, "a bigoted and savage work."\(^4\) Binsfeld incorporated all the standard group of beliefs and superstitions concerning witchcraft into his book and he included a lengthy section on the justification of torture which he referred to decorously as "the painful question." The frontispiece of Binsfeld's book is by an unknown printmaker and depicts a number of different activities of female witches. (Plate 5) Once again, as we have seen in other German works, the witches are depicted for the most part as realistic-looking human beings. Here are actually well dressed witches, for it was believed that not only peasants became witches, but also members of the upper classes, the clergy, and the nobility could be followers of Satan. The illustrator depicts witches flying to a sabbath. One even issues from a chimney. A witch is shown causing a hailstorm, while another spoils wine and two witches nearby consort with demon lovers. A witch at the right of the scene is shown also with her demon familiar. Both are very elegantly dressed.

At the left a witch fondles a demon dressed as a Catholic priest (Binsfeld was a Catholic). This demon may represent the Antichrist as well as a priest, as the Antichrist is often shown requiring homage from his followers in a similar fashion. Lastly, the central witch in the print is happily holding a baby.

We see a wide range of witches' activities, the flight, *maleficia*, and the sabbath as well as sexual license. The artist of the Binsfeld *Tractat*, like German artists before him, has been absolutely faithful to the printed word in his iconography. All the scenes depicted in this frontispiece can be found described in the text. Binsfeld wrote such an intense book (a work which we feel can safely be described as bloodcurdling) that it must have been easy for the artist illustrator to render the sort of detailed and complicated iconography which he has given us in the frontispiece.

A last example well illustrates the journalistic nature of German Renaissance witchcraft art. This is a pamphlet describing the fall into witchcraft and subsequent trial and execution of Waltherg Hausmann in 1587.\(^5\) (Plate 6)
This pamphlet contains an illustration of Walpurga and her demon friend has all the tabloid qualities of later broadsides such as those which were popular in England in the seventeenth century. It shows us Walpurga and the demon (whom she met at the side of the road) who convinced her to become a witch. Walpurga was primarily a practitioner of maleficia, but she was nonetheless tried, condemned, and burnt. Her trial comes just over one hundred years after the publication of the Maleus Maleficarum. Like most sixteenth-century witches, Walpurga is shown as a normal-looking woman. Illustrated trial records such as this seem to be rather rare, at least from the number of surviving representatives. However, a large number of trial accounts have been preserved and we may presume that some others were illustrated.

We began this discussion by noting that witches were real to the sixteenth-century German. We further noted that their existence was probably accepted as real by the artists who illustrated them as well. Witchcraft was a component of Renaissance Germany and witchcraft themes were a component of German Renaissance art. In another sense, these themes are also medieval. By this is meant that many ideas about witches and demons were formulated prior to this century. Even the ideas of the Maleus Maleficarum cannot be construed to be entirely those of the Renaissance. Institoris and Sprenger wrote out of a longstanding tradition of religious attitudes towards women and witches. It is a nice problem, this witchcraft craze in Renaissance Germany. Because the beliefs and the persecutions existed, they were a part of the period. If we have difficulty in accepting that Renaissance artists such as Dürer and Altdorfer could have depicted witches and may have believed in them, it is perhaps because we are imposing on these artists our own notions about what the Renaissance was. Nothing quite so well reveals the great intellectual complexity of this period than does the presence of hundreds of German books on witchcraft and the impact that these had on art.

NOTES

1. Editions of the Maleus Maleficarum consulted in this study include, the first edition (Speier, before 15 Apr., 1487), and the second edition (Speier, 1490). A workable modern translation may be obtained in M. Summers, Maleus Maleficarum (London, 1948).

2. In Part I, Question 6, the Maleus carefully describes women as being less moral, less intelligent, and more sensual than men. Institoris and Sprenger describe in great detail the sexual dysfunction of men that witches can cause in Part I, Question 9, and to a lesser extent elsewhere in the text. They describe various witches’ modes of flight such as broomsticks anointed with ointment in Part II, Question 3.

3. The Maleus quotes from Ecclesiastes xxv in Part I, Question 6, for example, “I had rather dwell with a lion and a dragon than keep house with a wicked woman. . . . All wickedness is but little to the wickedness of woman. . . .” Ecclesiastes or the Book of the Wisdom of Jesus, Son of Sirach, was regarded as part of the Apocrypha by


5. I am indebted to Professor Noel Brann for calling this to my attention. Trithemius' comments on the Malleus can be found in his catalog of German luminaries, published after his death in the early sixteenth century.

6. The British Museum owns an edition of Molière from 1486. The earliest editions which I have been able to find in the United States are from 1499 (Constance). One is owned by the Huntington Library, another by Cornell University and a third may be found in the Library of Congress.

7. U. Molière, Von den Hexen und Unholden (Strasbourg, 1498).

8. J. Geller von Kaisersberg, Die Eremes (Strassburg, 1517).


10. Indications of witchcraft included ugly facial features, physical deformities, bad reputations, habitual cursing, and the like. They were much discussed by Roman writers on witchcraft, and were well known and discussed by German writers as well. For example, Peter Binsfeld's Tractatus de Confessibus Maleficarum et Sagerum (Trier, 1589), and editions from 1590, 1591, 1592, and 1596, describes indite on pp. 232, 236, 240-41, and 248-49.

11. The use of the male goat to symbolize the Devil may come from France. One finds, for example, trials from the early fifteenth century in which French witches confessed to having talked with or having kissed the rumps of male goats who were demons. For descriptions of such accounts see C. H. L. Lea, Materials Toward a History of Witchcraft (New York, 1957), Vol. 1, pp. 223-232.

Another account is found in Robbins, Encyclopedia, p. 209. The poem, Le Champion des Dames, written by Martin le Franc about 1440, specifically mentions goats as demons in its description of a witches' sabbath. Illustrations from French fifteenth-century manuscripts concerning witches and the Waldensian heretics, such as Johannes Tinctors' Contra sectam Waldensim, from about 1460 depict witches kissing a goat-demon's rump.

12. O. Magnus, Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus (Rome, 1555), De Viatoris.

13. Burr made this comment in a notation on the inside cover of the original. It is also discussed in R. H. Robbins, ed., Catalog of the Witchcraft Collection in Cornell University Library (Millwood, N.Y.), p. 94.


15. This pamphlet was published at Dillingen (apparently Walpurgis Hausmann's home) in 1588, after her execution.
Correspondence with Women: The Case of John Knox
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The Reformation opened an ambiguous era for women. There were risks of losses and opportunities for gain for women who made the transition to Protestant faith. Protestant women gave up some traditional religious supports. The Virgin Mary and the female saints, who provided Catholic women with role models and sisterly patronage, were thrust aside. Priestly intercession ended, and Protestant women, like men, stood alone with their consciences in the presence of God. Women were denied the option of careers as nuns in self-governing female communities, and virginity ceased to be a respected female vocation. All women were expected to marry, and both church and state ordered them to submit to the "spiritual control of their spouses." 

There was promise, however, in the fact that the Reformation accorded marriage the dignity of a spiritual vocation. Sexuality was given greater respect. Mothers were recognized as having responsibility for the spiritual nurture of their children. Wives were expected to be sufficiently informed about religious matters to offer companionship in faith to their mates. Protestantism may or may not have had a positive, long-term effect on the level of female education. Some women, however, did study Scripture and seek to understand theological issues, and their efforts were encouraged by correspondence with leaders of the Reformation.

The attention accorded noblewomen was often a response to the privileges of their class and their political usefulness. Charmarie Jenkins Blaisdell has shown that John Calvin's "interest in aristocratic women was the same as his interest in aristocratic men: political." The situation was different for some of the other reformers.

Women of all ranks earned the palms of martyrs and the reputations of heroines in the struggles of the Reformation. Despite this, society preferred, when possible, to exclude them from positions of leadership in church and state. They were encouraged to become a new generation of Priscas and
Phoebe, the aid and helpers of the male revolutionaries who directed the fight for the new religion. In these roles they met for prayer and spiritual conversation. They helped others through agonies of conscience and the dark days when even the most faithful doubted the efficacy of God's grace for the forgiveness of their sins. They urged men on and applauded their victories. Many of these women accepted their dependent status without question and, perhaps because of it, felt entitled to a share of attention from the reformers. The correspondence of John Knox offers glimpses into the lives of two such women. It reveals the personal struggles the Protestant faith created for its followers, and it casts light on the subtle influence some ordinary women had on the famous man from whom they sought advice and reassurance.

Knox's letters and tracts have caused his attitudes toward women to be variously interpreted. Robert Louis Stevenson thought that he was all too preoccupied with sex. Pierre Janton suggested that he might have had a neurasthenia, a mother fixation that made him ambivalent toward females. Agnes MacKenzie believed him to have had a marked need for the approval of submissive women. He was certainly capable of virulent, misogynistic rhetoric, but his opinions of women may have been no worse than those of most males of his generation. John Aylmer, who wrote to defend queens against Knox's attack on female authority, saw nothing inconsistent in championing royal women while asserting that ordinary females were "dollied with the dregs of the Devils lourne hill."

Jasper Ridley has attempted to mitigate the impression made by Knox's antifeminist statements by suggesting that Knox pandered to popular prejudices he did not share. Ridley believed that Knox's true attitude toward women was revealed in his private correspondence. Half of Knox's extant letters were written to women, and Ridley argued that they 'show the high opinion which he had of the sisters in the congregation... and demonstrate that he obviously preferred the company and friendship of women to the company of men.'

It is impossible to determine how many letters Knox wrote to women. He left no log of his correspondence. The extant letters were preserved only because the women who received them protected or published them. On the basis of the known correspondence, however, Ridley's advocacy of Knox goes too far. About fifty of Knox's letters to women survive. Only six women are individually named as recipients of his private correspondence: Elizabeth Bowes, Marjorie Bowes, Anne Locke, Mrs. Hickman, Janet Adamson, and Janet Henderson (Mrs. Guthrie). Only two of these women received multiple letters. Thirty letters which Knox sent to Mrs. Bowes survive and thirteen which were received by Mrs. Locke. Knox did not write to an unusually large number of different women, and the volume and content of the correspondence hardly supports Ridley's claim that Knox had unusual respect or affection for women.

Knox's letters to Mrs. Bowes and Mrs. Locke permit close examination of one reformer's personal relationships with female members of his communion.

In the case of Mrs. Bowes Knox is very much a Protestant priest-confessor. The relationship with Mrs. Locke began in the same way, but in its final phases Knox used Mrs. Locke as an agent to circulate information about and garner support for the Scottish reformation. He wrote her quasi-public letters which she was instructed to circulate among their friends. Although none of the letters from Mrs. Bowes or Mrs. Locke to Knox survives, the two women were formidable correspondents. Knox's replies to their questions reveal that they often pushed and challenged him. He even admitted on rare occasions to receiving spiritual consolation from their words (III, 337-38, VI, 129).

The Bowes and Locke correspondences cover relatively brief periods in Knox's life. Following Ridley's reconstruction of the chronology of the Bowes letters, two are to be ascribed to 1551, fifteen to 1552, eight to 1553, two to 1554, and one to 1555. The Bowes letters were written during Knox's residency in England and at the beginning of his Marian exile on the continent. The correspondence with Mrs. Locke began in 1556 when that with Mrs. Bowes faded. There are three letters to Mrs. Locke from 1556; then none until the eight written in 1559; and, finally, one each for the years 1560, 1561, and 1562. They begin with Knox in exile and end with reports of his activities in Scotland.

John Knox was ordained a Catholic priest before he made the acquaintance of the Cambridge humanist, George Wishart, and came under the influence of Protestant ideas. Wishart was executed in 1546, and Knox emerged as one of his spiritual successors. In 1547 a group of Protestants occupied St. Andrew's Castle and called Knox as its pastor. By September of that year the Catholic government of Scotland, assisted by its French allies, had retaken the castle, and Knox found himself a prisoner of war on the French galleys. After a term of eighteen months he was released in an exchange of prisoners, and he emigrated to England. He obtained a post as minister to the church of Berwick, a town on England's border with Scotland. After two years he succeeded to a more prominent pulpit in nearby Newcastle. Knox's English ministry brought him the acquaintance of his major female correspondent, Elizabeth Bowes. The Bowes family was of some significance among the country gentry. Elizabeth's husband, Richard, commanded Norham Castle, the largest fortress on the Scottish border. Norham Castle was seven miles from Knox's post in Berwick.

Not much is known about the biography of Elizabeth (Aske) Bowes. She was nine years older than Knox and, when they met, a wife of thirty years and a mother of fifteen children. She was born a Catholic and her family converted to Protestantism only as far as was necessary to retain good relations with the government. Elizabeth Bowes at some point made the transition from nominal to enthusiastic Protestantism and found in Knox, her local pastor, an ally in her struggle with her more moderate relatives. She promoted a match between Knox and her daughter that her family considered to be socially inappropriate (III, 378). After Knox's exile she and her daughter fled England into Scotland.
where the wedding probably took place in 1555. Knox then took his wife and his mother-in-law to Geneva. Richard Bowes may not have approved of these arrangements, for he struck his wife and daughter from his will. He died before Knox's return to Scotland in 1559. Marjorie (Bowes) Knox died in 1560, and Elizabeth Bowes assumed the care of her daughter's two sons until Knox's second marriage in 1564. She ultimately returned to England and died not long before Knox's demise.  

Elizabeth Bowes does not seem to have been converted to Protestantism by John Knox. Knox's letters suggest that she was already a Protestant of his frame of mind when they met. Knox noted that they took to each other at first sight, and their relationship was not one-sided. Knox never allowed her to forget that he was one "to whom God has given greater gifts" (III, 340) and she was only a weak woman. But he was fascinated by the way in which her spiritual odyssey paralleled his own. In June of 1553 he wrote to her from London reflecting on their relationship (III, 337-38):

Since the first day that it pleaseth the providence of God to bring you and me in familiaritie, I have alwayes deylied in your company; and when labouris wald permit, ye know I have spairit hours to talk and commune with yow, the fruite wherof I did not than fullie understand nor perceave. But now absent... I call to my mind how that oftentimes when, with dolorous harris, we halfe begun our talking, God hath send greit confort unto both of us, whilk now for my awn part I commendable wande. The exozioun of your rubils, and acknowledging of your infirmitie, was first unto me a verie mirour and glass whairin I beheld my selfe sa rychilie paynit furth, that nothing could be mair evident to my awn eis.

In the midst of the composition of this letter Knox received another note from her which confirmed his feeling that they were on the same track. The letter indicated that the two friends, although separated, were suffering from the same spiritual trials: "I myself was compaignyng evin the self samene things at that verie instant moment that I resavit your letter" (III, 339). Knox was frequently amazed by the fact that his crises of faith were similar to those of Mrs. Bowes, and he thought she should be comforted by the fact that God granted her the same afflictions of the soul that He visited on Knox, one of "Godis chief ministeris" (III, 340).

Elizabeth Bowes sought guidance from John Knox, but she was capable of exploring spiritual territory on her own. Her sensitivity of conscience at times exceeded his. She was adept at introspection and alert to every glimmer of faith or doubt that welled up in her soul. She was fond of close readings of the Scriptures. Knox's answer to her letters indicate that she did not simply seek vague reassurances from him. She asked specific questions that Knox admitted forced him to search the word of God "mair neir than ever I cud do for my owne caus" (III, 379). When she was not content with an answer, she risked his impatience by repeating her inquiries (III, 762). She pressed Knox to explain the meaning of Jacob's wrestling with the angel and the change of his name to Israel (III, 397-402). She involved him in a rather embarrassing discussion of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah (III, 382-85). She wanted to know how God could be said to have "repentit" making Saul king (III, 362-64, 356-58). And she asked for a detailed explication of the story of Jacob's sons slaughtering the circumcision men of Sichem (III, 396-97). Knox urged her on a more liberal approach to the interpretation of Scripture than he later permitted others.  

He taught her that the Bible uses human terms to describe God, but it does not intend them to be applied literally. God is spoken of as having hands, a face, anger, repentance—"yit na sic thing can be in the Godheid" (III, 364). Knox warned her that Scripture used symbolic language and needed interpretation.

The Bowes-Knox correspondence is very doeful. There is unending complaint about "maladie," "rubils," and "infirmity" of the spirit. There is constant appeal for comfort and reassurance. Mrs. Bowes is the model of a soul in torment before the awful fact of God's omnipotence. Knox found her to be a unique and admirable case. After her death he wrote of her: "I have heard the complaints of divers that feared God, but of the lyke conflict as she susteyned... till this hour, I have not known!" (III, 513). Knox encouraged her extraordinary spiritual scruples. During a trip to London he wrote to tell her that one of her letters arrived while he was entertaining "thir honest pure women" who had come to him to confess "thair greit infirmitie." He read portions of Mrs. Bowes' note to his visitors, and one of them was moved to exclaim, "O wald to God I mycht speik with that persone, for I perswe that their be ma tempte[s] greater than I!" (III, 379-80). Knox evidently did not fear exciting Mrs. Bowes to the sin of pride in her own humility, but sometimes her extreme need for reassurance exaggerated his patience and elicited his complaint (III, 361-62, 364).

The nature of Mrs. Bowes' "infirmity" seems to have been entirely spiritual. After her death he wrote an open letter about his relationship with her in which he explained (V, 513-14):

For her tentation was not in the flesh, nor for any thing that apperteyned to flesh... but it was in spirte: For Satan did continually buffette her, that remission of sinnes in Christ Jesus apperteyned nothing unto her, be reason of her former
idolatry and other iniquities: for which... I
have seen her... powre furthe teares, and send to
God doloerous complaints, for than ever I heard
man or woman in my lyfe. Her company to me
was comfortable... but yet it was not without
some croce [sic]; for... my mynde was seldome
quet, for doing somewhat for the comfort of her
troubled conscience.

Mrs. Bowes was a victim of the spiritual anxiety that the Protestant doctrine of salvation by grace imposed on converts. She had grown up in a medieval Catholic world that had taught her that salvation could be acquired by acts of virtue. She had subsequently come to believe that all her former piety was "idolatry" and a sinful usurpation of the prerogative of God. No human act merited God's favor. All persons were lost in sin and deserved damnation.

Only by the gift of undeserved divine grace in election would some be saved. The church and the sacraments could guarantee nothing. The sinner was alone and defenseless before God.

Mrs. Bowes desperately wanted to be among the saved but could never quite believe that she was. She constantly sought help from Knox in identifying the signs of her election. Knox taught her that "trewli nether thocht nor deid salte imput unto yow, for thai ar remittit in Chrystis blude; but thair foue do ye not rejoi in thochtis and workris repugnyng to Godis expres commandemant; but dois lament and murre that any sic motioun suld remaine in you" (III, 365). Knox followed Paul in believing that human actions counted nothing toward salvation but that human sin was still important and still to be resisted.

He encouraged Mrs. Bowes to deny her own worth and throw herself totally on the mercy of God, "wha requyris nathing mair than that we knaw and confess oure imperfectionis" (III, 375). Knox wrote that "the cheif sign of Gods favir is, that we knaw and understand oure selves uneamidlie to be na thing without his support, and that we dispar of all things within oure selves" (III, 374).

Mrs. Bowes took his advice very much to heart and condemned virtually every impulse of her will. But, as hard as she worked at self-loathing, she knew that her fate was beyond her control. Knox taught her that true repentance was not possible without the assistance of divine grace (III, 341):

To confession of synnys ar theis thingis requisit:
first, we man acknowledge the syn; and it is to be
notit, that symtymes Godis verie elect, albeit they
have synnit maist haynouslie, dois not acknowledge
syn, and thair foue can not at all tymes confes the
same; for syn is not knawin unto sic tymes as the
valle be taken fra the conscience... And then
(whil is the second thing requisit to confession)
beynnis the haided of syn, and of oure selves for
temptyng of God and of his halle law, whairst of
last springs that whilk we call boip of mercie;
whilk is nathing els but a sob fra a trubilfull hart,
confoundit and aschamit for syn.

The punishment due human sin has been taken by Christ, and "God hes ressavit alredie at the hands of his onlie Sone all that is dew for our synnis, and sa
can not his justice requyre nor craf any maier of us" (III, 342). Nothing remains to the sinner but, with the assistance of the Spirit, to acknowledge her wickedness and need. Mrs. Bowes was eager to do this at every opportunity, and Knox assured her that her endless "dolour for syn" was evidence of God's work in her (III, 381).

Mrs. Bowes' letters were filled with self-indictments. She confessed to thinking that the Scriptures were only a "vaine taill inventit be man" (III, 366). She believed herself to have denied the existence of God (III, 360). She had moments of exhausted indifference to her guilt (III, 386). In the only quotation surviving from her writing she went so far as to accuse herself of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah:

Allace! wrechit woman that I am, my bodie is far
wrang, for the self same synnys that ringit in
Sodore and Gomone, whairfoi they persistit,
ringes in me, and I have small power or nane to
resist.

This was too much even for Knox. He charged her with ignorance of the nature of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah and with the error of confessing sins she had not committed (III, 382-83).

The pressure which Protestant doctrine and Knox placed on Mrs. Bowes was considerable, and she occasionally bent under it. There were times when she felt the exhalation of faith and assurance of salvation. But there were others when she was totally bereft. Knox tried to comfort her with the thought that "Yet, Sister, the maist perfyt is ofymes left without all sence and feiling thairfo [i.e., of God's mercy]" (III, 353). In her darkest moments she succumbed to nostalgia for the rituals of her Catholic past. Knox shamed her out of these moods by claiming, "I am sure that your hart neither thirssis nor desyris to invocate or mak prayyr unto breid, nor unto any uther creatur, but to the leving God onlie" (III, 361). Knox assured her that the very intensity of her struggle with doubt made him certain, "sa fer as creatur can be," of her election, for where the devil still labors there he has not yet succeeded (III, 375).
Knox reminded Mrs. Bowes that he sometimes felt what she felt, and even Christ on the cross believed himself to have been abandoned by God (III, 358-60). Mrs. Bowes was not easily convinced, and she pushed Knox to audacious extremes in his attempts to speak to her need. In some passages he went so far as to imply that he was certain of the mind of God and of her election to grace. He wrote: “In my conscience I judge, and by the Holy Spirit of my God, am fullly certifie that ye are a member of Christis bodie” (III, 352). “I am evin equallie certifie of your election in Chrust, as that I am that I myself preacheth Chrust” (III, 369). Knox was a polemical writer sometimes given to overstatement in order to make his case. These private words to Mrs. Bowes were written with the knowledge that she would read them in the context of her long history of instruction in Protestant theology. She would hardly have taken them as a sign that Knox intended to depart from his vigorous proclamation of God’s omnipotence and the mystery of divine election.

Mrs. Bowes probably carried her struggle with the concepts of salvation by grace and the insufficiency of all human works to her grave. No sign of its resolution appears in her correspondence. Her sensitivity to the implications of Protestant doctrine was judged to be unusually acute by Knox himself, but it was this that earned her his respect.

His relationship with her provided his enemies with material for malicious rumors. Catholic propagandists routinely reacted to Protestant criticism of celibacy by accusing Protestant clergy of sexual irregularities. Knox and Mrs. Bowes were not the most conventional of friends, and Knox was at least indirectly involved in the collapse of Mrs. Bowes’s marriage. Only one passage in the Knox-Bowes correspondence, however, might stir the suspicions of the reader. In context it is perfectly congruent with Knox’s claim (V, 513-4) that their relationship was purely pastoral. On 26 February 1552 he wrote her in response to her complaint that she was tormented with doubts about her salvation. Knox reminded her that even Christ’s disciples doubted him at moments, and then he went on to confess that he too shared her feelings. He wrote (III, 350):

Call to your mynd what I did standing at the copburd in Anwik: in VERIE deid I thought that na creature had bene temptit as I wes. And when that I heard proceed fra your mouth the verie same words that he “your adversarie,” Satan, trubillis me with, I did wonder, and fra my hart lament your sair trubill knowinge in my selfe the doubl thairof.

This passage refers to personal crises of faith, not moments of mutual carnal temptation. It was evidently a time in their relationship when Knox and Mrs. Bowes achieved a new level of honesty with each other. Nothing in the letters they had exchanged before this suggests the scope of Mrs. Bowes’ struggle. The two inflamed Protestants, who were under pressure from their hostile acquaintances, may have had a hard time confiding to each other that they had serious doubts. Knox evidently handled her courageous self-revelation badly. She complained to a Harle Wickel, who communicated the remark to Knox, that Knox did “start bak” from her confession. Knox excused himself, saying that this was a characteristic action for him when he was deeply touched (III, 350). He was moved by the discovery that this woman, whose faith he admired, shared his own secret doubts and anxieties. The “Anwik copburd” incident may have been a turning point in his relationship with her, but it was a relationship without erotic content.

Knox’s other female correspondent, Anne Locke, was a younger and more sophisticated woman than Mrs. Bowes. Mrs. Locke was the daughter of Stephen Vaughan, a London cloth merchant and Henry VIII’s agent in Antwerp, and wife of Henry Lock, a scion of another mercantile family with close ties to the court. She and a Mrs. Hickman were among Knox’s confidants in London at the time of Edward VI’s death. Knox was lodging at the Lockes when he decided that he had to flee England and make a new life for himself on the continent.

Knox was justifiably concerned about the implications of Mary Tudor’s ascension. Mrs. Locke and Mrs. Hickman shared his anxiety about a resurgence of Catholic “idolerie” in England, and Knox found a great deal of comfort in their company (IV, 239-41). He saw them as God’s agents for his support in a time of great personal difficulty, and he spoke of them as caring for him as a mother cares for her child (IV, 220).

Knox’s correspondence with Mrs. Locke is different from that with Mrs. Bowes. Eight of the thirteen letters come from the year 1559 when Knox was deeply involved in the events of the Scottish reformation and had little leisure for his friends. During this period Mrs. Locke was used as a conduit for information from Scotland to people Knox had known at Geneva (VI, 21, 27, 30, 78, 85, 108), and Knox tried, with little apparent success, to turn her into a fund raiser for the reforming party (VI, 101, 103). Much less space is given to private pastoral counsel in Mrs. Locke’s letters than in those addressed to Mrs. Bowes, but enough is written to indicate the nature of Mrs. Locke’s religious concerns.

Mrs. Locke and Mrs. Bowes shared a common anxiety about the efficacy of God’s grace for their salvation, and both sought assurance from Knox that they were among the elect. Knox, however, was more impressed by Mrs. Bowes’ spiritual struggles than Mrs. Locke’s. In one of his earliest letters to Mrs. Locke (addressed jointly to Mrs. Hickman) Knox explained that Christ’s sacrifice alone sanctified the saved—“of whilk nounderness, as my assuret hop is that yow art” (IV, 222). His language here is more cautious than that he used to reassure Mrs. Bowes (above: III, 352). It may be that Knox feared that Mrs.
Locke had yet to confront the full extent of the problem of human sin. In the first of his private letters to her he urged her to “be not to be plane with me” touching her spiritual troubles. He also rejoiced that she was experiencing a period of anxiety about God’s love. He confessed that he had been worried about her, for things had been too easy for her. In prosperity, he reminded her, it is not difficult to “think well of God,” but the Christian should learn to “call upon him for help whom we think arright to our distraction” (IV, 237-8).

The only other reference in the Locke documents to the kind of personal spiritual anxiety that filled Mrs. Bowes’ letters comes from a note addressed to Mrs. Locke three years after her correspondence with Knox began. She wrote to complain that her doubts kept her awake in sterile prayer at midnight and that she felt completely alone. Knox assured her that God fought the battle with her and suggested that her problem lay in pride. He urged her to be content “to enter [salvation] under mercy,” and he comforted her with the assurance that the best weapon against pride was the experience of despair that presently troubled her (VI, 79).

The other major issue that rose in Knox’s notes to Mrs. Locke concerned her participation in the church of England. Mrs. Locke became Knox’s friend during the last days of Edward VI, and Knox claimed to have been more open with her than he was with anyone about his predictions for England’s future under Mary (IV, 220). When his worst expectations materialized and he fled to the continent, he wrote to urge Mrs. Locke to surrender home and possessions rather than risk God’s wrath by compromising with Mary’s “idolatrie” (IV, 220). Mrs. Locke eventually joined Knox as a guest in his home in Geneva, and she remained there after he returned to Scotland. The ascension of Elizabeth opened the way for her return to England, but the English church remained short of the highest Reform ideals. Mrs. Locke, therefore, was in a quandary about her duty. She wrote to Knox from Geneva in March of 1559, and he answered a month later. He took what he admitted to be a very hard line with her and warned her that he could never counsel anyone to submit to the “dregges of Papistrie” left in English services (VI, 11). He argued that it was not simply a matter of externals that corrupted the English service, but the fact that Reform preaching was not central to it. It was distorted by human inventions to the point where he considered it no divine service at all. The decision whether not to countenance it was nothing less than a choice between obeying God or following men (VI, 14). Mrs. Locke continued to press him with questions on the same topic, and he in exasperation reminded her that “I have other than once answered [your doubts]” (VI, 83). In no way would he encourage her to participate in a “bastard religion” like the “mingle mangle” practiced in the English parishes (VI, 83). He stopped short, however, of commanding her to take a martyr’s stand and advised her that the extent of her compromise with England’s state church was something she would have to work out in her own heart with the guidance of the Holy Spirit (VI, 84).

Mrs. Locke’s youth and long association with Knox may account for the suspicions harbored by some scholars of a romantic attachment between them. There is certainly little evidence in their correspondence of erotic interests. Stanford Reid’s claim that Anne Locke was “the only woman whom Knox really loved” is impossible to substantiate. Patrick Collinson committed a gross overstatement when he declared that Mrs. Locke’s ties with Knox were so intimate that she might as well have assumed his name as she did the names of her three husbands. Lewis Lupton’s speculation that Henry Locke might have warned his wife about the potential for scandal of her relationship with Knox is substantiated by nothing more than Lupton’s claim that “these things do happen”.

As in the Bowes’ correspondence, only one passage in Knox’s letters to Mrs. Locke can be construed as a declaration of carnal love. Shortly after his marriage to Marjorie Bowes Knox wrote to Mrs. Locke to comfort her in her “trubills [Spirituall I mene]” (IV, 237). Knox was then residing in Geneva, and Mrs. Locke had evidently written to tell him how much she missed him since he left England. He gallantly assured her that he, on his side, felt deprived of her company (IV, 238):

Deir Sister, ye I suld expers the thirst [sic] and langoure whilh I halfl had for your presence, I suld appeir to pass meare. . . . I weep and rejoise in remembrance of you; but that wold evanich by the comfort of your presence, whilk I assure yow in se deir to me, that giff the charge of this liill flok heir, gatherit together in Chrisitis name, did not impede me, my presence suld prevent my letter.

That is not unlike the kind of thing that Knox occasionally wrote to Mrs. Bowes (III, 370). In context it suggests the desire of one troubled soul for the company of another, not a declaration of love. Knox occasionally expressed his loneliness for absent male friends in similarly emotional language, and this has not caused any of his critics to assume that he was subject to homosexual attractions (VI, 27).

Knox did invite Mrs. Locke in December of 1556 to flee the corruption of Marian England for the spiritually pure atmosphere of Geneva (IV, 240). Her husband opposed the move, but his reasons may have had nothing to do with anxieties about his wife’s feelings for Knox. Knox admitted in his invitation that she had no pressing reason for leaving England at the time, and she was the mother of two small children who might be put at risk by the journey. Six months later the situation apparently had changed. Mrs. Locke, her children, and a maid appeared in Geneva and took refuge in Knox’s home with his wife and mother-in-law. Knox returned the hospitality that he had earlier received
from the Lockes in London. Mr. Locke did not accompany his family. He may have remained in England or moved to Antwerp where he had connections and could keep a closer eye on business than he could have from Geneva. No sign of a break occurs between husband and wife. While in Geneva Anne Locke produced a translation of some of Calvin's sermons, and the British Museum preserves the inscribed copy which she presented to her husband.¹⁸ Knox greets Mr. Locke in his letters, and he on several occasions reminds Anne Locke of her obligation to obey the man who was her God-appointed "husband" (IV, 219, 239–41).

The extant correspondence suggests that Knox's close female friends were few and his relationships with them were primarily pastoral. His constant preoccupation was to help them with their struggles of conscience and their earnest efforts to trust the promises of God's grace for their salvation. He freely acknowledged that their doubts, anxieties, and failures in faith were similar to his own. He provided aid and encouragement to them, and he confessed that his relationship with them was not entirely one-sided. He needed their words of assurance as they needed his (VI, 129). Knox's correspondence with women survives as witness to the struggle of the first generation of Protestant faithful to understand and meet the terms of their rigorous faith. It chronicles the private struggles of three individuals to live with the awful fact of God's omnipotence and their need to trust totally in His mercy for their salvation.

NOTES
25. When Mrs. Locke subsequently fled to Geneva, she buried her infant daughter Anne four days after her arrival.
26. *Four Sermons of John Calvin, upon the Song that King Ezechias Made after He had been Sick* (London: John Day, 1560), 696. a 40.

**Review Article**

Chaucer and the Three Crowns of Florence (Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio): Recent Comparative Scholarship

by

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The 1970's witnessed a number of major anniversaries relating to Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Chaucer. 1971 marked the 650th anniversary of Dante's death in 1321; 1972-73, the 600th anniversary of Chaucer's first known trip to Italy; 1974, the sixcentenary of Petrarch's passing; 1975, the sixcentenary of Boccaccio's demise; and 1978, the 600th anniversary of Chaucer's second journey to Italy. Many of these events were commemorated by special lectures or symposia, the written results of which have been appearing in print ever since. Perhaps because of the anniversaries' chronological closeness, scholars were also encouraged to devote considerable attention to comparative analyses of the fourteenth-century authors' works. Assuredly such studies do not constitute a recent phenomenon and may be traced at least to Mario Praz's seminal 1927 article in *The Monatly Criterion* on "Chaucer and the Great Italian Writers of the Trecento" (rpt. in *The Flamboyant Heart* in 1958)—not to mention the pioneering studies of A. Rambeau in German, C. Chartini in Italian, and J. L. Lowes in English. Nevertheless comparative scholarship in the period from 1974 to 1984 remains remarkable for its quality and quantity. I am thinking, specifically and initially, of the booklength studies focussing on the famed Boccaccio-Chaucer parallels or the larger Boccaccio-and-English...
Litlerature relationships—e.g., *Il Boccaccio nella cultura inglese e anglo-american*, ed. Giuseppe Galli (1974); Piero Boitani, *Chaucer and Boccaccio* (1977); and *Chaucer’s Boccaccio: Sources of *Troilus* and the *Knights* and *Franklin’s Tales,* ed. and trans. N. R. Havel (1890)—all of which have been, I believe, favorably reviewed elsewhere. But three more recent books have covered either the general problem of Chaucer and Trecento Italy or the more narrow Chaucer-Dante connection. In this review I shall assess the contributions of these latest studies, listed at the outset of my essay.

Professor Boitani’s well-edited collection of thirteen articles (counting an extremely helpful bibliography) by eleven contributors is entitled *Chaucer and the Italian Trecento*. It is dedicated “To the memory of Jack Bennett,” a Chaucerian and comparatist of note who taught at the University of Cambridge and who has the lead article in the second part of the volume (devoted to Chaucer’s relationship with the great Trecento writers). An initial triad of essays—medieval historian John Larner’s “Chaucer’s Italy,” political scientist Janet Coleman’s “English Culture in the Fourteenth Century,” and historian Wendy Child’s “Anglo-Italian Contacts in the Fourteenth Century”—make up the book’s first part and are directed to comparative cultural history. For the *lettareur*, these contain numerous reminders of and insights into the complexities of fourteenth-century Italian and English culture, from period politics and economics to artistic currents and systems of education. Larner, for example, chronicles the far-reaching changes in Italy between the death of Dante and the flourishing of Petrarch’s generation—not just the outbreaks of plague but also the shifts in philosophy from Thomism and scholasticism to Augustinianism and humanism. Coleman, on the other hand, stresses the importance of the papal court in Avignon as a meeting place for Italian and English humanists trained in or familiar with civil and canon law. Child details England’s longstanding mercantile, clerical, and diplomatic contacts with Italy, as exemplified by a number of Chaucer’s well-travelled Canterbury pilgrims and as attested to by a variety of documents in the Public Record Office: “English awareness of Italy came through both Englishmen (churchmen, pilgrims, envoys and mercenaries) returning from Italy, and Italians (merchants, envoys, churchmen) coming to England” (p. 65). The plethora of Anglo-Italian cultural ties arising from merchant trade—a fact underscored by all three scholars in this first section—suggests the reason for the richness of the fourteenth-century literary theme of economic exchange. As we shall see, R. A. Sholof provides, in a separate book-length study, an in-depth examination of this *Leitmotiv* in Dante and Chaucer.

Bennett’s “Chaucer, Dante and Boccaccio,” as noted, sets the stage for the collection’s second group of essays, where a primary concern is that of literary influence. This venerable scholar is well aware of Chaucer’s debts to Boccaccio, direct and otherwise—e.g., *Il Filostrato* as the immediate source for *Troilus and Criseyde*; *Il Tesardo*, the free adaptation of which constitutes the

Knight’s Tale; the story of Griselda (*Decameron* X, 10) as the indirect source, via Petrarch’s Latin translation, for the Clerk’s Tale; and *De claris mulieribus* and *De casibus virorum illustrium* as two important sources for the Monk’s Tale. But perhaps more importantly, he is also aware of Boccaccio’s profound admiration for Dante and of the myriad Danteisms in Boccaccio’s works. Following in the tradition of J. H. Whitefield, Bennett explores how Chaucer dealt with Dante’s poetry, both directly and through Boccaccio. Furthermore, he argues that “[i]t is thanks to Chaucer’s reading of the Commedia that English verse joins the main stream of European poetry” (p. 108). This article, as Boitani indicates in the Introduction, focuses attention on critical areas of concern to be treated in the subsequent essays.

In Boitani’s “What Dante Meant to Chaucer” the author reminds us that Dante and Chaucer were not contemporaries and that we must not forget the chronological and geographical distance that separated them. Nevertheless the poets shared much: they loved the classics, especially Virgil and Statius; they were widely read in medieval philosophy and literature, with Boethius being a key figure for both; they were fascinated by science; and they both started their literary careers as love poets. Moreover, “[i]n the *House of Fame*, the *Friar’s Tale*, the *Legend of Good Women* and the *Knight’s Tale* Dante is for Chaucer the poet of Hell and Heaven, the poet of the muses, of Thought, of *en[y]n,* of science and light” (p. 126). Boitani goes on to consider the potential impact of Dante’s *Convivio* on Chaucer’s concept of “gentility.” He proffers that one might even view the moral ballad “*Gentilesse* as Chaucer’s version of Dante’s great moral *canzone* *De dolci tene di amor, ch’è sola* discussed in the *Convivio*” (p. 132).

David Wallace, in “Chaucer and Boccaccio’s Early Writings,” argues that Boccaccio’s *Amorosa Visione*, with its fifty cantos of Dantesque terza rima, “offers parallels with the *House of Fame* both in its general enterprise and in its specific engagements with particular literary models” (p. 143). While admitting the difficulty of demonstrating that the *House of Fame* consciously borrows from the *Amorosa Visione* (p. 145). Wallace insists on the importance of the poets’ analogous approaches to similar problems. Certainly the two works in question share a dream-vision framework, but it is not an uncommon mise en scene for the times. The author also notes that “[o]f all Chaucer’s works, *Boccaccio’s* Caccia di Diana most resembles the *Book of the Duchess*” (p. 147). The noteworthy thing of such an observation is of course greatly diminished when Boccaccio and Chaucer are not studied in isolation: Italian caccia and French hunting poems were fairly common in the fourteenth century. In the end Wallace does acknowledge a fundamental difference between the two poets, although I find unconvincing his speculation on why Boccaccio’s name never appears in any of Chaucer’s works (p. 159).
Chaucer, although of bourgeois origins, received a courtly education. Boccaccio, however, remained an outsider to the courtly world; his conception of cortesia is inevitably impoverished and debased. In Boccaccio's early writings, the popular appropriation of courtly vocabulary ... is made absolute. It was perhaps for this reason that Chaucer nowhere acknowledges Boccaccio by name.

Barry Windeatt's "Chaucer and the Filastro" perceptively discusses the "payned prose" (Troilus and Criseyde, I, 424) by which the English poet adopts and adapts Boccaccio's love poem to his own purposes: "Chaucer in translating stream over his original with the language of a more courtly love" (p. 168). The poet also "encrusts" his translation with added references to classical figures (p. 171) and "floods his translating with an alertness to death" (p. 172). Boitani's second essay in the collection, "Style, Iconography and Narrative: the Lesson of the Teseida," follows Windeatt's article and is similarly insightful. The point of the essay is that the Teseida, although one of Boccaccio's assuredly minor works, enjoyed a considerable public in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance; it follows, therefore, and hardly surprises that Chaucer used the Italian poem in ottava rima throughout his career, from the House of Fame, to the Anelida, the Parliament of Fowles, the Troilus, the Legend, the Knight's Tale and the Franklin's Tale" (p. 188). Boitani makes a fairly strong case for the Teseida's being placed alongside the Divine Comedy, the Consolation of Philosophy, and the Romance of the Rose as "the book that most influenced Chaucer, that most stimulated him in his experiments as a narrative poet and a stylist" (ibid.). The Italian scholar's assertion, however, that the Decameron may disappoint because of "its relative lack of characterization" and the "absence of that most obvious of Chaucerian qualities—irony" (p. 225) is puzzling indeed. While Dante (and Chaucer) may be superior to Boccaccio in powers of characterization and while the potential of irony may not be fully realized in Italian letters until Ariosto, characterization and irony often go hand in glove in Boccaccio's masterpiece, from the depiction of Ser Ceppereello in the first story of the first day to the tales of the hardheaded Calandrino in the later days.

The next two articles, "The Wake of the Commedia: Chaucer's Canterbury Tales and Boccaccio's Decameron" and "The Griselda Story in Boccaccio, Petrarch and Chaucer," are by Robin Kirkpatrick and are both in the best comparative tradition. The first treats the "dissimilarities [emphasis added] between the Canterbury Tales and the Decameron" and points to the dearth of "clear evidence that Chaucer ever used the Decameron as a source of material" (p. 201). More specifically, Chaucer's straightforward and realistic portrayal of the Pardoner is contrasted with the highly creative recreation of such a figure as Fra Cipolla in Boccaccio. In the second essay Kirkpatrick stresses "how close Chaucer stays [in retelling the Griselda story] in most respects to the text of Petrarch" (p. 238), but the author also provides close readings and examples of how Petrarch and Chaucer modify their respective sources for their own purposes. Kirkpatrick's discussion of the image of Griselda in the Trecento might have been better informed had he consulted Marga Cottino-Jone's "Fabula vs. Figura: Another Interpretation of the Griselda Story," in Italic 50 (1973), 38-52. It is a brilliant article analyzing (Boccaccio's) Griselda as a figura Christi.

Nicholas Havely's "Chaucer, Boccaccio and the Friars" addresses the two poets' antierarianism and traces their somewhat divergent attitudes on the subject to "the French antifamiliar tradition deriving largely from the événements at the University of Paris in the mid-thirteenth century" (p. 255). Havely also reviews possible artistic reasons for including friars in the Italian and English narratives: such men were, in the traditional mendicant mould, invertebrate tale-tellers. Peter Godman's "Chaucer and Boccaccio's Latin Works" distinguishes "what Boccaccio's Latin prose offers to its earliest English adapter" (p. 269). In Boccaccio's Latin biographies, the author, notwithstanding his claims to historical veracity, "follows his sources when it suits him"; when it fails to please him, "he alters them to his own ends" (p. 290). Chaucer acts in a similar vein, for example, "[in the Legend of Good Women he asserts the authority of the texts upon which he draws, yet employs Boccaccio's account of Cleopatra to reverse Boccaccio's interpretation of her" (p. 291).

The final article, Enrico Giaachetti's "Chaucer and the Italian Trecento: a Bibliography," is what its subtitle suggests. After a half-page of explanatory remarks—e.g., the selection of books and articles is not intended to be complete—the bibliography is divided into six sections: I. General Studies; II. Chaucer and Italy; III. Chaucer and Dante; IV. Chaucer and Boccaccio; V. Chaucer and Petrarch; and VI. Varia. For not intending to be complete, sections II through V are remarkably exhaustive and most valuable. Howard Schless's Chaucer and Dante: A Revolution, listed as an unpublished 1956 Pennsylvania dissertation, has of course since been published. (In fairness I should add that Giaachetti, quite attentive to detail, does acknowledge in a note that he has seen the publication announcement of Schless's book.)

Professor Boitani, known also as the author of English Medieval Narrative in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries (1982), is to be praised for collecting and editing this varied and generally distinguished group of essays. It will undoubtedly prove an important resource to students and scholars interested in the interrelationships of Italian and English letters in the Trecento. The book itself is handsomely printed, replete with jacket cover and frontispiece illustrations germane to the subject—the frontispiece, for example, is from the Last Judgment fresco in the Strozzi Chapel of Santa Maria Novella in Florence and shows Dante and, perhaps, Boccaccio and Petrarch.
H. H. Schless's *Chaucer and Dante: A Revaluation* has a more restricted purview than the previous study; it largely “deals with the literary indebtedness of Chaucer to Dante on the basis of an investigation of all the reasonable suggestions of parallels and sources that have been made to date” (p. ix). The author acknowledges his great debt to the unpublished doctoral dissertation of J. P. Bethel, “The Influence of Dante on Chaucer’s Thought and Expression” (Harvard University, 1927), whose appendix contains most of the Dante ascriptions discussed by Schless. The Preface to *Chaucer and Dante* outlines the author's procedure for presenting and analyzing the parallels in the two poets: first, he cites the ascription, indicating whether it comes from Bethel's list and, if so, whether it is original to him; second, he provides the full citations or texts from Chaucer and Dante, supplying the context when needed; third, he includes an English translation of the Italian (C. S. Singleton for the *Commedia* and W. W. Jackson for the *Convivio*); and, finally, he discusses the individual entry (often questioning or “revaluing” the reasonableness or validity of the ascription). He sees the bases on which ascriptions can be made as three: (1) direct translation or citation, (2) verbal parallelism, and (3) contextual parallelism” (p. x). Throughout the study the author argues eloquently that with the first basis for ascription or with the combination of the latter two, there is proof or reasonably certain evidence of direct borrowing or noteworthy parallelism. But when the second or third basis exists alone, Schless reexamines the ascription in an effort to determine whether or not the two writers are drawing on a third element—e.g., a common classical or medieval source or even common knowledge. This scholar, in brief, wisely refuses to study Dante and Chaucer in a vacuum; rather he persistently strives “to revalue the Chaucer-Dante relationship in the light of the social and literary background of the period” (ibid.). Because of the soundness of such a methodological approach and because of the book’s highly readable format—individual investigations of each suggested instance of Chaucer’s indebtedness to Dante, plus a detailed Index of Comparisons—this elegantly and expansively printed volume is destined to become the fundamental sourcebook for Dante-Chaucer studies for decades to come.3

*Revaluation* comprises nine chapters. The first, “Chaucer and Fourteenth Century Italy,” discusses at length the problem of when Chaucer learned Italian. That in the Trecento “Italian was the language of international business and finance” (p. 4) points to the possibility, if not probability, that Chaucer knew Italian before his 1372 mission to Italy. In a similar vein Schless urges caution to those who believe that Dante was unknown in England until after Chaucer’s return from Italy: many Tuscan merchants dwelt in England for several decades before Chaucer’s trip for that easily to have been the case. Schless does not establish the year in which Chaucer learned Italian, but he does indicate 1372 as the year by which he must have learned the language. In the initial chapter, moreover, the author carefully outlines differences between Chaucer and Dante. Nowhere in Chaucer, for example, is “the outspoken political view or the aggressive didacticism that informs Dante’s writing” (p. 20). Because of such fundamental differences between the two poets and because of the tendency of some scholars to view Dante and Chaucer in an isolated context, Schless warns that “the constant reference to Dante that one finds in Chaucer criticism . . . seems frequently more a function of the scholars’ need than of Chaucer’s poetry” (p. 26). Strong words, but not without justification, for the point is that Dante is repeatedly invoked for comparison because his well-ordered encyclopedic opus is more accessible than many other medieval writings, such as that of Vincent of Beauvais. Schless closes the first chapter with the reminder that, in the number of derived lines, Boccaccio, Boethius, the *Roman de la Rose*, Ovid and several other works and authors are ahead of Dante. Because Schless is insistent on keeping everything in perspective, his subsequent judgments, harsh or revisionist as they may be, inevitably strike one as objective and just.

Chapters 2 through 8 treat, respectively, the Dante ascriptions in *The House of Fame*, *Anelida and Arcite*, *The Parliament of Fowls*, *Troilus and Criseyde*, *The Legend of Good Women*, *The Canterbury Tales*, and *The Minor Poems*. Each chapter contains a brief review of pertinent scholarship and/or an overview of the significance of Dante’s influence in the particular work to be studied. Chapter 9 is the author’s Conclusion. After the previously mentioned Index of Comparisons, the book closes with a lengthy Bibliography and a detailed General Index.

Throughout the book, I found Schless’s thorough familiarity with classical and medieval sources, not to mention his command of Chaucer criticism and his scholarly caution, truly commendable. A few examples from the second and longest chapter will suffice to demonstrate this fact. The chapter begins with a review of Dantesque interpretations of *The House of Fame* (hereafter, *HF*), from Lydgate’s famous and cryptic description of the poem as “Dante in yoghlish” to the views of ten Brink and Kittredge, Chiari and Robinson, and Ruggiers. This early work, “the first major poem to show the influence of Dante” (p. 29), is seen as a reflection of how “Chaucer . . . could seriously employ the framework of the *Commedia* to express his innermost feelings . . . and yet, at the same time, satirezine Dante’s poem to the point of ridicule” (p. 33). The significance of Dante’s ascriptions within a given work, therefore, may vary; more certainly, the import of Dantean allusions from work to work will hardly be constant. Before presenting the list of parallel passages, Schless offers one final note of warning: “Considerations of the two poets in vacuo . . . entail so many questionable assumptions that such a basically exclusive procedure should only be employed with the utmost caution” (p. 42). Shared references to God as the mover of all things, to cite an example from the list, fail to show influence when there is no contextual parallel, since “one certainly does not need a source for a medieval reference to God as the prime mover of the universe” (ibid.).
Other parallels are “due rather to the common genre of the two passages” (p. 52). Later and more precisely, in comparing HF 534-39 with Paradiso 1. 74–75, 92–93, Schless emphasizes that “[t]he whole genre of love visions, as well as vico literature, was common knowledge of Chaucer’s time, and it would be a mistake to force connections with the Commedia that could only show Chaucer’s complete misunderstanding of the work” (p. 53). In discussing HF 936-59 and Convivio II. xiv. lff., both of which deal with the origins of the Galaxy, the author comments that “Chaucer’s source here in all probability is not the Convivio but rather a combination of common knowledge, folk etymology, and (at least in the case of the Metamorphoses) the same source that Dante had used” (p. 62). In the case of an obvious source in Dante—e.g., HF 523–28 and Inferno II. 8–9 and Paradiso I. 11, when Chaucer invokes his Thought—Schless strives to show “the way in which Chaucer molds his sources to fit his poetic intention” (p. 50), always keeping in mind that “Dante’s influence was never as extensive as Boccaccio’s, but . . . it served an entirely different function in the poetry of Chaucer” (Chapter 4, p. 89). In Chapter 5 Schless explains that eventually, as in Troilus and Criseyde, Chaucer “turned to Dante for support in verses expressing the mystical quality of religion in much the same way that he turned . . . to Boccaccio for narrative stimulus” (p. 101).

Schless, in his summary statements, outlines Chaucer’s debt to Dante as two-fold: “the few direct adaptations and translations made for purposes of their content and the many shorter images borrowed for their verbal and dramatic force” (p. 246). He maintains that “poetry to Chaucer was primarily entertaining, moral, and undiscursive,” while “to Dante [it] was a medium for expressing . . . the fiercely held theological and political doctrines that he had formed into a philosophic whole” (ibid.). The author, by the end of the book, has made a strong case for the incorrectness of considering that Chaucer, when he does borrow from Dante, “necessarily believed the entire doctrine that informed the borrowing” (ibid.). This belief may run slightly counter to the view taken in the approach to Dante and Chaucer which we shall next consider.

Richard Shaof, an Associate Professor of English at Yale University, approaches Dante and Chaucer with the sophistication of a highly trained theorist in modern literary criticism and the sensibility of a widely read scholar of the Middle Ages. The result is an often challenging but frequently illuminating study of, as the subtitle suggests, Money, Images, and Reference in Late Medieval Poetry. While it is true that imaginative and referential coining is discussed primarily in relation to Dante and Chaucer, the conclusions reached have much wider application (to other medieval authors) and significance (i.e., for medivalists other than Dantists and Chaucerians). Shaof’s basic thesis, or the analogy that he explores, is that “[m]oney and poetry are both fictions, . . . and they are both strangely alike—so much so that the problem of the meaning of money is analogous to the problem of the meaning of language, especially poetic language” (p. 8). The argument for studying this problem in relation to Dante and Chaucer runs something like this: both men are love poets; love involves an exchange; hence the love poet is typically preoccupied with economics; hence there is a “profound similarity between Dante and Chaucer” (p. 9). While agreeing to differences between the two poets (Dante “begins in a blurred and fragmented vision of his own condition but ends in a whole vision of prismatic unity”; Chaucer, “in Troilus and Criseyde, begins in a pseudo-unity of vision but ends in a whole vision of fragmentariness”) and recognizing that the language-money analogy “is of some modern interest, especially since Saussure and Derrida,” Shaof nevertheless makes a creditable argument for Dante’s and Chaucer’s cognizance and acceptance (on the authority of Boethius) of “the structural relationship between language and money” (ibid.).

His study is divided into an introduction (“The Discourse of Man ‘By Nature a Political Animal’”), three long essays (Part One: “Dante’s Comedy and the Promise of Reference,” with four chapters; Part Two: “Troilus and Criseyde and the ‘Falsifying’ of the Referent,” with five chapters; and Part Three: “The Canterbury Tales and the Ethics of Reference,” with four chapters), plus an Epilogue, Notes, Bibliography, and Index.

Shaof maintains, somewhat problematically, that Chaucer not only read the Commedia but also interpreted it, as would a specialized Dantista; Chaucer then incorporated that interpretation into his mature poetry. The English poet, in other words, supposedly derived his poetics of reference from the Commedia’s poetics of exchange. Many Chaucerians, such as Schless, will undoubtedly question such a revisionist interpretation, assuming that Dante’s, on the other hand, will likely view such a claim with more sympathy. In either case the author, “to read Chaucer, with Dante’s help” (p. 22), turns his attention in the first part (pp. 17–100) to the Florentine poet’s coin imagery, as found in the context of narcisistic allusions in Inferno XXX, Purgatorio XXX, and Paradiso XXX. He concludes that Hell’s “images refer without a referent,” while in Purgatory “reality is experienced as a confusion of signs and referents” and in Paradise “is perfect reference” (p. 23). In the second part (pp. 101–57) Shaof examines coin and exchange imagery in Troilus and Criseyde and relates it to parallel imagery in Dante’s epic. The third part (pp. 159–227) shifts the focus to the poetics of reference in the Canterbury Tales and analyzes the figures of the Wife of Bath, the Merchant, and the Pardoner—each of whose tales reflects a significant relationship between language and money.

Such a short summary perhaps provides more of a notion of Shaof’s “trendy” vocabulary than of his analytical powers. It is meant, however, to convey an idea both of his critical jargon (not to mention ubiquitous wordplays) and of his fresh insights. For a more balanced assessment of the Yale scholar’s contribution I should add that while he stresses what Chaucer ostensibly shared with Dante he also sketches fundamental differences between the
poets. This fact shines through the one-line summary he offers of his study. Speaking of each poet's desire to communicate, the author epigrammatically states that "what for Dante is a problem of the expression of transcendence is for Chaucer a problem of the transcendence of expression" (p. 235). In the end, Shoaf's highly original and largely a-historical interpretation of the two Trecento figures nicely balances the more traditional but similarly important evaluations found in Boitani's and Schless's volumes.3

NOTES

1. The few (very minor) misprints that I noticed in the essays, so carefully edited by Boitani, were these: "scutiny" for "scrutiny" (p. 23), "sumblime" for "sublime" (p. 121), "predistined" for "predestined" (p. 241), and "Pitzralph" for "PitzRalph" (p. 257).
2. The only significant erratum in Schless's volume seems to be the omission, at least in my copy, of one sheet—pp. 253–54. This is disturbing not only because of the high cost of the book ($85.00) but also because those pages are the first two of the Bibliography and are necessary to decipher a number of citations within the text. I checked with Pilgrim Books and discovered that a number of defectively bound volumes, with various pages missing, were sold. The press has replaced and will continue to replace defective copies as they are brought to its attention.
3. Shoaf's text, like the other two, has a minimum of printing errors. I did find "languge" for "language" (p. 33), "echoos" for "echoes" (p. 45), ""la" for "lā" (p. 61), "sl" for "sū" (p. 87), "serves serves" for "serves" (p. 108), "petitio" for "petition" (p. 157), and "Friedrich" for "Friedrich" (p. 232). As in note 1 above, these are picayune misprints mentioned only so they will be corrected when the books are reprinted.

Varia
Announcements

THE JOHN DONNE SOCIETY

At the December meeting of the Modern Language Association, a group of interested Donne scholars agreed to begin a John Donne Society. Since then, they have formed a steering committee and have made plans to sponsor a conference on John Donne. These efforts are being supported by The John Donne Journal, The Donne Variorum, and The Pennsylvania State University.

Members of the steering committee are the following: Diana Beest, Eugene R. Cunnar (chair), Dennis Flynn, M. Thomas Hester, Albert C. Labriola, Ted-Larry Peborough, John R. Roberts, John T. Shawcross, Edward Sich, Jr. (secretary-treasurer), Gary A. Stringer, Claude Summers, and Julia Walker.

The first conference and initial meeting of The John Donne Society will be held at the Gulfport Conference Center of the University of Southern Mississippi on 20–23 February 1986. Those interested in submitting papers for the conference (complete, 8–12 pages, 3 copies) should send them by 1 October 1985 to Prof. John R. Roberts, Department of English, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211.

Those interested in information concerning The Donne Society or the Conference should write to Prof. Edward Sich, Department of English, The Pennsylvania State University, McKeesport, PA 15132.

MEDIEVAL PUBLICATIONS

The Committee for Medieval Studies at the University of British Columbia intends to publish a teaching and research aid: CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES OF MAJOR NARRATIVE SOURCES (AND LETTER COLLECTIONS) 500–1500 A.D. (J. Bak, D. Bethell½, H. Quin ed.), as part of a planned handbook on medieval sources. They hope to be able to supply copies for class use for cost (about $3.50–4.00) by this coming Fall. "Examination copies"—actually copies of the unrevised draft—are already available on request (in limited numbers); write to "Medieval Publications", c/o Dept. of Hist., UBC, Vancouver B.C. V6T 1W5, Canada and include $1.00 for postage and handling (if cheques, please write them to "UBC").
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