

DECIPHERING THE MANUSCRIPT PAGE:  
THE *MISE-EN-PAGE* OF CHAUCER, GOWER, AND HOCCLEVE MANUSCRIPTS

Aditi Nafde  
Keble College  
University of Oxford

D.Phil Thesis  
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## ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the production of the Middle English poetic manuscript. It analyses the *mise-en-page* of manuscripts created during a crucial period for book production, immediately after 1400, when there was a sudden explosion in the production of vernacular manuscripts of literary texts, when the demand for books increased, and the commercial book trade swiftly followed. It offers a close analysis of the *mise-en-page* of the manuscripts of three central authors: Chaucer's, Gower's, and Hoccleve's manuscripts were at the heart of this sudden flourishing and were, crucially, produced when scribal methods for creating the literary page were still unformed. Previous studies have focused on the localised readings produced by single scribes, manuscripts, or authors, offering a limited examination of broader trends. This study offers a wider comparison: where individual studies offer localised analysis, the multi-textuality of this thesis offers broader perceptions of book production and of scribal responses to the new literary texts being produced. In analysing the layout of seventy-six manuscripts, including borders, initials, paraphs, rubrics, running titles, speaker markers, glosses and notes, this thesis argues that scribes were deeply concerned with creating a manuscript page specifically to showcase texts of poetry.

The introduction outlines current scholarship on *mise-en-page* and defines the scribe as one who offers an individual response to the text on the page within the context of the inherited, commercial, and practical practices of layout. The three analytical chapters address the placement of the features of *mise-en-page* in each of the seventy-six manuscripts, each chapter offering three contrasting manuscript situations. Chapter 1 analyses the manuscripts of Chaucer, who left no plan for the look of his page, causing scribes to make decisions on layout that illuminate fifteenth-century scribal responses to literature. These are then compared to the manuscripts of Gower in Chapter 2, directly or indirectly supervised by the poet, which display rigorous uniformity in their layout. This chapter argues that scribes responded in much the same way, despite the strict control over meaning. Chapter 3 focuses on Hoccleve's autograph manuscripts which are unique in demonstrating authorial control over layout. This chapter compares the autograph to the non-autograph manuscripts to argue that scribal responses differed from authorial intentions. Each of the three chapters analyses the development of *mise-en-page* specifically for literary texts. Focussing on the *mise-en-page*, this thesis is able to compare across a range of texts, manuscripts, scribes, and authors to mount a substantial challenge to current perceptions that poetic manuscripts were laid out in order to assist readers' understanding of the meaning of the texts they contain. Instead, it argues that though there was a concern with representing the nuances of poetic meaning, often scribal responses to poetry were bound up with presenting poetic form.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND SIGLA

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### Chaucer

Cl	New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M817 (formerly Campsall).
Cp	Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 198.
Cp1*	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 61.
Dd	Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS Dd.4.24.
El	San Marino, Huntington Library, MS EL 26 C 9.
Gg	Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS Gg.4.27.
H1	London, British Library, MS Harley 2280.
H2	London, British Library, MS Harley 3943.
Ha4	London, British Library, MS Harley 7334.
Hg	Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS Peniarth 392D.
La	London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 851.
Ph	San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 114.
Pw	Sussex, Petworth House, MS 7.
R	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson Poet 163.

### Gower

A	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 902.
Ad	London, British Library, MS Additional 12043.
Ash	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 35.
B	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 294.
B2	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 693.
Bodmer*	Geneva, Foundation Bodmer, MS 178.
C	Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 67.
CC148*	Oxford, Christ Church, MS 148.
E	London, British Library, MS Egerton 1991.
E2	London, British Library, MS Egerton 913.
F	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 3.
G	Glasgow, Glasgow University Library, MS Hunterian 7.
J	Cambridge, St. John's College, MS B.12.
L	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc 609.
M	Cambridge, University Library, MS Mm.2.21.
M125*	New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M125.
M690*	New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M690.
N	Oxford, New College, MS 266.
Nott*	Nottingham, University Library, Middleton Collection, MS Mi LM 8.
O	London, British Library, MS Stowe 950.
P2	New Jersey, Princeton University, Firestone Library, Robert H. Taylor Collection, Medieval MS 5.
Pem307*	Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 307.
Plimpton*	New York, Columbia University Library, Plimpton Collection, MS 265.
R	London, British Library, MS Royal 18.C.xxii.
T	Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2.
Y	Private Collection (formerly Mount Stuart, Rothesay, Marquess of Bute, MS I.17).

**Hoccleve**

A	London, British Library, MS Arundel 38.
Ad	London, British Library, MS Additional 18632.
As	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 40.
B	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 221.
B2	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 638.
Cc	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 496.
Cosin*	Durham, University Library, MS Cosin V. III. 9.
D1	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 181.
D2	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 185.
Do	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 158.
Dug*	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Dugdale 45.
E	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng Poet d.4.
Ed	Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh, MS 202.
F	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 16.
Ga	New Jersey, Princeton University, MS Garrett 137.
Ha4	London, British Library, MS Harley 4866.
HM111*	San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 111.
HM744*	San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 744.
Hn1	San Marino, Huntington Library, MS El 26 A 13.
Hn2	San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 135 (formerly Phillipps 8980).
Kk	Cambridge, University Library, MS Kk.i.3 pt.11.
L	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc 735
Ma	Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys 2101.
Na	Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Adv. MS 19.I.II, pt.3.
Qu	Cambridge, Queens' College, MS 24 (formerly 12).
Ra1	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson Poet. 10.
Ra2	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson Poet. 168.
Ry2	London, British Library, MS Royal 17 D.vi.
Ry3	London, British Library, MS Royal 17 D.xviii.
Ry4	London, British Library, MS Royal 17 D.xix.
S	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Selden Supra 53.
S2	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch Selden B.24.
Sj	Cambridge, St John's College, MS I.22 (formerly James 223).
Sl1	London, British Library, MS Sloane 1212.
Sl2	London, British Library, MS Sloane 1825.
T	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 346.
Tc	Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.22 (formerly 602).

\* Asterisks denote manuscripts which have no established sigla and where I have provided my own. Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 198, and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 61 both have the siglum 'Cp'; I have altered Corpus Christi College, MS 61 to 'Cp1'. Where two manuscripts have the same sigla but are examined in different chapters, I have not altered the established sigla.

**Primary Texts**

<i>BD</i>	Chaucer, <i>Book of the Duchess</i>
<i>CA</i>	Gower, <i>Confessio Amantis</i>
<i>CkT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Cook's Tale</i>
<i>CIT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Clerk's Tale</i>
<i>CT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Canterbury Tales</i>
<i>FranP, FranT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Franklin's Prologue, Franklin's Tale</i>
<i>GP</i>	Chaucer, <i>General Prologue</i>
<i>KnT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Knight's Tale</i>
<i>Mel</i>	Chaucer, <i>Tale of Melibee</i>
<i>MilP, MilT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Miller's Prologue, Miller's Tale</i>
<i>MkP, MkT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Monk's Prologue, Monk's Tale</i>
<i>MLT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Man of Law's Tale</i>
<i>PardT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Pardoner's Tale</i>
<i>ParsP, ParsT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Parson's Prologue, Parson's Tale</i>
<i>RP</i>	Hoccleve, <i>Regiment of Princes</i>
<i>SqT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Squire's Tale</i>
<i>TC</i>	Chaucer, <i>Troilus and Criseyde</i>
<i>Thop</i>	Chaucer, <i>Tale of Sir Thopas</i>
<i>WBP, WBT</i>	Chaucer, <i>Wife of Bath's Prologue, Wife of Bath's Tale</i>

**Journals**

<i>ChauR</i>	<i>Chaucer Review</i>
<i>EBST</i>	<i>Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions</i>
<i>EETS</i>	<i>Early English Texts Society</i>
<i>EMS</i>	<i>English Manuscript Studies: 1100 - 1700</i>
<i>FMLS</i>	<i>Forum for Modern Language Studies</i>
<i>HLQ</i>	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
<i>JEBS</i>	<i>Journal of the Early Book Society</i>
<i>JEGP</i>	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
<i>PMLA</i>	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association</i>
<i>RES</i>	<i>Review of English Studies</i>
<i>SAC</i>	<i>Studies in the Age of Chaucer</i>
<i>YES</i>	<i>The Yearbook of English Studies</i>

**Translations**

Where translations of Latin passages are included in the cited editions, I have offered these alongside the Latin quotation. Otherwise, I have not translated rubrics, running titles, glosses, or quotations in modern languages.

## INTRODUCTION

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The period immediately following Chaucer's death was a crucial one for literary manuscript production in England. After the beginning of the fifteenth century, there was a sudden flourishing of the production and circulation of manuscripts of vernacular literary texts, and the demand for books, the book trade, and modes of book production simultaneously grew.<sup>1</sup> Book production practices became more standardised and commercial during this period and networks of professional artists and scribes were established to produce and disseminate the texts in demand. Chaucer's, Gower's, and Hoccleve's texts were at the centre of this increased production and the manuscripts of these major authors circulated extensively in the fifteenth century. The surviving manuscripts demonstrate some of the first reactions to these literary texts and to the late medieval author, and are central in interpreting this period of book historical importance. This study examines the production of the Middle English literary manuscript page.

In their ongoing project, Simon Horobin and Linne Mooney have started identifying and locating scribes and, as a result, our picture of the trade organisation involved in late-fourteenth and early-fifteenth-century manuscript production is rapidly becoming clearer.<sup>2</sup> These professional scribes often carried the responsibility of accurately copying legal and bureaucratic documents, which, if produced carelessly, could result in damaging litigious circumstances. From his lengthy oath of fidelity to his company and its aims, we know that Scribe B, identified by Mooney as Adam Pinkhurst, pledged to produce documents that strictly adhered to a

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<sup>1</sup> As A. S. G. Edwards and Derek Pearsall outline, the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century were 'the beginnings of routine commercial production' in London, see 'The manuscripts of major English Poetic Texts', in *Book production and publishing in Britain 1375-1475* ed. Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp.257-78, p.275. See also Alexandra Gillespie and Daniel Wakelin, 'Introduction' in *The Production of Books in England 1350-1500*, ed. Alexandra Gillespie and Daniel Wakelin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp.1-11, pp.3-4. These developments in fifteenth-century book production were not for literary manuscripts alone; the preceding century saw a proliferation of written records for law, business, and administration (see M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307* (London: Blackwell, 1979), especially pp.42 and 86).

<sup>2</sup> Simon Horobin and Linne Mooney, 'Identification of the Scribes Responsible for Copying Major Works of Middle English Literature'. Web. 9 April 2012. [www.medievalscribes.com](http://www.medievalscribes.com). See also Linne R. Mooney, 'Chaucer's Scribe', *Speculum* lxxxi (2006), 97-138; Simon Horobin, 'The Edmund-Fremund Scribe Copying Chaucer', *JES* xii (2009), 195-203.

prescribed form.<sup>3</sup> His oath implies cautious obedience to copying legal documents to a predetermined layout.<sup>4</sup> Simultaneously, these scribes also had a hand in copying works of literature. Though Horobin and Mooney's project reveals the professional and familial backgrounds of these (now celebrity) scribes, we do not yet know how Scribe B, Scribe D, and the others, who had clerical positions and copied legal and other bureaucratic documents, interacted with literary texts.<sup>5</sup> We do not yet know how these scribes responded to the literary text and the literary author, and so how they created the literary manuscript page.

Layout is central to this response. There are numerous influences on the production of the manuscript page. It is often not a product of a single scribe, but of an entire production team, each of whom was influenced by a variety of factors: inherited practices, taught procedures, limitations of the exemplar, patron request, practical restrictions of time and expense, and individual response all contribute to the overall look of the page. The *mise-en-page* stands in the overlap between scribal response and the decorators, exemplars, and patrons who each had some influence on the end appearance of the manuscript. Manuscript layout, the placement of paraphs, initials, rubrics, running titles, borders, glosses, and speaker markers – the physical form of the medieval text – thus illuminates medieval practices of book production, scribal responses to poetic texts, and the emergence of the poetic manuscript page.

Though usually given a section of description in a facsimile introduction, discussion of layout tends often to be descriptive rather than analytical. All features of layout are described at once with generalisations for their placement across the manuscript as a whole. The introduction to *St. John's College, Cambridge, Manuscript L.1: a facsimile*, a copy of a TC manuscript, offers a two-

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<sup>3</sup> Scriveners' Company Common Paper: London, Guildhall Library, MS 5370, p.56: see Francis W. Steer, ed., *Scriveners' company common paper 1357-1628: With a continuation to 1678 (1968): VII-XXI, British History Online*. Web. 02 August 2011. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=35888> and Mooney (2006).

<sup>4</sup> Francis W. Steer, ed., 'Introduction', *Scriveners' company common paper 1357-1628: With a continuation to 1678 (1968): VII-XXI, British History Online*. Web. 02 August 2011. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=35888>. See also Linne R. Mooney, 'Vernacular literary manuscripts and their scribes' in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.192-211 for a definition of 'professional scribe'. I will offer my own definition below, p.26 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Scribe D has been identified as John Marchaunt, common clerk, by Linne Mooney and Estelle Stubbs (New Chaucer Society Congress 2010). See also, Mooney (2006) and Mooney and Stubbs's forthcoming monograph.

and-a-half-page description of the 'Layout and Presentation of the Text', which briefly describes the colophons and headings, the lack of title, the '4-line, blue-bodied and red pen-flourished initials', the 'alternating blue and red paraph marks placed to the left of each stanza', the decorative red brackets, marginal notes, and number of lines per page (ruled to receive stanzas).<sup>6</sup> This brief outline does not offer any detailed analysis. Manly and Rickert offer a few short descriptive paragraphs on 'Illumination' in each of their descriptions.<sup>7</sup> Descriptions of layout in catalogues or manuscript lists are often necessarily truncated. Macaulay's list of *CA* manuscripts describes layout often very simply as: 'written in double columns of 46 lines in a good square hand of the late fourteenth century type. Latin summaries in the margin. The first page has a well-executed border of geometrical pattern and a rather rudely painted miniature...Floreated half borders at the beginning of books and illuminated capitals throughout, well executed and with an unusual amount of gold'.<sup>8</sup> Or, even more briefly, as: 'floreated pages in good style at the beginning of each book'.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, Seymour's *Catalogue of Chaucer Manuscripts* has only a small paragraph on decoration per manuscript.<sup>10</sup> In his description of the manuscripts of Hoccleve's *RP*, Seymour offers a paragraph on decoration for each manuscript, the majority of which is taken up with describing illustration.<sup>11</sup> On the other features of layout, the descriptions simply outline: 'f. 1 foliate tinted and gilded borderwork, including the royal arms of England differenced for the Prince of Wales. Similar borderwork introduces the major

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<sup>6</sup> Richard Beadle and Jeremy Griffiths ed., *St. John's College, Cambridge, Manuscript L.1: a facsimile* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1983), pp.xxi-xxiii, quotations from p.xxi.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the description of Dd: John M. Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Text of the Canterbury Tales Studied on the Basis of all Known Manuscripts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940) Vol 1: Descriptions of the Manuscripts, p.101. However, this is supplemented by Margaret Rickert's chapter on 'Illumination' at the back of the volume, which is largely also descriptive and has the double aim of: '1) establishing the relationships between the various MSS, thus confirming the groupings indicated by other kinds of evidence; 2) providing additional evidence for dating and, in certain cases, localizing the MSS'. While her chapter provides some detailed analysis of the illumination, it uses the features of the page to analyse the manuscripts' context; it does not situate the decoration within the text itself or examine the responses to the text that the illumination might suggest.

<sup>8</sup> G. C. Macaulay ed., *The English Works of John Gower* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench Trübner & Co., Ltd. for the Early English Text Society, 1900), I, p.clii, description of the Stafford manuscript, San Marino, Huntington Library, MS EL 26 A 17.

<sup>9</sup> Macaulay (1900), I, p.cliv, description of Ad.

<sup>10</sup> M. C. Seymour, *A Catalogue of Chaucer Manuscripts Vol II: The Canterbury Tales* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995, 1997).

<sup>11</sup> M. C. Seymour, 'The Manuscripts of Hoccleve's Regiment of Princes', *EBST* iv (1974), 253-299.

sub-divisions of the text on ff. 39v, 45v, 55, 60v, 63, 66, 71, 73, 75, 81v, 87, 88, and less ornately, on f. 98'.<sup>12</sup> Daniel W. Mosser's CD-ROM descriptions are useful in updating Manly and Rickert but equally only have limited space for the discussion of layout.<sup>13</sup> The description of Hg, for example, states:

Blue initials (2-line, extending above the first line of text for several more lines) with red penwork mark the openings of tales, prologues, and links. Blue paraphs mark lesser textual divisions and glosses. The opening page of *CT* (fol. 2r) begins with a 7-line initial **W** in blue, gold, and an orange-red. The text is surrounded by a full border—bars of the same colors, decorated with knots and trefoils—although the heading (“Here bygynnyth the Book of the tales of Caunt[er]bury”), in a goldish-brown ink, is above, and in places overlapped by, the top bar<sup>14</sup>

Each of the descriptions in each of these catalogues is necessarily short because they are part of a wider endeavour. The achievements of these can now be built upon.

Far more detail is provided by Benson and Blanchfield, for example, who offer a vast descriptive catalogue of the manuscript features of all of the B-Text manuscripts of *Piers Plowman*, or by Stephen Partridge, whose PhD thesis charts all the glosses in *CT*.<sup>15</sup> However, such data still remain largely unprocessed and await analysis.

Where layout is analysed rather than catalogued, the features of the manuscript page are discussed individually. To date, there have been a few local studies: for instance, Joel Fredell writes on the paraphs in the *CT* manuscripts, Richard K. Emmerson on the glosses and Siân Echard on the speaker markers in the *CA*, building on Derek Pearsall's discussion of the Latin therein.<sup>16</sup> This line of investigation, perhaps due to the practicalities of space and time, has been

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<sup>12</sup> Seymour (1974), p.264, description of A.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel W. Mosser, *Digital catalogue of the pre-1500 manuscripts and incunables of the Canterbury Tales*. CD-ROM. Birminham: Scholarly Digital Editions, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> Mosser, 'Hg: Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth 392 D'. *Digital catalogue of the pre-1500 manuscripts and incunables of the Canterbury Tales*. 2010.

<sup>15</sup> C. David Benson and Lynne S. Blanchfield, *The Manuscripts of Piers Plowman: The B-version* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1997); Stephen Bradford Partridge, 'Glosses in the manuscripts of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*: an edition and commentary', Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University (1992).

<sup>16</sup> Joel Fredell, 'The Lowly Paraf: Transmitting Manuscript Design in The Canterbury Tales,' *SAC* xxii (2000), 213-80; Richard K. Emmerson, 'Reading Gower in a Manuscript Culture: Latin and English in the Illustrated Manuscripts of the *Confessio Amantis*', *SAC* xxi (1999), 143-186; Siân Echard, 'Dialogues and Monologues: MS Representations of the Conversations of the *Confessio Amantis*' in *Middle English Poetry: Texts and Translations: Essays in Honour of Derek Pearsall*, ed. A. J. Minnis (York: York Medieval Press, 2001), pp.57-75; Derek Pearsall, 'Gower's Latin in the *Confessio Amantis*', in *Latin and Vernacular: Studies*

divided into four categories: scholarship concentrates either on a single author, on a single scribe, on a single manuscript, or a single text. The joint function of these features on the page is still unanalysed.

Furthermore, the interaction between producers and the text is lost in the modern book page. Modern editorial practice creates authorial texts, removing and suppressing details from individual manuscript copies – those features generated in scribal transmission.<sup>17</sup> As a result, the modern editor encounters a problem: how to interpret the surplus of information that is common to a manuscript but foreign to a modern text-based page.<sup>18</sup> However, the whole page is rapidly becoming available to scholars as new technologies, commercial and professional practices of manuscript production, are being introduced. The digital manuscript facsimile represents the manuscript page with its scribal mediation intact. About a decade ago a conference was held in Harvard to consider new developments in manuscript study.<sup>19</sup> The newest of new directions, the digital manuscript, offered exciting possibilities for deciphering the manuscript page.<sup>20</sup> Since then, the number of digital editions of manuscripts has rapidly increased: the *Canterbury Tales* Project and the *Piers Plowman* electronic archive continue to grow and the entire collection of the Parker Library, folio by folio, is available online.<sup>21</sup> These

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*in Late Medieval Texts and Manuscripts*, ed. A. J. Minnis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp.13-25. These studies will be discussed in more detail in the relevant chapters below.

<sup>17</sup> Though these are sometimes authorial as in the case of Hoccleve (see Chapter 3, p.191 ff.).

<sup>18</sup> For example, the variety of responses to Gower's glosses in the *Confessio Amantis* (see Chapter 2, p.155 ff.).

<sup>19</sup> Derek Pearsall ed. *New Directions in Later Medieval Manuscript Studies: Essays from the 1998 Harvard Conference* (York: York Medieval Press, 2000).

<sup>20</sup> See especially, Martha W. Driver, 'Medieval Manuscripts and Electronic Media: Observations on Future Possibilities', pp.53-64, N. F. Blake, 'New Approaches to the Witness and Text of the *Canterbury Tales*' and Alison Stones, 'The "Lancelot-Graal Project"', pp.167-182, all in Pearsall (2000).

<sup>21</sup> *Parker Library on the web*. Web. <http://parkerweb.stanford.edu>; 'Corpus Christi College, Oxford MS 201 (F)'. *Piers Plowman Electronic Archive*. CD-ROM. Volume 1. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000, 'Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.15.17 (W)'. *Piers Plowman Electronic Archive*. CD-ROM. Volume 2. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001, 'Oxford, Oriel College, MS 79 (O)'. *Piers Plowman Electronic Archive*. CD-ROM. Volume 3. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005, 'Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 581 (S.C. 987) (L)'. *Piers Plowman Electronic Archive*. CD-ROM. Volume 4. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005, 'London, British Library, MS Additional 35287 (M)'. *Piers Plowman Electronic Archive*. CD-ROM. Volume 5. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005, 'San Marino, Huntington Library Hm 128 (Hm, Hm2)'. *Piers Plowman Electronic Archive*. CD-ROM. Volume 6. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009, 'London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 398 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson Poetry 38 (R)'. *Piers Plowman Electronic Archive*. CD-ROM. Volume 7. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011. 'The Wife of Bath's Prologue on CD-ROM'. *Canterbury Tales Project*. CD-ROM. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 'The General Prologue on CD-ROM'. *Canterbury Tales*

developments offer new ways of reproducing old layouts. Yet the old ways of producing old layouts are seldom the focus of full investigation. The process of creating these digital versions reopens those questions on the production of the literary manuscript and on the medieval responses to literature on the page. It is possible that these developments in digitized manuscripts will draw our focus away from those four 'singles' outlined above to enable a broader ranging comparison of layout across multiple authors, scribes, manuscripts, and texts.

Additionally, textual form is again starting to become central to analysis.<sup>22</sup> Revived New Formalist studies are taking strongly against older criticisms such as W. J. T. Mitchell's rejection of it ('everyone knows that the concept of form has outlived its usefulness in discussions of literature, the arts, and media'), and Harold Bloom's declaration that formalism had reached an 'impasse'.<sup>23</sup> Rather, as Susan J. Wolfson suggests, the play of form in cultures of reading reinvigorates texts through its 'mobile, variable, unpredictable' nature, and as D. F. McKenzie demonstrates, the 'material form of texts crucially determines their meanings.'<sup>24</sup> Middle English texts specifically, however, as Christopher Cannon summarises, 'have seemed almost uniquely resistant to formalism of any sort, despite the complex formal richness that is the very cause of

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*Project*. CD-ROM. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 'The Hengwrt Chaucer Digital Facsimile'. *Canterbury Tales Project*. CD-ROM. Leicester: De Montfort University. Research edition 2000. Standard edition 2003, 'The Miller's Tale on CD-ROM'. *Canterbury Tales Project*. CD-ROM. Leicester: De Montfort University, 2004, 'The Nun's Priest's Tale on CD-ROM'. *Canterbury Tales Project*. CD-ROM. Birmingham: Scholarly Digital Editions, 2006.

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Christopher Cannon, 'Form', in *Oxford Twenty First-Century Approaches to Literature: Middle English*, ed. Paul Strohm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.177-190; D. Vance Smith, 'Medieval Forma: The Logic of the Work', in *Reading for Form*, ed. Susan J. Wolfson and Marshall Brown (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007), pp.66-79; Maura Nolan, 'The Performance of the Literary: Lydgate's Mummings', in *John Lydgate: Poetry, Culture, and Lancastrian England*, ed. Larry Scanlon and James Simpson (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2006), pp.169-206. There are two forthcoming special issues of *Chaucer Review* which attempt to analyse how formalism intersects with book history, provisionally titled, 'Medieval English Literature and Its Manuscript Forms: Aesthetics and Codicology' ed. Alexandra Gillespie and Arthur Bahr (2012-2013). And, more broadly, see Marjorie Levinson, 'What is New Formalism?' *PMLA* cxxii (2007), 558-569, D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), Mark David Rasmussen ed., *Renaissance Literature and its Formal Engagements* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), especially Richard Strier, 'Afterword: How Formalism Became a Dirty Word, and Why We Can't Do Without It', pp.207-215.

<sup>23</sup> W. J. T. Mitchell, 'The Commitment to Form; or, Still Crazy after All These Years', *PMLA* 118.2 (2003), 321-325, p.321; Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p.12. See Wolfson, 'Introduction: Reading for Form' in Wolfson and Brown (2006), pp.3 and 7.

<sup>24</sup> Wolfson in Wolfson and Brown (2006), p.24, and McKenzie (1999), p.ii.

that resistance'.<sup>25</sup> Recently, a conference on editorial problems at the University of Toronto sought to reinvigorate questions of form and to reassert New Formalism as a valid approach to the analysis of medieval texts, specifically in relation to book history.<sup>26</sup> Where and how (or even if) form interacts with either new critical or new historicist readings, and whether these are relevant modes of enquiry into medieval literary texts, are questions which are now being asked again.<sup>27</sup> The layout of the manuscript page is certainly one aspect of form, though it intersects partially with numerous others, such as a concern with social form, material form, and verse form. Scribal interests in decoration seem to map on to the new scholarly interests in New Formalism. Whether these concerns were a major factor in a scribe's understanding of a text is a deeply pertinent question: in copying and producing a book, he engaged with the material not only on a textual plane but also in terms of its formal expression, its layout.

It is timely, therefore, that a large scale study examines comparatively multiple manuscripts of numerous authors, texts, and scribal hands simultaneously, to construct a deeper and wider picture of their creation during this period of increased production. Stephen Partridge attempts to do just this in his recent essay, and a fuller and more comparative examination of numerous manuscripts seems necessary: that examination underlies this thesis.<sup>28</sup>

## **The Layout of the Literary Manuscript Page**

A. I. Doyle and M. B. Parkes examine the role of individual scribes in the production of numerous literary manuscripts, especially those of Chaucer and Gower.<sup>29</sup> The relationship between these individual scribes, and the overlap of the manuscripts they copied, Doyle and Parkes argue, is central to understanding book production in the fifteenth century. George

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<sup>25</sup> Cannon (2007), p.184.

<sup>26</sup> Manuscripts and the Forms of Middle English Literary Texts, the Forty-Fifth Conference on Editorial Problems, St Michael's College and at the Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto, 6–8 November 2009.

<sup>27</sup> See Smith in Wolfson and Brown (2006), pp.66-71, p.79; Levinson (2007) especially pp.559 ff.

<sup>28</sup> Stephen Partridge, 'Designing the Page', in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.79-103.

<sup>29</sup> A. I. Doyle and M. B. Parkes, 'The Production of Copies of *The Canterbury Tales* and the *Confessio Amantis* in the early fifteenth century', in *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts and Libraries: Essays presented to N. R. Ker*, ed. M. B. Parkes and Andrew G. Watson (London: Scolar Press, 1978), pp.163-210; repr. in M. B. Parkes, *Scribes, Scripts and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Medieval Texts* (London: Hambledon Press, 1991), pp.201-48.

Kane's description of the copying procedure of *Piers Plowman* suggests that scribes often deliberately changed the text they copied: 'scribes treated their copy in a number of characteristic ways, and in so doing expressed several clear tendencies of substitution, distinct from mechanical errors of transmission'.<sup>30</sup> He elaborates: 'In general scribes set out to produce what seemed to them a more correct, or more easily intelligible, or a more emphatic, or a more elegant text. Their substitutions seem designed to make the meaning clearer, or to express it more forcibly, or to embellish the form of its expression'.<sup>31</sup> However, Kane is careful not to imply that all changes were individual scribes' 'readings'. Instead, he argues that scribes were intelligent beings who sometimes copied their text with attention, but, at other times, made numerous mechanical errors of transcription. Likewise, Windeatt comments on scribal variations in copying *TC*: 'Within their times the scribes are reading men. They may not be thinking men, but their minds are the courses through which runs the literary language of their day in order to achieve its literary form...Scribal transcribing is a form of writing which constitutes an "active reading", an active reading which involves judgement-through-variation on the difficulties and peculiarities of what it encounters'.<sup>32</sup> Unlike Kane, Windeatt argues that *TC* invites less 'active reading' than does the more controversial *Piers Plowman*, but readings are offered nonetheless, and equally need to be distinguished from routine mechanical errors which scribes were prone to make. More recently, Eric H. Reiter has demonstrated that scribes were intelligent respondents to the texts they copied: manuscripts 'show remarkable variance, which goes far beyond the inevitable errors that creep in during the copying process' so that books are 'artifacts [sic] of the reading process'.<sup>33</sup> Even authors themselves, who were also scribes (such

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<sup>30</sup> George Kane, *Piers Plowman: The A Version: Will's Vision of Piers Plowman and Do-Well: An edition in the form of Trinity College Cambridge MS. R.3.14* (London: University of London, The Athlone Press, 1960), p.116. See also p.116, n.3.

<sup>31</sup> Kane (1960), p.128.

<sup>32</sup> B. A. Windeatt, 'The Scribes as Chaucer's Early Critics', *SAC* i (1979), 119-141, pp.120, 122.

<sup>33</sup> Eric H. Reiter, 'The Reader as Author of the User-Produced Manuscript: Reading and Rewriting Popular Latin Theology in the Late Middle Ages', *Viator* xxvii (1996), 151-69, pp.158, 154. See also: Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978) whose argument on reading as a 'dynamic interaction between text and reader', p.107, is applicable to the scribal process of reading and rewriting. Likewise, see: Wolfgang Iser, 'The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach', *New Literary History*, iii (1972), 279-299; Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an*

as Hoccleve), rewrote texts as they copied. As Schultz suggests, ‘This unusual circumstance of mediaeval author and scrivener combined in one person suggests a very fertile source of psychological error. Hoccleve was not bound by any principle of strict adherence to exemplar which might have been followed during his long experience as a clerk of the Privy Seal, but might alter or substitute what he considered a better word at the time of copying’.<sup>34</sup> He suggests that those scribes that were also clerks (such as Scribe B and Scribe D examined here) did not abide by the same rules whilst copying literary texts as they did legal documents, offering some individual response. However, where Kane, Windeatt, Reiter, and Schultz take a cautious approach in suggesting that not all changes were ‘readings’, Kathryn Kerby-Fulton pushes the theory further.<sup>35</sup> She suggests that the work of the individual scribe was that of the ‘professional reader’, who solitarily annotated a text so as to offer his particular interpretation of its meaning: the scribe was ‘someone whose job it is to prepare a text for the reading public, someone whose job description...allows him to filter the text for presentation to the patron’.<sup>36</sup> This presumes that the scribe acted alone and was solely responsible for the production of particular readings of the text on the manuscript page.<sup>37</sup>

There are three major considerations which Kerby-Fulton’s theory does not take into account: that scribes inherited established traditions and procedures of copying which informed and set boundaries for what they could offer on the page; that numerous members of a complex

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*Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), especially pp.3-45.

<sup>34</sup> H. C. Schultz, ‘Thomas Hoccleve, Scribe’, *Speculum* xii:1 (1937): 71-81, pp.75-76. See also, Seth Lerer, *Chaucer and his Readers: Imagining the Author in Late Medieval England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p.4 ff.

<sup>35</sup> Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and Maidie Hilmo, ed. *The Medieval Professional Reader at Work: Evidence from Manuscripts of Chaucer, Langland, Kempe and Gower* (Victoria, B. C.: ELS, 2001), especially p.8. Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, ‘Langland “in his working clothes”?: Scribe D, Authorial Loose Revision Material, and the Nature of Scribal Intervention’, in *Middle English Poetry: Texts and Traditions: Essays in Honour of Derek Pearsall*, ed. A. J. Minnis (York: York Medieval Press, 1996), pp.139-167; Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and Denise L. Despres, *Iconography and the Professional Reader: The Politics of Book Production in the Douce Piers Plowman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, ‘Professional Readers of Langland at Home and Abroad: New Directions in Political and Bureaucratic Codicology of Piers Plowman’, in Pearsall (2000), pp.103-129; Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and Maidie Hilmo, *The Medieval Reader: Reception and Cultural History in the Late Medieval Manuscript, Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, third series i (old series xxvi, new series xvi) (New York: AMS Press, 2001).

<sup>36</sup> Kerby-Fulton and Hilmo (2001), p.8.

<sup>37</sup> The scribe is, of course, aware of his readers’ responses so is not entirely ‘solitary’. However, Kerby-Fulton argues that in producing the manuscript, though concerned with his readers, he is solely responsible for the end look of the page.

network of producers each had a hand in the end look of the page; and that, sometimes, mechanical errors or difficulties in copying a manuscript meant that changes and substitutions were not all ‘readings’ but solutions to practical problems. The arguments above are based on textual variation from manuscript to manuscript. Variation in layout is a slightly different issue for which the three caveats above are particularly relevant. This section will examine these three considerations in turn to suggest that the scribal readings offered in manuscripts should be viewed as mediated by these external factors.

The origins of manuscript features and their impact on later literary production that inherited them are most fully examined by Parkes in his foundational ‘The Influence of the Concepts of *Ordinatio* and *Compilatio* on the Development of the Book’.<sup>38</sup> As a result of changes and of new developments in theological and philosophical argumentation and Latin disputation, *mise-en-page* was used to best represent those carefully ordered arguments so as to render them clearly: ‘most works copied in and before the twelfth century were better organised in copies produced in the thirteenth century, and even better organised in those produced in the fourteenth century’.<sup>39</sup> The desired effect was to extend those logically divided arguments within the text to the division of the manuscript page. With A. I. Doyle, Parkes famously elaborated: ‘layout and decoration function like punctuation: they are part of the presentation of a text which facilitates its use by a reader’.<sup>40</sup> In other words, the provisions of scribes on the manuscript page are seen not as routine, practical processes of production but were for the purpose of clarifying the text. As Parkes outlines:

the rules governing the relationships between this complex of graphic conventions and the message of a text conveyed in the written medium – may be described as “the grammar of legibility”.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> M. B. Parkes, ‘The Influence of the Concepts of *Ordinatio* and *Compilatio* on the Development of the Book’, in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays presented to Richard William Hunt*, ed. J. J. G. Alexander, M. T. Gibson, and R. W. Southern (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp.115-141.

<sup>39</sup> Parkes (1976), p.115.

<sup>40</sup> Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.186.

<sup>41</sup> M. B. Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1992), p.23.

He discusses, in the main, disputation which is transformed into written accounts. He then relates this layout to fifteenth-century literary manuscripts in a speculative comparison: 'features of the apparatus can be found even in well-produced copies of vernacular texts which do not presuppose an academic readership'.<sup>42</sup> Parkes assumes that the layout of books of theological disputation filters through to the layout of the literary manuscript page. However, he does not argue explicitly that this is the case. The concern with clarifying the meaning of the text – its nuances and structure – carries forward to the literary manuscripts analysed here. This is, in part, a hermeneutical analysis – presenting the producers' means of understanding, interpreting, and explaining the text.<sup>43</sup> However, an interpretative scheme created through layout would imply that the text is fixed before scribes and producers create the manuscript, onto which they impose an understanding. Rather, as I will demonstrate, the manuscript layout, like the variable text itself, demonstrates flux and fluidity in production. It is equally an attempt to understand the meaning of the text whilst simultaneously communicating that meaning.

The literary manuscripts examined here were created by professional scribes who were clearly trained copyists.<sup>44</sup> As such, they would have had an eye for the critical effects produced by the layout, and they would have also been heavily influenced by the layout of more established traditions of book production.<sup>45</sup> Fifteenth-century manuscripts share a variety of the features that Parkes identifies in theological manuscripts, and borders, rubrics, running titles, paraphs, initials, and glosses have extensive histories which shape the production of later manuscripts. Though this thesis does not attempt to make a direct, detailed comparison between the manuscripts produced before and after the turn of the fifteenth century, it is essential here to note that the features used in fifteenth-century literary manuscripts were inherited from more established traditions of manuscript production. Individual features were

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<sup>42</sup> Parkes (1976), p.133.

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, Rita Copeland and I. Sluiter, *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric: Language Arts and Literary Theory, AD 300 -1475* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p.47.

<sup>44</sup> See Kane (1960) p.116, n.3 and Mooney in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.192-193 for definitions of 'professional'. I will clarify my own choice of terms later in this introduction (p.26). See also Jean-Pascal Pouzet, 'Book Production outside Commercial Contexts', in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.212-238, p.225ff.

<sup>45</sup> See also Stephen Partridge 'Designing the Page' in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.79-103.

developed in manuscripts which predate Chaucer's, Gower's, and Hoccleve's, and do not always have the same function.<sup>46</sup>

Paraphs were first used to mark the opening of a new *kaput* or *capitulum*. Originally marked with a 'k', and later replaced with a 'c', this 'c' was made to be a more conspicuous marker rather than a letter of the main text by the addition of a vertical line through its centre, which was eventually exaggerated to become the paraph in the twelfth century.<sup>47</sup> These were further exaggerated in prominence by the addition of colour. Paraphs become increasingly common in later manuscripts: London, British Library, MS Harley 2253, for example, uses paraphs to indicate each new opening in 'Les cinqes joies de Nostre Dame' (c.1340). These are in coloured ink and are the size of the capital that begins the first line of text, and so are visually noticeable markers of a new opening.

Initials were used interchangeably with paraphs. These also indicate the openings of sections of text. Large initials were used frequently in continental literary manuscripts that predate those that are examined here. In Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Selden Supra 57 and MS Douce 332 for example, copies of the *Roman de la Rose*, a large initial 'M', five lines in height, opens the beginning of the text (f.1r) (see Figure 1, p.13). In Selden Supra 57, this is accompanied by a red ink rubric: 'i[ci] commence le roman de la rose', which supports the initial textually to indicate the opening of the work. Likewise, in an early fifteenth-century Christine de Pisan manuscript, London, British Library, Harley 4605, the opening page is also indicated with a large initial (f.3r). The large initials in a mid-fifteenth-century Italian manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Canon. Ital. 85 of Boccaccio's *Filocolo*, are so large that they take up nearly the whole text space: the opening initial on f.1r is eleven lines high. Bureaucratic papers also used a similar system of large initials to mark the opening of a document or a section of a document. The Scriveners'

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<sup>46</sup> As Geneviève Hasenohr observes in tracing the history of the vernacular manuscript page, 'l'histoire de la mise en page vernaculaire commence du jour où les textes en langue vulgaire cessèrent d'être des éléments adventices dans l'économie du livre latin pour bénéficier d'un support matériel spécialement réalisé pour eux... Il est frappant de constater combien ces premières copies, dans leur majorité, répondent à un type de mise en page fixe et accompli': Geneviève Hasenohr, 'Les origines monastique' and 'Les Romans en Vers', in *Mise en page et mise en texte du livre manuscrit* ed. Henri-Jean Martin and Jean Vezin (Paris: Éditions du Cercle de la librairie – Promodis, 1990), pp.231 and 245.

<sup>47</sup> Parkes (1992), p.42.

Company Common Paper, London, Guildhall Library, MS 5370, has large initials at the head of each scribe's oath. Likewise, Hoccleve's formulary, London, British Library, MS Additional 24062 has guide marks (in the shape 'cc') at the opening of each section of text (see f.5r, for example).



Figure 1: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Selden Supra 57, f.1r, and Douce 332, f.1r (with permission of the Bodleian).

Such features are often practical and demonstrate a pragmatic scribal response to the text. De Hamel examines the relationship between the manuscript page of liturgical books from the second century onwards, the beginnings of organised Christianity, and their practical functions.<sup>48</sup> Indicating the opening of sections of texts, especially the Gospels, he argues, initials were practical marks for the reciter: they indicate the beginnings and endings of each reading (as he demonstrates using Milan, Biblioteca Cod. C.39.Inf., second half of the sixth century; Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana cod.I.61.sup, a seventh-century book used up to the late fourteenth century; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 286; and Oxford, Bodleian library, MS Auct.D.2.14, a sixth-century book used as late as the ninth century and which contains musical neumes that de Hamel suggests indicated those parts that should be chanted during services).<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Christopher de Hamel, *Book: a History of the Bible* (London: Phaidon, 2001), pp.29-31.

<sup>49</sup> De Hamel (2001), p.31.

Such markings demonstrate that these books were pragmatically ‘prepared for recitation in the liturgy’.<sup>50</sup>

However, the function of paraps and initials was not limited to marking the opening of sections; they are often also used to indicate the stages in an argument in order to render theological and philosophical argumentation clearly on the page. Parkes demonstrates this use in the thirteenth-century manuscripts of Peter Lombard’s *Sentences*.<sup>51</sup> Later continental manuscripts used the paraph and initial for this purpose. London, British Library, Harley 4431, an early fifteenth-century Parisian copy of Christine de Pisan, has paraps every time the narrative develops (f.3v, for example).<sup>52</sup> This is an extension of the use of paraps to mark arguments: they indicate in Harley 4431 the stages of narrative progression, the way they indicate the stages in argumentation in those manuscripts that Parkes describes. After the large initial in Selden Supra 57 and Douce 332, smaller initials are likewise placed throughout each manuscript at developments in the narrative. This was more often the case in prose texts. In Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 316 (1390s), for example, a copy of Higden’s *Polychronicon*, coloured paraps appear amidst a mass of black ink text: a paraph appears on f.71v at ‘Eadem [i]g[itur] feria sexta qua p[ri]m[us] | adam peccauit post nongentos xxx. annos | obiit’ and another at ‘Et qua hora ferie sexte adam eiectus | est tali hora latro in p[ar]adisum | introduct[us] est’. These function to separate out cohesive sections of text and to indicate the developments in the progression of the work as a whole.

Furthermore, speaker markers were often added to the margins to function as an extension of the paraps and initials, elaborating in the margin the development of the main text. They appear, for example, in the Latin Boethius, as well as numerous Latin works in dialogue form such as Gregory’s *Dialogi* and as far back as Augustine. These are also found in the later manuscripts of *La Belle Dame Sans Mercy*, for example, where ‘lamant’ and ‘la dame’ are

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<sup>50</sup> De Hamel (2001), p.29.

<sup>51</sup> Parkes (1992), pp.121-135.

<sup>52</sup> See Henri-Jean Martin and Jean Vezin (1990) for descriptions of continental manuscript traditions of *mise-en-page*.

indicated in the margins, as well as in the Middle English ‘Dame Sirip’ which predates Chaucer.<sup>53</sup> *La Belle Dame Sans Mercy* is found in anthologies which place it in the context of lyric poetry alongside Chaucer and Lydgate (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 16 and Cambridge, Trinity College MS R.3.19, for instance), and the features of manuscript layout are shared across these texts.

A different use for paraphs and initials, however, is suggested by Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 819, a manuscript of Bede’s commentary on the proverbs (eighth century). The scribe used the ivy leaf, a predecessor of the paraph, not to indicate stages in an argument, but rather to separate clearly the text from the commentary; paraphs and initials were used to a similar purpose in later manuscripts (see Figure 2, p.16).<sup>54</sup> Glossed manuscripts often used paraphs in order to connect the gloss with the text. These are especially carefully rendered in Psalters which have complex layers of glossing. Lincoln, Cathedral Library MS 18 (A.1.1) (c.1170) has extensive extra textual material (described below) in which the commentary surrounds the text on the page. This has coloured initials to open each verse of text. These indicate the *capitulum*, the opening of each section, as paraphs and initials often do. But they also play another role – not only do they open each verse, their colour-coding allows them to be matched with their colour-counterpart adjacent to the appropriate commentary or gloss and so they function as *signes de renvoie*, linking the marginalia to the main text.

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<sup>53</sup> See Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Digby 86, ff.165r-168r.

<sup>54</sup> Parkes (1992), p.27.

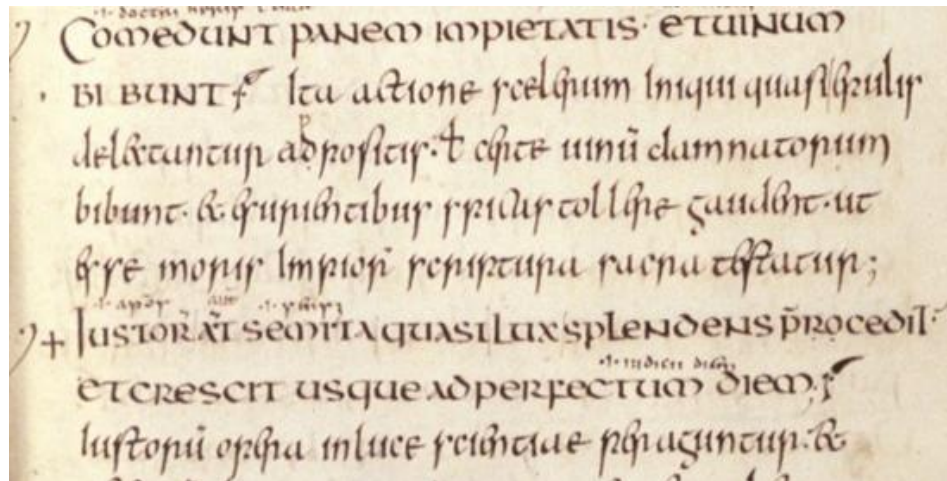


Figure 2: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 819, f.11r (with permission of the Bodleian).

The increasing presence of the gloss generated increasingly complex systems of layout. As glosses became lengthier and more complicated – the extensive *glossa ordinaria*, for example – there began to develop a variety of methods for presenting them: they were no longer placed in the margins but in ruled columns, often wider than that of the main text.<sup>55</sup> Often, glosses were interlinear as well as marginal and ran into the gutter so blurring the boundaries between text and margin. De Hamel describes the elaborate placement of commentaries in Bibles as a ‘pattern of bricks’, closely tessellated blocks of words in the margins of the page.<sup>56</sup> These, he states, were laid out by scribes in order to suggest two different types of interpretation: ‘one could pick up a glossed book and simply read the Bible narrative without interpretation. Alternatively one could follow the commentary and, from time to time, check back across the page to the Bible text’.<sup>57</sup> This summary oversimplifies the number of possible responses to the complex layout of the page. More importantly, it assumes that all texts were glossed in the same way. However, the production of the intricate page complicated the process of responding to a text. By the fifteenth century, as I will demonstrate, the variety of purposes to which glossing is put and the variety of layouts that are employed by later scribes confuse this straightforward notion of only two types of interpretation.

<sup>55</sup> See Lesley Smith, *The Glossa ordinaria: the making of a medieval Bible commentary* (Leiden: Brill 2009), pp.91-139, especially pp.94, 95, 100, 105-106; Christopher de Hamel, *Glossed Books of the Bible and the Origins of the Paris Booktrade* (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1984), pp.14-27.

<sup>56</sup> De Hamel (2001), p.109.

<sup>57</sup> De Hamel (2001), p.109.

As Beryl Smalley demonstrates, the scholastic gloss was prepared by appropriate authorities so as to instruct the scholar in the correct interpretation of the main text.<sup>58</sup> However, these were often disorganised. The glosses were often haphazard and did not always use a particular script size to distinguish between text and gloss.<sup>59</sup> Sometimes, as in the *Ecloga* of 'Theodulus', the gloss was distinguished by boxing in red and marking with the word 'gloze'.<sup>60</sup> This type of layout complicates the interpretation of the text and the distinction between text and gloss more than De Hamel's description permits.

Psalters, however, were usually cautiously organised. The manuscripts of Richard Rolle's Psalter, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 953, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 12, and the scrappier Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc 286 demonstrate the use of a strict and traditional hierarchy of scripts to differentiate the gloss from the text. These were modelled on the manuscripts of Rolle's source, Peter of Lombard's glosses on the Psalter, in which the text in a more formal hand is surrounded by lengthy glosses in a smaller hand (see, for example, Oxford Bodleian Library, MS. Auct. D. 2.8). Manuscripts of Rolle's Psalter, Bodley 953 and Hatton 12, mark their glosses with paraphs. The Latin text is also written in red ink in a large, more formal hand. This visually heightens the status of the Latin over the vernacular gloss. In Bodley 953, the Latin is followed by English summaries which are marked with paraphs and underlined in red in order to differentiate them visually on the page, but not to raise their status above the Latin. The less magnificent Laud Misc 286 marks its glosses with a small blue initial and red underlining and, later in the manuscript, with alternating blue and red initials and red underlining. Again, the marking differentiates the gloss but not above the status of the main text.

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<sup>58</sup> Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), pp.xiv-xv and p.176.

<sup>59</sup> See Ralph Hanna III, Tony Hunt, R. G. Keightley, Alistair Minnis, and Nigel F. Palmer, 'Latin Commentary Tradition and Vernacular Literature' in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Vol. 2: The Middle Ages*, ed. Alistair Minnis and Ian Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp.363-421, p.365, and Kristian Jensen, 'Text-Books in the Universities: the Evidence from the Books' in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Vol. III: 1400-1557*, ed. Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp.354-379, p.355.

<sup>60</sup> See Hanna et al. (2005), p.369.



Figure 3: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. E. Inf 6, ff.28v-29r (with permission of the Bodleian).

A more impressive, but atypically laid out manuscript of Peter Lombard's commentary on the Psalter is Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. E. Inf 6, which places its glosses in two separate smaller margins, one adjacent to the text, the other further out (see Figure 3, p.18). This again imposes a hierarchy onto the texts and distinguishes the main text from the gloss. The Eadwine Psalter, Cambridge, Trinity College, MS. R.17.1 (c.1160), places the *Gallicanum* Psalter in wide columns in the centre of the page, within and surrounding which is the Latin gloss.<sup>61</sup> Margaret Gibson compares this to other twelfth-century Psalters, each of which has a complex system of columns: Lincoln Cathedral, MS 18 (A.1.1) has two columns of commentary and six columns of the three versions of the Psalter, the *Romanum*, *Hebraicum*, and *Gallicanum*, though as the scribes struggled to incorporate eight columns per folio, eventually the layout has only four columns.<sup>62</sup> In Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.5.4 (150) the commentary is placed below and to the right of the main text. Books of Hours equally use colour and layout to distinguish text from gloss: British Library, MS Additional 54782, produced after 1470, indicates the main text with red ink, and the interlinear gloss with brown ink.

<sup>61</sup> See Margaret T. Gibson, T. A. Heslop, and Richard William Pfaff ed. *The Eadwine Psalter: Text, Image, and Monastic Culture* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), especially Gibson, 'The Latin Apparatus', pp.108-122.

<sup>62</sup> Gibson in Gibson, Heslop and Pfaff (1992), p.108 and p.114.

Furthermore, the late-fourteenth- and early-fifteenth-century creation of the Wycliffite Bible produced greater need for careful layout of text and gloss. Translators provided extracts of the Latin Bible in translation along with explanatory glosses placed both intertextually and in the margins. These were separated from the main text by brown or red underlining.<sup>63</sup> These glosses offered translations, prologues, and variant meanings where one meaning was not fixed. Mary Dove suggests that glossing in the margins was a 'far less problematic method of interpretation than glossing within the text', and hints that the relationship between layout and text is more cautious and complex than de Hamel indicates above.<sup>64</sup> However, she does not elaborate on the distinction she draws here between the two placements and the type of interpretation each encouraged.

Literary manuscripts of the fifteenth-century use this relationship between text and gloss in order to respond to the play within the text itself. Gower's glosses, for example, are self-authored: they are not glosses the way that Biblical commentaries are, but are part of the text and so question the idea of textual authority and the interaction between the margin and the centre (see Figure 4, p.20). Likewise, the glossed margins of *WBP* undermine the central text and indicate a complex interaction between the two spaces, challenging both the main text and the integrity of the margins. Fifteenth-century scribes thus operated within these inherited traditions; but their use in fifteenth-century manuscripts is not routine, fixed, or prescribed. This variety of functions and interactions with the text needs examination.

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<sup>63</sup> See Mary Dove, *The First English Bible: The Text and Context of the Wycliffite Versions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), esp p.152ff.

<sup>64</sup> Dove (2007), p.159.

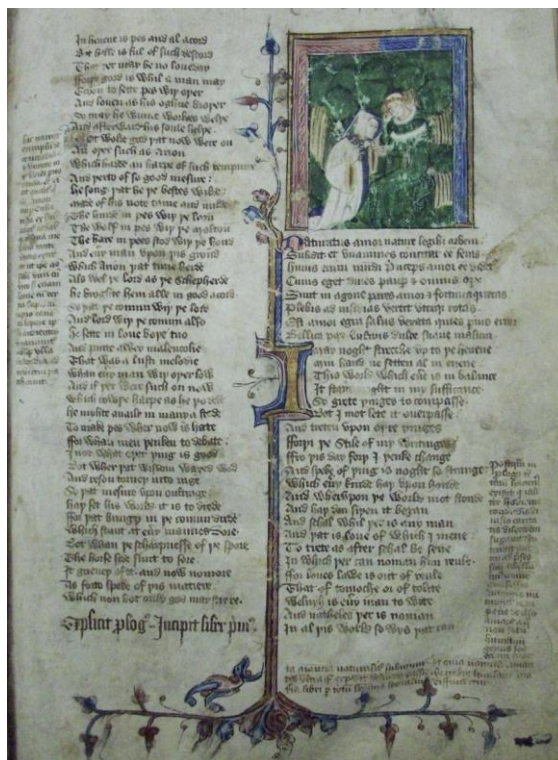


Figure 4: Gower's glosses: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 3 (F), f.8r (with permission of the Bodleian).

Fifteenth-century manuscript *mise-en-page* stands at an intersection between inherited and commercial practice. The manuscripts examined here are often de-luxe and would have been produced by scribes who were not only influenced by their taught practice, but also by the commercial networks within which they operated.<sup>65</sup> London saw the innovation of mass production in Caxton's press at Westminster which suggests that an organised production network for literary books was established long before the advent of print.<sup>66</sup> The scribes that produced these texts were not just 'professional readers' but also commercial scribes. Though the scribe may have had some interpretative freedom over the page he produced, this was restricted by the complex established circles and networks of stationers and artisans that contributed to the production of a manuscript. Scholars are now starting to develop a larger-

<sup>65</sup> See, for example, Horobin (2009): 'scribes were above all professionals and...their choice of texts was more likely to have been governed by the market than by personal literary preferences', p.202 n.16.

<sup>66</sup> Though the production of books also took place elsewhere, see A. I. Doyle, 'English Books In and Out of Court from Edward III to Henry VI' in *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. V. J. Scattergood and J. W. Sherborne (London: Duckworth, 1983) pp.163-81. See also A. S. G. Edwards, 'Chaucer from Manuscript to Print: The Social Text and the Critical Text', *Mosaic* xxviii (1995), 1-12; Alexandra Gillespie, *Print culture and the medieval author: Chaucer, Lydgate, and their books, 1473-1557* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp ed. *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain: Vol 3 1400-1557* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Rodney M. Thompson, *From Manuscript to Print* (Tasmania: University of Tasmania Press, 2008).

scale view of book production practices, which suggests that such activity seldom occurred in isolation.<sup>67</sup> Kathleen Scott, for example, has catalogued a variety of marks left by scribes on the manuscript page.<sup>68</sup> These can still be seen in the margins of several manuscripts: Cp, for instance, has the words 'dj vynet' or 'champe' left as an instruction for the decorator from the scribe to insert either a coloured initial on gold ground or a gold initial on coloured ground in the space provided.<sup>69</sup> Such marks suggest that there were established networks of producers. The commercial book trade in the fifteenth century was multifaceted and the set up involved a great deal of this type of negotiation. Scribes often had such practical considerations: both patron stipulations and the circulation and availability of exemplars. Exemplars were not always accessible and, with the size of each of these endeavours, scribes did not always know whether they would have access to any particular copy (the large gaps left for the end of *CkT* or *Gamelyn* in *CT*, for example). Ralph Hanna has suggested a piecemeal, ad hoc copy practice, with sections of manuscripts circulating amongst scribes and decorators.<sup>70</sup> Equally, the literary book trade was heavily financially driven and patrons often stipulated the expense of each manuscript which directly influenced the layout of the page. Each border, paraph, initial and all other features of the manuscript page had to be paid for and a cost agreed between client and producer.<sup>71</sup> Individual patrons may have requested specific books to be produced, or exact

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<sup>67</sup> See especially Erik Kwakkel, 'Commercial Organization and Economic Innovation' in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.173-191, and Pouzet in the same volume, pp.212-238, especially pp.214-218.

<sup>68</sup> Kathleen L. Scott, 'Limning and Book-Producing Terms and Signs *in situ* in Late-Medieval English Manuscripts: A First Listing', in *New Science out of Old Books: Studies in Manuscript and Early Printed Books in Honour of A. I. Doyle*, ed. Richard Beadle and A. J. Piper (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), pp.142-188, especially p.143. See also J. J. G. Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators and Their Methods of Work* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), especially pp.52-71 and 117-118.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, ff.44r, 45r, 54v, 55r, 61r-v, 62r, 90r. See also Margaret Rickert, 'Illumination', in Manly and Rickert (1940), I, p.562.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, Ralph Hanna III, *Pursuing History: Middle English Manuscripts and their Texts* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), especially pp.8, 34, 43, 148, and 'Miscellaneity and Vernacularity: Conditions of Literary Production in Late Medieval England' in *The Whole Book: Cultural Perspectives on the Medieval Miscellany*, ed. Stephen G. Nichols and Siegfried Wenzel (Michigan: University of Michigan, 1996), pp. 37-51, p.47; Margaret Connolly, 'Compiling the Book' in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.129-149, especially p.130.

<sup>71</sup> See Kwakkel in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.178-179, on the 'middlemen' between patrons and scribes.

replicas to be made, and so the degree of decoration was variable according to patron request.<sup>72</sup> However, patrons only had a limited influence on the actual positioning of these features on the manuscript page: while they may have stipulated cost and a particular number of borders, paraps, or initials, which had an effect on the overall look of the page, it is unlikely that they stipulated the exact placement of paraps or initials within the body of the text. This was more likely the remit of the producers.

The manuscript, therefore, had numerous influences on its layout and so the production of the page was a collaboration between the scribe, inherited features, and external factors. Though of course, where there is no mass production each manuscript is likely to offer some unique interpretations of the text it contains, individual response was seldom the only influence. Discussing the manuscript page, Henri-Jean Martin argues that 'la structure d'un livre et sa visualisation traduisant la logique dominante d'une société'.<sup>73</sup> This is a useful way of thinking about the relationships between the producers and their clients. The space on the page is related to scribal response in the light of his professional training and within the production circles in which he operates. This space is imbued with meanings that reflect these circles, and the manuscript becomes meaningful because of the mutually comprehensible layout that it embodies.<sup>74</sup> The space of the text indicates cohesion of shared ideas between producers in ensuring a level of comprehension of the manuscript features (codes) embodied there. Those

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<sup>72</sup> See for example, Kate Harris, 'Patrons, Buyers and Owners: The Evidence for Ownership and the Rôle of Book Owners in Book Production and the Book Trade', in Griffiths and Pearsall (1989), pp.163-199, p.177; Ralph Hanna III, 'Sir Thomas Berkeley and his Patronage', *Speculum*, lxiv (1989), 878-916, p.885.

<sup>73</sup> Henri-Jean Martin, 'Introduction', in *La naissance du livre moderne (XIVe-XVIIe siècles): Mise en page et mise en texte du livre français*, Henri-Jean Martin, Jean-Marc Chatelain, Isabelle Diu, Aude Le Dividich, and Laurent Pinon (Paris: Electre – Éditions du Cercle de la Librairie, 2000), pp.vi-ix, p.vii.

<sup>74</sup> This idea is based on Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell 1991), p.66: space 'operate[s] on a process from which it cannot separate itself because it is a product of them'. Likewise, Michel de Certeau elaborates that for negotiating this space, in creating and in using it, the application of 'tactics' are necessary. These 'tactics' are part of the process of interpretation of the text by a network of producers. Though referring generally to a variety of spaces, and specifically to the printed page, these theoretical notions are particularly apt when considering the manuscript page: Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), especially pp.xi-xix and 'Reading as Poaching', pp.165-176 (also printed in *The History of Reading: a Reader*, ed. Shafquat Towheed, Rosalind Crone, and Katie Halsey (London: Routledge, 2011)). I do not use these theories to read the manuscripts examined here but as a useful way of understanding and defining the relationships between the network of producers and clients that had an influence on the look of the manuscript page.

involved in the creation of the page codify the text, placing it within a system of supratextual features, its *mise-en-page*. This is then negotiated by the client and both the client and the producers are engaged participants in the creation of the shared space. The manuscript page is both a product and producer of codes that can be processed and interpreted by those who share the mutual space – by the networks of scribes and artisans involved in the production process, and by the clients that commission the manuscript.

In dealing with the space on the page, scribes demonstrate a concern with the overall form of the text, and so a large part of their engagement with the text is through its form – an act which Christopher Cannon, discussing the New Formalist approach to reading medieval texts, has described as ‘uniquely comprehensive’.<sup>75</sup> Though Cannon discusses modern readings of medieval texts, scribal approaches are somewhat similarly ‘comprehensive’. In being involved in the layout of the text, scribes must take into consideration the variety of formal structures both within the text and those external factors that contribute to the layout. The definition of ‘form’ in the New Formalist approach is never entirely clear, and often deliberately eluded.<sup>76</sup> The medieval understanding of form is complex but less baggy than new formalist definitions, focusing more precisely on two aspects: form is the structure of the text, its narrations and developments and fluctuations in plot, tone, imagery, and its verse-form (often through the deployment of inherited features); but it is also the text’s social and historical structures, such as its circumstances of production, both authorial or, as in the examples here, scribal (production networks, practical copying difficulties). Based on the theoretical foundations of Aristotle’s four causes, Priscian and later Kilwardby, and Jordan of Saxony discuss the *forma tractatus* or *divisio textus* as the way in which to organise their texts.<sup>77</sup> These two aspects of form were described as the *forma tractatus*, the mode of the text’s expression, or the text’s presentation, and the *forma tractandi*, the expression of the text’s subject matter, its style, which is related to the author’s

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<sup>75</sup> Cannon (2007), p.178. See also McKenzie (1999), p.12 who expresses a similar sentiment.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, Wolfson in Wolfson and Brown (2006), p.9.

<sup>77</sup> Parkes (1976), pp.115-141

interpretation of his material.<sup>78</sup> The scribes of the manuscripts analysed here use such theory as practical guidance. Though, to Minnis, the *forma tractatus* is a 'less cerebral and altogether more pragmatic concern' than the *forma tractandi*, to scribes, it was central in their approach. The physical expression of a text's subject matter does not only display but rather contributes to and offers an approach to meaning, as Kerby-Futon, Kane, and McKenzie, argue above.<sup>79</sup> As D. Vance Smith summarises, 'form in medieval texts is neither merely aesthetic nor aesthetically disinterested; it is always tuned to purpose'.<sup>80</sup> Or, as McKenzie has demonstrated, 'material form of texts crucially determines their meanings.'<sup>81</sup> In having to provide a layout for their texts, scribes, by the nature of their work, had to deal with its form – this was part of their way of thinking about the text during its production. The ways in which the scribe chose to handle this form, even in the practical manner of negotiating complex layouts, demonstrates an involvement with the structures of the text. This is not to say that scribes interacted completely or exclusively with the text with what we would call a New Formalist agenda. Rather, especially when dealing with matters of practicality (such as problems with space on the page), form was at the forefront of presentation. The issues raised in copying and reproducing a text go hand in hand with the issues raised in dealing with form. Indeed, the Middle English word *forme* mainly implied the physical shape of an object or a text, the representation of an idea rather than the idea itself – more synonymous with *forma tractatus* rather than *forma tranctandi*.<sup>82</sup>

As this thesis will demonstrate, on the page this *forme* is often separated into two further aspects: more broadly, the overall look of the page – the *forma tractatus* which supports the *forma tractandi*; and, more specifically, the verse form of the text – a part of the *forma tractatus* which often undermines *forma tractandi*. The *forme* variously contributed to, and was seen as

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<sup>78</sup> See Cannon (2007), pp.181-183 and A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (London: Scolar Press, 1988), p.145.

<sup>79</sup> See Minnis (1988), p.145 and nn.30-35 above.

<sup>80</sup> Smith in Wolfson and Brown (2006), p.71. See also Jerome J. McGann, who argues that 'Integral form is the sign of this seeming knowledge – and it persuades its reader that such a totality is not just a poetic illusion, but a truth': 'Keats and the Historical Method in Literary Criticism', in *The Beauty of Inflections: Literary Investigations in the Historical Method and Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), pp.21-22, as quoted in Wolfson in Wolfson and Brown (2006), pp.7-8.

<sup>81</sup> McKenzie (1999), p.ii.

<sup>82</sup> See Cannon (2007), p.183.

either in opposition to or complementary to, the meaning of the text, and offers further insights into scribal responses to literary texts.

However, alongside such intellectual engagement with form, there were also practical constraints on the scribes which limited their interpretative freedom. These were often the result of restriction, mistake, haste, or the need to remedy tricky difficulties in an exemplar. These are sometimes material constraints: scribes sometimes run out of space in the margins of their manuscripts and find the need to limit the decoration or compromise on an ideal layout in order to fit these restrictions. Lacking the open space of El in producing Hg, the scribe was limited by the size of the manuscript page, resulting in squashed and untidy margins.<sup>83</sup> Similarly, the scribes of, L, C, CC148, B, Ash, Pem307, E, M125, and Plimpton, copies of the *Confessio Amantis*, faced a choice between glosses and speaker markers at several points throughout their manuscripts.<sup>84</sup> The marginal Latin prose takes up the space in the margin where a speaker marker should sit, and so, due to limitations of space, scribes compromise one feature for another, though elsewhere, these manuscripts offer a full programme of glosses and speaker markers. Each feature of layout is thus in competition with the others for the available space. Often, these compromises in layout are the result of practicality rather than meaningful choice. At the same time, however, because of these limitations, we also see which features scribes most valued or considered most useful for layout. In making such compromises, the scribes still demonstrate a choice, either the glosses over the speaker markers or to maintain marginal notes despite the limited space, as in the examples above.

At the same time, such practical constraints result in mistakes which are usually accidental. The production of the page is fertile ground for error. Limited time or funds, complicated processes, haste, along with the tricky business of co-ordinating producers, resulted in blunders which can often be seen on the page. In several copies of Hoccleve's *RP*, the large initial that separates the opening dialogue and the address to the prince, 'Hye noble and myȝtty Prince

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<sup>83</sup> See Chapter 1 for further discussion of this example (p.32 ff.).

<sup>84</sup> See Chapter 2 for fuller discussion (p.155 ff.).

excellent', is different in each manuscript.<sup>85</sup> Approximately half have the same large initial as A, an 'H'; the remaining have an 'M', turning 'Hye' into 'My'. One manuscript has an 'O', so that the sentence reads 'O ye noble and mighty prince excellent' (Na, f.37v). These differences may be due to the exemplars being different for each of these manuscripts, but it is also highly likely that this has been caused by unclear instruction and lack of co-ordination between scribe and decorator. The scribe may have left a gap for the large initial to be inserted, but may not have left a guidemark (the initials added in these gaps cover any guidemarks that may have been left). Based on the remaining words on the line, the decorators have attempted to deduce which letter ought to be inserted in the gap left for the initial. As the following line begins 'My lord the Prince', some decorators have logically inserted an 'M' instead of an 'H' in the first line. In the case of the initial 'O', the decorator spotted the 'ye' and assumed this to be a complete word without the need for an initial letter. He thus chose a large initial 'O' as the only sensible opening single-letter word before the word 'ye'. The difficulties of co-ordinating the execution of each part of the production of the manuscript, with different tasks completed by different producers, leaves ample room for blunder. Such examples of tricky situations alert us to the potential for error. But they also alert us to the practical measures and clever solutions scribes and decorators had to find to remedy mistakes. There is often evidence of thoughtful reactions to practical difficulties, often with a degree of inventiveness. This places literary response to the text within the limits of practicality. This is not to undermine the intelligence of the scribes, most of which, as explained above, would have been trained and experienced in copying large and complex documents. Rather, this suggests that scribes copied thoughtfully and cautiously, aware of not only the textual and interpretative implications of their layouts, but also the practical problems of their craft.

The text on the manuscript page is a conflation of shared ideals and individual response, which is mediated through a variety of external influences. The production of the page, the

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<sup>85</sup> Quotation from A, f.39r.

response of producers to the literature they copy, is therefore far more complex than that suggested by theories such as Kerby-Fulton's.

## Methodology and Outline

Networks of professional scribes in the early fifteenth century developed practices for presenting the literary text in the process of creating the manuscript page. These terms require definition. The term 'professional' has been used in many different ways with nuanced distinctions between each use. The most recent definition has been made by Linne Mooney who distinguishes between 'professional' scribes and 'commercial' scribes.<sup>86</sup> The 'professional' scribe 'makes his living by writing, but he does not simply copy texts for his own or his family's or community's use...[but might] make his living primarily by writing legal documents'; the 'commercial' scribe 'made his living largely by copying books for a bespoke trade'.<sup>87</sup> She elaborates: 'all commercial scribes are professional scribes – trained writers of some sort. But not all professional scribes are commercial scribes'.<sup>88</sup> Mooney highlights the nuances and complications of the trade: not all scribes were 'professional' scribes of the same kind. Mooney, Stubbs, and Horobin's identification of scribes certainly suggests that some of the manuscripts analysed here were produced by those that worked for the civic secretariat at the Guildhall, other London guilds, and who were members of the stationers' company, but who simultaneously produced literary books.<sup>89</sup> Mooney's definition is a development of Parkes's, who defines 'professional' scribes as those who 'write in the course of pursuing different professions' and 'commercial' scribes as those who worked as 'independent craftsmen' and had 'regular patrons' or sometimes 'compet[ed] for commissions'.<sup>90</sup> Kane, however, offers a different definition. He writes: 'For one thing there were almost certainly two kinds of scribes,

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<sup>86</sup> Mooney in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.192-211.

<sup>87</sup> Mooney in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), p.193

<sup>88</sup> Mooney in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), p.193.

<sup>89</sup> Linne Mooney and Estelle Stubbs (New Chaucer Society Congress, 2010). See also, Mooney (2006) and Mooney and Stubbs's forthcoming monograph.

<sup>90</sup> M. B. Parkes, *Their Hands Before Our Eyes: a Closer Look at Scribes: the Lyell Lectures delivered in the University of Oxford 1999* (Oxford: Ashgate, 2008), pp.42, 47, 133 respectively.

professional scribes, and amateurs taking copies for themselves or others...But there is little to show even that any manuscript is the product of a succession of copyists entirely from one or the other class. If anything the evidence is to the contrary'.<sup>91</sup> Kane's definition of 'professional' seems to be both Parkes's or Mooney's 'professional' and 'commercial' scribes combined: those that produced copies for others for payment. He does not distinguish between the scribes based on their other activities. Rather, the manuscript seems to be a mixture of professional, commercial, and amateur scribes' hands, all fairly loosely defined. It is important to suggest that not all 'professional' scribes were 'professionals' in the same capacity. Without disputing Mooney's or Parkes's definitions, I use the term 'professional' in a different sense here – and one which is more akin to Kane in arguing that the scribe had a concern for the overall look of the page and the readings produced therein. Above I have referred to the commercial book trade to mean the networks of producers that had a hand in the creation of the manuscript page. As such, I do not suggest that all scribes were 'professionals' of the same sort. Rather, I use the term 'professional' not only to mean those scribes that mainly copied documents as well as literary texts, but rather find the term useful as it encompasses Kerby-Fulton's idea, mediated by those of Kane, Windeatt, and Reiter, of the 'professional reader'.<sup>92</sup> The scribe does both. He simultaneously offers individual response to the text, following an intellectual pursuit of the meaning of the text, but within the limits of professional practice – that is, within the networks of book producers, the limits of inherited practices and of the likely practical problems and errors therein. Though these scribes may have all been scribes, their training and day-to-day duties varied. By extension, their experience of producing literary books also must have varied. This examination will therefore offer a broader picture of the duties of London scribes.

Because of this, the word 'scribe' also bears a particular meaning. Alexandra Gillespie outlines the 'fluid' nature of the terms used to describe bookmakers before 1450, suggesting that the term 'scrivener' or a 'stationer' might refer to either a single text-writer – a limner,

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<sup>91</sup> Kane (1960), p.116, n.3.

<sup>92</sup> See nn.30-35 above.

decorator, binder – or to a combination of artisans working together.<sup>93</sup> Though he may leave guidemarks or blanks in copying the text for decoration to be inserted (as will be examined in the following chapters), the scribe is not the sole influence on the look of the page, as outlined above. For this reason, the use of the word ‘scribe’ here will encompass the entire production team – any of those producers involved in the final look of the manuscript page.

This thesis examines three major, late-medieval authors: Chaucer, Gower, and Hoccleve. The focus of the investigation will be on manuscripts produced in the period in which these authors were first promulgated, though some comparisons will be made with manuscripts produced later in the fifteenth century. The choice of dates must necessarily be loose: though palaeography can date manuscripts to a quarter of a century, often manuscripts produced early in the fifteenth century are dated variably as s.xv<sup>in</sup>, s.xv<sup>1/4</sup>, or s.xv<sup>1</sup>. As such, though this thesis focuses on the first quarter of the fifteenth century, manuscripts dated to the first half of the century are also considered.

The *mise-en-page* of seventy-six manuscripts of Chaucer’s, Gower’s, and Hoccleve’s texts are analysed here with reference to others. Each chapter examines the borders, rubrics, running titles, large initials, paraphs, smaller initials, speaker markers, glosses, and longer notes. Due to lack of space here, it will not include a full discussion of illustration, though it will analyse in brief illustrations where relevant. Equally, Parkes’s extensive study of punctuation means that it is out of the scope of this study to analyse fully this feature alongside all of the other features of the manuscript page.

I do not aim to offer a single vision of the process of production or to posit a single response to literature; rather, each chapter offers detailed local analysis of an individual author which will lead to a broader comparison of manuscript features, both unique to individual authors and those shared across all three. This will suggest numerous individual conclusions as well as larger and more general patterns and trends in response. As outlined above, scholarship on *mise-en-page* so far has not been comparative: critics concentrate on either a single author, a

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<sup>93</sup> Alexandra Gillespie, ‘Books’, *Oxford Twenty-First Century Approaches to Literature: Middle English* ed. Paul Strohm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.86-103, pp.92-93.

single scribe, a single manuscript, a single text, or single feature.<sup>94</sup> This thesis takes a holistic approach. For this reason, the manuscripts have been chosen by author rather than by scribe or provenance. This will demonstrate the broader responses to literature by fifteenth-century producers instead of the influences of single workshops, production centres, or locations.<sup>95</sup> If, as Parkes suggests, the features of *mise-en-page* were inherited from a variety of genres of books, what purpose did they serve in being incorporated into the manuscripts of literary texts – texts which are often quite differently inflected? An examination of the page layout will reveal these producers' reactions to the vernacular literary text.

Chapter 1, Chaucer, analyses all of the earliest extant manuscripts of *CT* and *TC*. It takes into consideration various verse-forms: tales in couplets, stanzas, prose, and tail rhyme. It also analyses the overall structure of the manuscripts via the rubrics and running titles used throughout, and compares the functions of both long and short glosses. Chaucer left his texts in an incomplete state. Using the affiliations between manuscripts and between scribes, this chapter assesses the various scribal responses to the unfinished texts which have no authorial precedent for layout, and the ways in which scribes offered through the manuscript layout a response to the text. This chapter argues that the difference between the regular layout of *TC* and the disparate layouts of *CT* reveals a scribal response towards the literary text: the desire to represent form, and specifically verse-form, on the page sometimes to the detriment of meaning.

Chapter 2, Gower, analyses the *mise-en-page* of twenty-six extant manuscripts of Gower's *CA*, focusing specifically on the framework, tales from Book V, and the change in format in Book VII. Gower's manuscripts differ from Chaucer's in that they were produced to fit a more rigorously defined layout. Of particular interest is the placement of the Latin notes and glosses: these vary from manuscript to manuscript, sometimes positioned in the margins, sometimes in the text column, sometimes both. The regularity of these manuscripts demonstrates a different response to Gower's text than to Chaucer's. At the same time, there are similarities in production despite

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<sup>94</sup> See the discussion of Fredell and others above, n.16.

<sup>95</sup> Though because of the de-luxe nature of many of the manuscripts examined here, several have been identified as London productions.

the varied textual circumstances. This chapter demonstrates that there was strict control over the text's meaning which manifests itself in the layout of the manuscripts – by the standard placement of borders, rubrics, running titles, even initials. It also demonstrates that where scribes had most interpretative freedom in the placement of the glosses, akin to Chaucer's scribes, they too created a *mise-en-page* that showcased verse-form over meaning – and so suggest a common response to the literary text.

Chapter 3, Hoccleve, examines the thirty-seven earliest manuscripts of Hoccleve's works. Hoccleve is unique of the three authors in that his texts exist in manuscripts that he himself produced: unlike Chaucer and Gower, Hoccleve demonstrates authorial involvement in the presentation of his manuscripts. This chapter analyses the *mise-en-page* of his three autograph manuscripts (as well as the two-and-a-half folios written by Hoccleve in the Trinity manuscript of Gower's *CA*), drawing comparisons with those manuscripts produced by other scribes. This chapter focuses on the apparatus that Hoccleve felt he ought to provide alongside his text in order to depict poetic meaning and simultaneously verse-form. His scribes, however, respond in a somewhat different way: whilst they too interact with poetic meaning, often this is limited, and their desire to represent verse-form on the page overrides clear depiction of meaning.

The evidence points towards two conflicting impulses in literary manuscript layout in the responses of producers to texts of poetry: to indicate the poetic meaning of the text and to indicate its poetic verse-form. The Conclusion takes a broader view of manuscript layout and opens further questions that are suggested by the layout to focus on two areas to which the data collected in the thesis are especially relevant: the development of a *mise-en-page* specifically for literary texts, and the attitudes of medieval book producers to poetry. It closes by asking what practical implications such conclusions have for the modern scholar and editor, and whether we too should participate in the scribes' shared understanding of space of the manuscript page.

## CHAPTER 1: CHAUCER

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First produced and circulated in the early fifteenth century, Chaucer's manuscripts firmly belong to this period of heavy commercial and professional book production. Of the fourteen earliest manuscripts analysed here, five *CT* manuscripts were produced by a group of acquainted scribes, likely to have been practising in London during this commercial expansion.<sup>1</sup> Most famously, Hg and El were produced by Scribe B, possibly identifiable as Adam Pinkhurst, and Ha4 and Cp by Scribe D, possibly identifiable as John Marchaunt.<sup>2</sup> Cp is textually related to La.<sup>3</sup> Pw was also produced in London by the scribe who copied parts of the later Lichfield manuscript and is copied from a fragmentary exemplar or set of exemplars related to those used by the scribe of Cp and La, and supplemented from another, as yet unattested, source.<sup>4</sup> This group of related scribes represents the network of professional scribes and artists now being identified as working in particular parts of London and copying large numbers of manuscripts of vernacular poetry.<sup>5</sup> This chapter examines a selection of Chaucer's early manuscripts, produced both in London and elsewhere, to investigate what features scribes felt they ought to provide on the page in order to best present Chaucer's poetry – and, in turn, what this suggests of scribal responses to the literary text.

Chaucer's manuscripts are complex and provide fertile hunting ground for scribal attitudes towards the page. As Chaucer articulated no clear plans of which we know for the production of

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<sup>1</sup> The manuscripts of *CT* analysed here are San Marino, Huntington Library, MS EL 26 C 9 (El); Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS Peniarth 392D (Hg); Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS Gg.4.27 (Gg); Cambridge, Cambridge University, MS Dd.4.24 (Dd); Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 198 (Cp); London, British Library, MS Harley 7334 (Ha<sup>4</sup>); London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 851 (La); and Sussex, Petworth House, MS 7 (Pw). Further references to these manuscripts will be by their sigla. When not directly from a manuscript, quotations are taken from Larry D. Benson ed., *The Riverside Chaucer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

<sup>2</sup> Horobin and Mooney, 'Identification of the Scribes Responsible for Copying Major Works of Middle English Literature'. Web. 9 April 2012. [www.medievalscribes.com](http://www.medievalscribes.com).

<sup>3</sup> Seymour (1997), p.10.

<sup>4</sup> Identified as by a London scribe, see A. I. Doyle, 'The Study of Nicholas Love's *Mirror*, Retrospect and Prospect', in *Nicholas Love at Waseda: proceedings of the international conference, 20-22 July 1995*, ed. Shoichi Oguro, Richard Beadle, and Michael G. Sargent (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997) pp.163-74.

<sup>5</sup> See Doyle and Parkes (1978) and Horobin and Mooney's 'Identification of the Scribes Responsible for Copying Major Works of Middle English Literature'. Web. 9 April 2012. [www.medievalscribes.com](http://www.medievalscribes.com).

his manuscripts, scribes were left with a mess of fragments. As such, these manuscripts offer the clearest examples of scribal practices and responses to poetic texts. *CT* manuscripts have a variety of layouts that differ from one manuscript to the next, and indeed, even those manuscripts copied by the same scribe show variation in layout. Cp and Ha4, the work of Scribe D, demonstrate two ways of organising the text: in Ha4, the scribe organises the text by teller, as do many of the other manuscripts; in Cp, the scribe has arranged the text into chapters with a number beside the start of each tale. Furthermore, the scribes of El, Hg, and Ha4, have left a blank folio at the end of *CkT* in order to ensure sufficient space for the end of the text, were they to come across it - a practical solution to a practical problem. As Manly and Rickert describe:

In Ha4 the fragment of *CkT* breaks off at the foot of f.58 (Q 8, f.ii) with A 4414 inserted after 4413 in the same line. In the lower margin in a tiny script occur the words, 'Ici commencera le fable de Gamelyn', probably written by a supervisor. Gamelyn occupies the rest of Q 8 and a short quire of six leaves more, ending on f.70b with space for 11 lines; and MLP begins at the top of 71a (Q 10, f.i). It seems practically certain that originally the last six leaves of Q 8 were left blank to receive the rest of *CkT* if and when found, and that after MLP had been begin in a new quire, Gamelyn was found and by order of the supervisor inserted between *CkT* and MLP. If *CkT*, Gamelyn, and MLP had been written in the order in which they stand in the MS, MLP would probably have begun on f.70b immediately after Gamelyn, with the usual 'Here endeth' and 'Here beginneth' between.<sup>6</sup>

This suggests a great deal of uncertainty as to the ideal layout for the text. We know that scribes were concerned with the order of the tales and the links between them. Equally, it also demonstrates a concern with poetic meaning, and the different interpretations of this meaning suggest different responses to the text. As a result, the manuscripts of *CT* are a muddle of disparate impulses.

Conversely, the manuscripts of *TC* differ in this respect from those of *CT*. Unlike the disparate manuscripts of the latter, the manuscripts of *TC* demonstrate regularity in planning and production.<sup>7</sup> Neither has a known authorial exemplar, yet *TC* manuscripts are more regularly

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<sup>6</sup> Manly and Rickert (1940), I, p.15.

<sup>7</sup> The manuscripts of *TC* have a simpler layout than those of the *CT*, but as complex a history. Root posited that the manuscripts can be subdivided into three groups (alpha, beta, and gamma) to represent different versions. Windeatt understood the manuscripts to be a result of the 'in-eching' of the text, representing

produced and more standardised in layout and in overall design than *CT* manuscripts. The majority of *TC* manuscripts are divided into five books by borders and usually also by large decorated initials. This formal book division is central to the layout of the text. Within each of these books, each stanza is indicated using a paraph or small initial and often with a gap created by a blank line between each. Such regularity amongst the manuscripts is immediately noticeable as very different from the incongruent *CT* manuscripts. The only copy that differs from the regularity of *TC* manuscripts is Cp1, an unfinished copy with large half-blank folios for illustrations that were planned as part of the production process but never completed.

Though it may have been possible that Chaucer left some plans for the copying and layout of the manuscripts in his working papers, which must have contained some *ordinatio*, we have not yet found any surviving evidence. A comparison of a variety of scribal reactions to the text, as recorded in the layout, will shed some light on what the exemplars contained and what scribes took pains to provide of their own accord, deliberately or accidentally. I have based my analysis here on the layout of a range of texts in a variety of verse-forms: *GP* and *FranT* in couplets, *TC* and *MkT* in stanzas, *Mel* in prose, and a tale like no other, *Thop*. This chapter examines the numerous organisational principles at work in the production of these manuscripts which may explain the irregularity of *CT* and the regularity of *TC* (in the first and second half of this chapter respectively) and the responses of scribes to the texts in the creation of the literary page.

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different stages in Chaucer's composition of the work, and that some textual variations are a result of scribal interpretation. See R. K. Root, *The Manuscripts of Chaucer's Troilus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914) and B. A. Windeatt, *Troilus and Criseyde* (London: Longman, 1984), p.51. See also Ralph Hanna III, 'The Manuscripts and Transmission of Chaucer's Troilus' in *The Idea of Medieval Literature: New Essays on Chaucer and Medieval Culture in Honor of Donald R. Howard*, ed. James M. Dean and Christian Zacher (Newark: University of Delaware, 1992) pp.173-88; Ralph Hanna III, 'Robert K. Root (1877-1950)' in *Editing Chaucer: The Great Tradition*, ed. Paul G. Ruggiers (Norman, OK: Pilgrim, 1984), pp.191-205 where he disagrees with Root's analysis.

The manuscripts of *TC* examined here are: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 61 (Cp1), Cambridge, Cambridge University Library MS Gg.4.27 (Gg), New York, Pierpont Morgan MS 817 (Cl), London, British Library, MS Harley 2280 (H1), London, British Library, MS Harley 3943 (H2), and San Marino, Huntington Library MS HM114 (Ph), and the slightly later Rawlinson Poet MS 163 (R). All further references to these manuscripts will be by their sigla.

## ***The Canterbury Tales***

### **Borders and Large Initials, Rubrics and Running Titles**

Immediately noticeable and the largest of all the features of the manuscript page are the borders that are placed throughout each of the manuscripts. These occur regularly throughout the text: unless a particular section of the text is missing, no tale begins without a large border. El, the most *de-luxe* of the seven *CT* manuscripts examined here, has extensive three-quarter borders throughout. These are placed at the opening of each prologue and each tale where they indicate the change from one tale to the next. Gg, Cp, La, Ha4 and Pw, despite being less expensively produced than El, also have three-quarter borders to signal a change in tale. This is especially important in Gg where *CT* does not start the manuscript but leads on from other texts.<sup>8</sup> Here the borders indicate both a change in tales and a change in text. Having observed the structure of text, segmented into tales, the scribes of each of these manuscripts add borders which represent this segmentation.

This is partly a response to the text, partly a practical solution, and partly a practice inherited from more established traditions of book production. The use of elaborate borders to divide a text is certainly not new and was a standard way of dividing the Bibles, Psalters, and books of hours into sections.<sup>9</sup> Though Parkes describes a thirteenth-century change in book production that took place in order to present segmented and structured philosophical or theological argumentation more clearly, and though there is no clear connection between these texts and the layout of the vernacular literary manuscripts, the concept of division and compilation demonstrates a similar response to Chaucer's fractured and fragmented *CT*.<sup>10</sup> The division of the text into tales using borders is largely practical. In response to the long and fragmented text, the scribes have provided finding devices – tools to render the segments more clearly. These enable navigation through the work as a whole: the borders are, of course, immediately eye-catching – a

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<sup>8</sup> The opening of *CT* in Gg is missing, though borders are present elsewhere so we can posit that they were part of the plan of the manuscript at the opening of *CT*.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, London, British Library, Arundel 83, ff.33v, 40v.

<sup>10</sup> Parkes (1976), pp.127-128.

visual rendition of the structure of the text which is noticeable outside the text. Equally, by exaggerating these fractures, the scribes indicate that the text is a series of tales. The Host in *GP* announces that each pilgrim will tell four tales: these tales then become the compilation that makes up the text as a whole (*GP*, ll.792-794). In advance of Chaucer's description of the pilgrimage and the Host's wager, the manuscript layout itself explains that the text is a composite of tales. In doing so, the layout exaggerates those textual divisions within the text to the margins of the page, turning the textual indications of change which are imbedded in the main text into graphic external markers of textual division.<sup>11</sup>

This may be a practical solution to readers' needs. The division of the text into its composite parts suggests that the scribes felt it was too large for linear reading and so needed to be broken down. The tales are essentially separable, and the layout interprets the text as one which may have been read selectively and piecemeal.<sup>12</sup> The borders offer numerous points of entry into the text. Such a reading process is most clearly demonstrated a later addition to *EI*: on one of the last folios of *EI*, f.vii v, a late-fifteenth-century reader has added an index. This is based largely on the rubrics and running titles in the manuscript as a whole<sup>13</sup>: each pilgrim is given in the order in which their tale appears in the manuscript, along with a brief note of description: 'The Knyght // Of Arcite and Palamon'; 'The Myller // Of Alison [and] Absolon [and] hende Nicholas'; 'The Reue // Of the Myller of Trumpyngton', 'The Person // Of the iii parties of penitence', for example. This demonstrates a (slightly later) scribe's response to the text. In using the rubrics and running titles to make his index, this scribe suggests that the reader required such aids to interpret the text and to comprehend its structure at a glance. As such, he has incorporated all of rubrics and running titles onto one folio so that he can navigate the topography of the work. In adding extra detail to the first column of his index, the scribe demonstrates that even the lavish decorative finding devices in *EI* were not enough: he required further summaries in order to navigate the book.

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<sup>11</sup> The concept of margin versus centre will be examined more fully in the section entitled 'Glosses'.

<sup>12</sup> See Introduction, n.70.

<sup>13</sup> Which will be discussed further below (p.40 ff.).

As well as for readers, the borders were also practical solutions for the scribes to mask the difficulty in accessing exemplars for the text. The fragmentary nature of *CT* lends itself to piecemeal copying.<sup>14</sup> By providing borders, each tale is a separate self-contained unit. This simplifies the process of copying the text whenever a tale or group of tales became available. The manuscripts, of course, have tales in different orders, and some have left gaps for tales if they were to turn up.<sup>15</sup> The scribes therefore freely rearranged the tales to match exemplar availability, moving them into any order depending on circulation. The borders offer a practical solution to a practical problem of scribal craft.

It is possible, of course, that the borders were only added because of client-instruction and expense and so were largely extraneous to the representation of the text's poetic meaning. In *EI* and *Gg* especially, these borders are associated with the pilgrim portraits which accompany each tale. These portraits are only present in two of the eight manuscripts examined here, suggesting they were largely superfluous or unnecessary to the scribe in the production of this text. When considered together with these portraits, the borders also appear to be part of the expense of manuscript production, a symbol of the cost rather than an extension of the text or a response by the scribes to its meaning.

However, though these borders themselves might be a folly of expense, those manuscripts without borders still demonstrate a similar response to the text – to divide it into its composite parts. The scribe of *EI* (Scribe B) demonstrates that he interprets the text as a compilation of tales without using borders in the production of his other copy of the text. In *Hg*, the considerably plainer brother of *EI*, the scribe represents the textual divisions between each tale graphically on the page using, not borders, but large initials. The scribe of *Dd*, similarly, uses no borders to indicate textual divisions and instead indicates these with large initials. Thus, the end of *KnT* and the opening of the prologue to *MilT* is depicted in these manuscripts with the large initial 'W', emphasising the first line: 'Whan that the knyght hadde thus his tale ytoold' (*Hg* f.41r

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<sup>14</sup> Doyle and Parkes (1978), pp.163-210; Hanna (1996) especially pp.8, 34, 43, 148.

<sup>15</sup> E. T. Donaldson, 'The Ordering of the Canterbury Tales', in *Medieval Literature and Folklore Studies: Essays in Honor of Francis Lee Utley*, ed. Jerome Mandel and Bruce A. Rosenberg (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1970), pp.193-204; Manly and Rickert (1940), I, p.15.

f.41r, Dd f.39r). Both these manuscripts, despite their lack of borders, equally offer graphic representations of the internal textual divisions. These act in place of the expendable and expensive decorative borders.

Furthermore, if we look back at those manuscripts that do have decorative borders – El, Gg, Cp, La, Ha4, and Pw – we see that these are always accompanied by large initials: no border appears in any of these manuscripts without a large initial alongside. El has flourished initials which alternate in colour, blue and purple lettering on a gold leaf background or vice versa, which are placed alongside each of the borders throughout the length of the manuscript. Other manuscripts are more modest: Gg, Cp, Ha4, and Dd have flourished initials which alternate blue with red penwork and gold with purple penwork; Hg, La, and Pw have large initials which alternate in colour but have no penwork flourishes. These, however modest, also appear alongside every single border.<sup>16</sup> Like borders, the insertion of large initials is also established practice in religious, scholastic works, and poetic works which predate the use here.<sup>17</sup> Both these features of layout together indicate the structure of the text as a whole, and so represent graphically the text as a compilation of individual tales.

However, though practical or inherited practice, the addition of borders and initials, no matter how little money was put into their production, also suggests an interpretative response to Chaucer's text. They demonstrate the desire to emphasise *compilatio* as central to the text's meaning. Three manuscripts label the text a compilation in the final rubric: 'Heere is ended the book of the tales of Caunterbury | compiled by Geffrey Chaucer' (El, f.232v); 'Here endeþ þe boke of þe talys of Can[ter]bury compiled by Geffray Chawcer' (Pw, f.307v); and 'Composito huius libri hic capit licenciam suam' (La, f.255r). Combining inherited practices with individual interpretation, the scribes here offer a response to the author. Despite the modest label of compiler, the use of either extravagant borders or large initials or both suggests that Chaucer is

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<sup>16</sup> A large initial 'W' is placed at the opening of *KnT* on f.10r of El, f.12r of Cp, f.12v of Ha4, f.12r of La, and f.12r of Pw, each time on a page which is decorated with a demivinet.

<sup>17</sup> See the Vernon and Auchinleck manuscripts, for example: A. I. Doyle ed., *The Vernon manuscript: a facsimile of Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Eng. poet. a.1* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer 1987); Derek Pearsall and I. C. Cunningham, *The Auchinleck Manuscript: National Library of Scotland Advocates' MS 19.2.1* (London: Scholar Press, 1977).

more than this. Typically, these features were employed by clerks in the thirteenth century, building on twelfth-century techniques, to organise the writings of a religious or scholastic *auctor*.<sup>18</sup> In using these features in Chaucer's text, scribes place upon it an inherited *auctoritas*. Later readers certainly responded to Chaucer in this way, and Hoccleve's imitation of Chaucer is an example.<sup>19</sup> This layout attempts to appropriate academic and religious traditions (often Latin, but also sometimes French or Anglo-Norman literary) onto the vernacular literary manuscript page.<sup>20</sup> The difficulty faced by the scribes of *CT*, however, is in creating a manuscript that represents the single *auctor* whilst simultaneously creating a multi-authored text. *CT* is a text in the many voices of the pilgrims. The text itself is divided by these voices: the tale teller ending his tale, the 'Amen' that ends *KnT* on El, f.33v, for example indicates the end of one section, and the words of the narrator that follow, 'Whan that the knyght hath thus his tale ytold' (El f.33v) indicates the start of the next. At the same time, the text as a whole is in the voice of Chaucer-the-pilgrim. The label of 'compiler' for Chaucer at the end of three manuscripts (El, Pw, La, as described above) negotiates this problem somewhat in suggesting a multi-authored text offered in a single vision. The layout attempts to further resolve this issue. Though borders and initials do represent the graphic indications of internal textual divisions between tales, they are also used for another purpose. Four tales, *KnT* (in El and Hg), *MLT* (El, Hg, and Dd), *CIT* and *ParsT* (in all eight manuscripts), are divided into books within their division into tales. *KnT*, *MLT*, and *CIT* are each divided into five books and *ParsT* into thematic parts. In the manuscripts, these are represented in the same way as larger divisions into tales: no border or initial which indicates divisions into its constituent parts is smaller than those that indicate divisions into tales. In El, the borders that represent the larger divisions between one tale and the next are represented using demivinetts; the internal divisions within each tale are represented in the same way, also using demivinetts. We would expect the divisions internal to

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<sup>18</sup> See Minnis (1988), p.118; Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Traditions and Vernacular Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp.207-221.

<sup>19</sup> For a fuller discussion of this, see Lerer (1993), p.4 ff. and my discussion in Chapter 3 (especially p.227 ff.).

<sup>20</sup> Numerous manuscripts of the *Roman de la Rose* offer similar features that predate Chaucer's. See Introduction, and *Roman de la Rose: Digital Library*. Web. <http://romandelarose.org>.

each of these tales to be subordinate to the main divisions that separate tale from tale: that the borders and initials that indicate the beginning of the second part of *KnT*, for example, are inferior in grandeur to those which indicate the beginning of the tale as a whole. However, the divisions are not hierarchical. This suggests that scribes found difficulty in interpreting and presenting this multi-authored text.

The addition of running titles and rubrics to the manuscript page attempts to clarify this confusion whilst representing the text as simultaneously multi-authored and single-authored. Though some running titles are severely cropped, these support the borders and initials in envisaging the text as *compilatio*. In *El*, *Hg*, and *La*, running titles typically consist of the name of the pilgrim who tells the tale such as the word ‘knyght’ or ‘þe knyght’ in the top margin of the page.<sup>21</sup> In order that these stand separate from the main text, they are decorated with paraphs or are written in red ink: *El* has flourished running titles each with a paraph on each folio; *Cp*’s running titles are severely cropped, but where they are present, they are in red ink; those in *Ha4* do not distinguish between the prologue and the tale, but state the name of the pilgrim speaking on the verso and the word ‘tale’ on the recto folio. Equally inherited as part of more established traditions of *mise-en-page*, alongside borders and large initials, the running titles offer the next level of detail: where the borders and initials indicate the *divisio* of the text as a whole, the running titles explain what each section of text contains. Unlike borders, these descriptions are on every folio of the text, outlining in more detail its contents by explaining clearly the text on each folio in turn.

Rubrics offer similar support to, and greater explanation than, the borders. Written most often in red ink the words ‘explicit’ or ‘incipit’ indicate not just graphically but also textually the move from one tale to the next. These also clarify the difference between tale divisions and divisions internal to the tale – those which the borders do not distinguish. In *El*, red rubrics in *KnT* indicate the end of one part and the beginning of the next, ‘Explicit prima pars | Sequitur pars secunda’ (f.15r). *Hg* and *La* have incipits to mark the beginning of *CT* as a whole: *Hg* has

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<sup>21</sup> Those in other manuscripts may have been cropped during rebinding.

written above the full page border, 'Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Caunt[er]bury' (Hg, f.2r); La in red ink outside the border in the top margin has 'Incipit prologus fabular[um] Cantuar[iensium]' (La, f.2r). Throughout each of the manuscripts, rubrics signal the start of each tale or book: after *GP*, a rubric in all *CT* manuscripts announces 'Heere bigynneth the knyghtes tale ~' (quoted from El f.10r), or 'Incipit fabula Milit[is]' (La f.12r). In the manuscripts of *TC*, rubrics mark the end of each book – 'explicit liber primus' (e.g. Cp1 f.26v) – and the start of the next – 'incipit liber secundus' (e.g. Cp1 f.27v).

In terms of the confusion between single and multi-authored texts, the rubrics and running titles may explain why the scribes treat borders as equal in size throughout the manuscripts where they ought to (more logically) be hierarchical. As Aristotle argued, the ordered parts of a text may be subordinate to each other, but are ultimately part of the same whole, as intended by the *auctor*.<sup>22</sup> Whilst rubrics and running titles explain that each tale is the work of the teller, simultaneously the layout as a whole – with borders and/or large initials, and rubrics and running titles working together on the page – suggests that the text in its entirety is a tale told by Chaucer: the rubrics and running titles suggest the many voices of the pilgrims, the unsubordinated borders and large initials suggest that ultimately the text is only in one voice, that of the author.

This can most clearly be seen in the rubrics and running titles of Chaucer's own tales, *Thop* and *Mel*. The rubrics state 'Heere bigynneth Chaucers tale of Melibee' (El f.153v; Hg f.216r; Cp f.217r; La f.192), emphasising that this is Chaucer's own tale. The running titles in El, Hg, and Ha4 similarly state that Chaucer is the teller of this tale: El has 'Chaucer ~' on each verso and 'Melibee ~' on each recto side of the folios; Hg has 'Chaucer of Melibeus'; and Ha4 has 'Chauceres' on the verso and 'Tale' on the recto. The rubrics and running titles in this way play into the illusion that Chaucer is one of the band of pilgrims on his way to Canterbury. As described above, the rubrics in Ha4 do not distinguish between the prologue and the tale of each pilgrim, suggesting that each tale is told entirely by each speaker, without an introductory

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<sup>22</sup> See Minnis (1988), pp.147-148.

section which is often given a 'literary' title that implies an author. The rubrics in Dd and Pw, rather differently, state 'And heere bigynneth the Tale of Melibeus' (Dd f.160v) and 'And here bygnneþ þe tale of Melebius [and] p[r]udence' (Pw f.227v): they do not announce at the start of the tale that Chaucer is the author. Instead, at the end of the text, both manuscripts state: 'Here endeþ chaucers tale of melebye' (quotation from Pw f.246v; Dd f.177r). Both manuscripts, therefore, return the reader to the hands of the narrator once the tale is told: we are removed from the illusion created by the tale, that Melibee and Prudence are the voices of the text, and are returned back to the illusion that the voice of the pilgrim Chaucer speaks the tale as a whole. E1, furthermore, has a portrait of Chaucer at the opening of *Mel*. Seated on a horse, as are most other illustrations of pilgrims in the manuscript, the portrait reaffirms the fiction of the pilgrimage. He points to his text, as if he is participating in the wager set by the Host. The layout thus indicates that there are two layers of fiction: that of Prudence and Melibee, and that of Chaucer the pilgrim.

The related manuscripts, Cp and La, add another layer. The running titles of these two manuscripts do not state that this is Chaucer's tale; instead, these two manuscripts only state 'Melibe' (Cp ff.128r-233v; La ff.192r-206r). The other running titles in these two manuscripts always name the teller of the tale – 'þe monke', for example (La f.206v). Here, however, the scribes have chosen to write only the name of the tale, not the teller. This indicates that the tales told by Chaucer are distinct from the tales told by the other pilgrims: Chaucer is here not only a pilgrim playing his part in the storytelling game, he is also the author of the work as a whole. As such, he needs no separate running title – he does not take up the voice of another pilgrim but speaks in his own. In this way, these manuscripts do not distinguish between the two voices of Chaucer, the one that tells *Mel* and the one that tells *Thop*. The different voices are seen as a singular voice compatible with the notion of Chaucer as the author of the text as a whole.

The running titles in *ParsT* also demonstrate this. In E1, the tale is labelled not simply as being that of the Parson but is divided into its components: ff.207v-212r are labelled 'prima pars' on the verso and 'penitencie' on the recto; ff.214v-216r 'Sup[er]bia~'; f.217r, 'Inuidia';

ff.218r-221r, 'Ira'; ff.222r-222v, 'Accidia~'; ff.223v-225r, 'Auaricia~'; ff.226v-228r, 'Luxuria~'; f.228v, 'Remedium~'; f.229r, 'Cont[ra] Luxuriam~'; ff.229v-231r, 'Secunda pars~' on the verso and 'Penitencie~' on the recto; and ff.231v-232r, 'Tercia pars~' on the verso and 'Penitencie' on the recto. Hg, Gg, Ha4, La, and Pw do the same using rubrics instead of running titles and so equally indicate the subsections of the tale. Likewise, *MkT* is subdivided into its constituent tragedies (into the 'Casibus virorum illustrium' that the rubrics of El, Cp, La and Dd suggest). The scribes of each of the eight manuscripts mark the beginnings of the separate narratives with a rubric: 'lucifer' (El, Gg, Ha4, Dd, and possibly Gg though the folio is torn at this point, quotation from El f.169r) and 'Primo de Lucifero' (Cp, La, Pw, quotation from Pw f.247v), or 'Adam' and 'De Adam', and so on. This is either placed in the margins of the folio, as in El, Hg, Gg, Cp, Ha4, Dd, and Pw, or in the central text column itself, as in La. La has the added rubrics 'de eodem' ('of the same') ahead of each stanza in half the tale (ff.207v-211r) to mark the continuation of each narrative.<sup>23</sup> The rubrics here emphasise the tale as a series of tragedies. The manuscripts each present the tale as a collection of short narratives, and indicate this using the page layout: just as each manuscript is careful to demonstrate that *CT* as a whole is broken down into its constituent tales labelled by their tellers (as shown by the placement of rubrics and running titles) so *MkT* is broken down into its constituent parts, labelled by their protagonists. In this way, the tale becomes a compilation, and this is reinforced by the use of initials: Hg further marks the beginning of each tragedy with both a rubric and an initial: at f.90v an initial marks the beginning of the description of Hercules, at f.91r the description of Nebuchadnezzar, at f.91v Balthazar, and so on for each new tragedy. These tales are divided into topics rather than by speaker, suggesting that the author of the work overall is not the Parson or the Monk: the Parson's voice is silenced by the lack of running title in his name; the Monk's voice by the subdivision of his texts into constituent parts. Rather than the pilgrims, Chaucer himself is the author. This notion is reinforced by the particular running titles used here. In naming the topics,

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<sup>23</sup> The scribe seems to have tired of this after f.211r, where he switches to marking only the head of each narrative with a rubric and the following stanzas with a paraph (as he does in Cp).

they are related to those running titles used in the scholastic texts that Parkes describes, and their careful treatment here is akin to the division of the prose tractae he discusses.<sup>24</sup>

Cp and Pw demonstrate a similar response executed in a different way. Rather than just rubrics which announce the start of each tale, these two manuscripts also have chapter numbers. In the margins of Cp at the beginning of *Mel* is written 'C[apitulum].xx.' (f.217v). In Pw, the chapter number is placed at the beginning of *Thop*: on f.224v is the note 'Cap[itulum] .xix.'. Unlike the scribe of Cp, who interpreted *Thop* and *Mel* as two separate chapters, the scribe of Pw sees the two tales as a single section – that written by Chaucer-the-author. By dividing *CT* into chapters rather than into tales, the scribes present the text as a work as a whole with a single author: not as a compilation of texts in various voices, but as a series of parts in Chaucer's voice. The placement of the pilgrim portrait in El supports this – not placed at the start of *Thop* but at *Mel*, whilst the portrait itself shows Chaucer as a pilgrim, its position reaffirms Chaucer as a serious author.

Along with the borders and initials which are not subordinate to one another despite indicating hierarchical divisions, this *mise-en-page* suggests that scribes planned to produce the manuscripts of Chaucer in such a way as to represent the text of an *auctor*. Some scribes attempt to further create specifically a vernacular manuscript. In only two of the eight manuscripts do the scribes employ Latin for the rubrics and running titles. The choice of Latin in La and in Pw (and for those mid-tale divisions in El) is useful to separate the main text from the written feature of layout: the Latin stands out as separate from the main verse and is part of the decoration of the text. The majority of the manuscripts, however, have rubrics in English. *KnT* is labelled throughout as 'Knyght' rather than 'miles'. When in English, as they are in El, these are separated from the main text by colour: they are written in red ink rather than text ink to ensure that they are not read as part of the main text. Scribe B in El clearly planned for the rubrics in *GP* in a way that he did not in Hg: as a result, the margins of Hg are cramped and untidy. Nonetheless the presence of these running titles suggest that the manuscript is specifically one

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<sup>24</sup> See Parkes (1976), pp.118-119, 122-124.

of vernacular text. The rubrics and running titles here respond to the contents of the English text and created a layout which follows suit. The Auchinleck manuscript (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland Advocates' MS 19.2.1), a similar *compilatio* of numerous vernacular literary texts, demonstrates similar use of vernacular rubrics: the rubrics here, as well as being in red ink, are in English, matching the almost entirely English contents of the manuscript as a whole. However, the manuscripts of Chaucer's text differ in that the scribes here produce a manuscript of a single author, not texts of multiple, mostly anonymous authors. Using the vernacular here has another meaning – that the manuscripts establish Chaucer as not just an *auctor*, but a Middle English *auctor*. The scribes of Chaucer's Middle English text do not necessarily find influence and established practice only in Latin texts which they seem to imitate or from which they attempt to differentiate Chaucer as *auctor*; the continental tradition provides another source of influence.<sup>25</sup> Continental manuscripts also have red ink rubrics, sometimes in the text-language as well as in Latin, such as the *Romance of the Rose* manuscripts, many of which begin with the rubric 'i[ci] commence le roman de la rose'.<sup>26</sup>

In providing such features, scribes impose a meaning via a structure on a disparate array of fragmented exemplars. The *compilatio* of the text, displayed through the manuscript layout, indicates that scribes provide in their planning and production those finding devices key to navigating a complex text. In doing so, they inherit features from more established traditions of textual layout – those which imply *auctoritas* – and place them upon the vernacular manuscript page. The vernacular poetic narrative is handled in a way which emphasises both its inheritance (in using each of these features) and separation (using Middle English rubrics and running titles) from more established Latin and continental traditions.

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<sup>25</sup> For discussions of continental influence, see e.g. Ardis Butterfield, "Mise-en-page" in the "Troilus" Manuscripts: Chaucer and French Manuscript Culture', *HLQ* lviii (1995), 49-80, especially pp.61 ff.; Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), p.91 n.18, and appendix A; Lawrence Earp, 'Machaut's Role in the Production of Manuscripts of His Works', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* lxii (1989), 461-503; James J. Wimsatt and William W. Kibler, *Guillaume de Machaut: Le Jugement du Roy de Behaigne and Remede de Fortune* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988), especially p.53; David F. Hult, *Self-Fulfilling Prophecies: Readership and Authority in the First Roman de la Rose* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp.74-93.

<sup>26</sup> See *Roman de la Rose: Digital Library*. Web. 9 April 2012. <http://romandelarose.org>.

## Paraphs and Smaller Initials

In addition to borders, running titles, rubrics, and large initials, the manuscripts of *CT* also have smaller initials and paraphs, both decorated and plain. Where borders and rubrics indicate graphically those divisions internal to the text as a whole, and sometimes within a tale, paraphs and smaller initials serve a more focused, and at the same time, a less restricted function. Though patrons may have instructed or directed the inclusion of borders and incipits, it is unlikely that they stipulated the exact placement of paraphs and smaller initials. Yet these are placed throughout all of the manuscripts examined here. This invites us to ask what purpose producers thought these features served in the literary manuscript.

Joel Fredell has most recently taken up the topic: he discusses the use of paraphs and initials in manuscripts of *CT* in general, and more specifically in *KnT*, *MiT*, *WBT*, and *SqT*.<sup>27</sup> Fredell suggests that some manuscripts decorate the text more than others: El, Hg, and Gg have more paraphs than Cp, which demonstrates a difference in attitude towards the texts. El, Hg, and Gg, the ‘dense’ manuscripts, mark the text as if it were an encyclopaedia of sources; Cp, a ‘sparse’ manuscript, marks the text as if in the tradition of a romance, prioritising the tale over the sources quoted. This is a development of Doyle and Parkes’s distinction between the text as either a repository of *auctoritas* or as a compilation of stories.<sup>28</sup> However, from a brief glance at the layout of *Mel*, the use of marking does not seem to support Fredell’s theory: Cp has as many paraphs and initials in this tale as do El, Hg, and Gg, if not more, especially when taking into consideration that the manuscript is thought to be incomplete, with several guide marks (‘//’) left by the scribe for the decorator to fill in at a later stage.

Often, paraphs and initials are used in place of each other: one scribe might choose to place a paraph where another places an initial; likewise, some scribes use both paraphs and initials interchangeably. After the large initial ‘W’ that indicates the opening line of the text, ‘Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote’, the scribes of El, Cp, La and Ha4 use small initials throughout the text; the scribes of Hg, Gg, and Dd, use paraphs at these same points. Scribe B indicates these

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<sup>27</sup> Fredell (2000), pp.213-280.

<sup>28</sup> Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.190.

descriptions in both ways: in El he uses initials; in Hg paraphs. This is, again, a practical constraint on the scribe. It is likely that this is largely due to the patron-specified cost rather than any inherent meaning in the use of a paraph rather than an initial or vice versa. The choice seems to be based on the funds available for the production of the manuscript. However, while the patron specified the cost which affects the choice of paraph or initial, the scribe decided on the positioning of these in the manuscript. Placing these markers shows a particular response to the poetic meaning of the text within a scribe's professional capacity, possibly influenced by the exemplars he uses, and the overall concept of page design. Here, taking the positioning of each paraph and small initial in *GP* as a case study, I will examine the multitude of purposes to which these features of *mise-en-page* seem to be employed.

*GP* opens and closes by establishing the framework of the tales that follow. It outlines in miniature the work of the borders and large initials: that each pilgrim will tell a set of tales to a group of listeners. The paraphs and initials here work with the borders and larger initials in creating this framework on the page. El and Hg indicate with a paraph Chaucer's decision to describe each pilgrim in turn: 'But nathelees whil I haue tyme [and] space...To telle yow al the condicioun/Of ech of hem' (El f.1r, Hg f.2v). This highlights a shift in the rhetoric from the lofty tone of the opening to the explanatory (often ironic) tone of the descriptions.

In a similar manner, five of the manuscripts also mark the end of the individual descriptions and the recommencement of the framework with either an initial or a paraph: 'Now haue I toold yow soothly in a clause' (initial f.8r, Hg paraph f.11r, Cp initial f.10v, Ha4 initial f.10r, La flourished paraph f.10v).<sup>29</sup> Further paraphs and initials are placed to mark the development of the wager: paraphs and initials indicate 'Greet chiere made oure hoost us euerichon', the beginning of the Host's description (El flourished paraph f.8v, Hg paraph f.11r, Cp initial f.11r, Ha4 initial f.10v); all except Ha4 mark 'Ye goon to Caunterbury god yow speede' (El flourished paraph f.9r, Hg paraph f.11v, Cp guidemark for paraph '/' f.11v, La flourished paraph f.11r); El and Cp in addition mark 'hoold up youre hond w[i]t[h]outen moore speche', the last line of the

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<sup>29</sup> El initial f.8r, Hg paraph f.11r, Cp initial f.10v, Ha4 initial f.10r, La flourished paraph f.10v.

Host's speech (El flourished paraph f.9r, Cp faint guidemark f.11v), whereas Hg and La mark the first line following on from his speech: 'Oure conseil was nat longe for to seche' (Hg paraph f.11v, La flourished paraph f.11r); all manuscripts mark the beginning of the Host's outlining of the wager, 'Lordynges quod he now herkneth for the beste' (El flourished paraph f.9r, Hg paraph f.11r, Cp initial f.11v, Ha4 initial f.11r, La large initial f.11r). In addition to these, three manuscripts mark further lines: El, Hg and La highlight the acceptance of the wager, 'This thyng was graunted and oure othes swore' (El flourished paraph f.9r, Hg paraph f.12r, La flourished paraph f.11v); and Hg marks the beginning of the first day of pilgrimage 'A morwe whan þ[a]t day bigan to sprynge' (f.12r). Whereas the borders and large initials indicate those major opening sections, the paraphs and smaller initials offer detail as to the makeup of the text. By indicating the framework that Chaucer establishes in *GP* for the remainder of the text, scribes demonstrate the evidence for their particular division of the text as a whole: the division into tales by tellers is here justified.

*GP* is most clearly divided into the descriptions of each of the pilgrims. This separates the prologue textually into fragmented parts. The paraphs and initials represent these fragmented parts on the manuscript page. Each description of each pilgrim begins with a paraph or initial: adjacent to the description of the Merchant, for example, El has a three-line initial at 'A marchant was ther w[i]t[h] a forked berd' (f.3v); Hg a paraph (f.5r); Cp and Ha4 a flourished one-line initial (f.4v); La a flourished paraph (f.5v); Dd an initial (f.6r); and Pw a two-line initial (f.4v).<sup>30</sup> Similarly, the opening line of the Clerk's description, 'A clerk ther was of Oxenford also', is indicated in each manuscript with either a paraph or an initial. This graphic indication of textual divisions is akin to the use of borders and large initials. Large divisions were followed by subdivisions so as to create for the text a detailed system of order and organisation. Chaucer provides these textually in *GP* as a means of *forma tractandi*, textual organisation.<sup>31</sup> Using paraphs and initials, scribes respond to this by creating the *forma tractatus* or *divisio textus*,

<sup>30</sup> I take this as an example because Gg, Cp, and Dd have missing beginnings so the placement of paraphs and initials cannot be compared until the description of the Merchant.

<sup>31</sup> See Minnis (1988), p.118, and Parkes (1976), p.120.

representing the *forma tractandi* on the manuscript page. Appropriately, these paraps and initials which indicate secondary, smaller divisions than the main division of the text into tales, are visually smaller than those larger divisions. Where borders and large initials, usually three to five lines high, indicate those larger, primary divisions, paraps and smaller initials, usually one to two lines high, indicate those smaller, secondary divisions or subdivisions. This physical sizing of features of layout indicates the subordination of one division to another: where the borders, large initials, rubrics, and running titles indicate major, separable sections in the text, paraps and smaller initials indicate internal and more nuanced textual divisions. The paraps and initials offer additional division and organisation to those suggested by the author.

In responding to more nuanced divisions, the scribes use paraps and initials to indicate their own responses to the text and its poetic meanings. In addition to indicating the opening lines of each description, the scribes also indicate key features in the descriptions of each of the pilgrims in *GP*. The scribes of El, Hg, Gg and Dd, for example, place a paraph or initial adjacent to 'At alisaundre he was when it was wonne' (El f.1v, the description of the Knight). These scribes interpret the knight as a figure defined by his victory in historically significant battles. Hg goes on to mark with a paraph 'At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene' and 'This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also/Somtyme with the lord of Palatye' (f.2v). El marks with a flourished paraph the start of his physical description, 'But for to tellen yow of his array' (f.1v). Each of these scribes marks the text at a slightly different point but there appears to be an overall scheme of interpretation and the same reaction to the text: to present, emphasise, and exaggerate on the page those qualities in the knight that make him a noble figure who tells a noble tale. The description of him in worthy battle here, of course, reflects the worthy battle which is to come in his tale. The paraps and initials point to these responses on the page: the *mise-en-page* emphasises particular lines above others so that these become the defining features of the knight.

Akin to the addition of pilgrim portraits to the margins of El, the paraps and initials here link the description of the knight to the tale that is to follow. Where the portraits do so by using the

physical descriptions offered in *GP* to represent them adjacent to the start of the tale, the paraphs and initials do so more subtly. By exaggerating those particular lines of description in the portraits that relate directly to the tale that is to be told, the scribes build up the character of the pilgrim, offering a particular voice for the tale that is tuned by the description. This is, of course, exactly what Chaucer attempts in *GP*. Likewise, Cp indicates the Monk's characteristics by accentuating with a guide mark ('cc') not only the start of his description, but also that he was 'a lord ful fatt and in good poynt' and his idle attitude in suggesting that we 'lat austyn haue his swynk to him reserued' (f.3v), emphasising his concern with hunting leisure activities and with 'casibus virorum illustrium' rather than the humble work of a monk. Hg, Gg, and Dd emphasise with a paraph the Prioress's dainty manners: 'At mete wel ytaught was she with alle' (Gg f.133r, Dd f.133r, Hg f.3v, though this has a '/' in the margins suggesting a paraph should be placed there). Gg and Dd go further and place a paraph 'ful semely here wi[m]pel py[n]ched was' (Gg f.133v, Dd f.133v), emphasising additionally her refined and fashionable nature. Again this relates her directly to the tale: of the Miracles of the Virgin genre, the tale is one suited to this interpretation of the delicate prioress. This definition also exaggerates the extent of her contrast with the unrefined, buxom, and loud Wife of Bath. As such, the paraphs and initials here indicate an overall cohesion within *CT*: they aim to integrate *GP* with the tales that follow, suggesting a single vision for a complete work. In indicating such poetic nuances that tie together the work as a whole, the scribes establish further the idea of the single author.

At the same time, the interpretation suggested by the layout of each manuscript is slightly differently inflected. The placement of paraphs and initials in Cp suggests that the scribe was focused on indicating nouns. On f.10v, at the description of the inn at which the pilgrimage starts, 'That highte þe Tabbard faste by þe belle', the scribe places an initial; in addition, the 'T' of 'Tabbard' is highlighted in gold. There is also such gold highlighting on the initial letters of the pilgrims' names: the 'N' of 'Nonne' (f.2v), the initial letters of 'Carpenter', 'A webbe', 'Dyer' and 'Tapecer' (f.6r), and the 'I' in the line 'Now haue I told ʒow soþly in a clause' (f.10v). Furthermore, the initial which signals the beginning of the Pardoner's description is placed in a

different location than in the other manuscripts: rather than at the line ‘With him þer rood a gentill pardonor’ (though there is a faint paraph guide mark in the margin at this line, f.10r), the initial is placed six lines below, at ‘This p[ar]doner hadde her as yelow as wax’ (f.10r), with pen flourishes extending five lines above and four lines below the initial. The decorator here has slipped up. Having not noticed the guide mark at the usual line, his eye has picked up the word ‘p[ar]doner’ in another line, where the noun is closer to the beginning of the line and so closer to the margin. This seems a more prominent place for an initial. As a result, the initial is placed at the beginning of the physical description of the Pardoner, rather than at the beginning of the description as a whole. Though perhaps an accidental blunder, the placement of the initial here adds to the overall effect of the layout in this section of the text. The *mise-en-page* suggests that the *CT* is a collection of people and places – that is, the notion of the pilgrimage underlies the meaning of the text. Akin to those features analysed in the previous section, this too interprets the text as a *compilatio*, a collection of tales by a variety of tellers. The exaggeration of nouns adds to the hubbub of the opening, with the many voices that appear later in the text simultaneously present.

Scribe B in Hg indicates personal pronouns rather than all nouns: paraps are often placed next to lines containing personal pronouns, especially ‘you’ and ‘I’, such as ‘But natheles while I haue tyme and space’ (f.2v) and ‘Ye woot youre forward and it yow recorde’ (f.12r). Of the eight manuscripts, these lines are only indicated with a paraph in Hg and El by their shared scribe. However, Hg has more lines indicated with a paraph than El, especially those which contain such personal pronouns: ‘But wel I woot he lyed right in dede’ (f.10r); ‘But first I pray yow of youre curteisye’ (f.11r); ‘Also I pray yow to foryeue it me’ (f.11r); and ‘Oure conseil was nat longe for to seche’ (f.11v). Scribe B has placed more paraps in his first copy, Hg, than in his second more de-luxe version, El. The marking of pronouns is usually reserved for indicating speech in a dialogue (see the section on *Mel* later), and may be a knee-jerk reaction on the part of the scribe to noticing so many pronouns in this section. Here the pronouns imply speech – the direct address of the reader by the narrator. That El cuts these down, however, suggests that the

scribe felt this was a mistake in his first version. Despite the greater cost of El, where presumably a large number of paraps and initials would have been paid for, it seems to be more cautiously copied, with the meaning of the text in mind.

This *divisio* is tied to that which the author himself provides in ordering *GP* into a series of descriptions. However, the paraps and initials here go beyond a graphic representation of authorial, textual divisions in indicating those lines which are not textual divisions. In doing so, the placement of these paraps and initials suggests a different response to the text. The paraps and initials function as extensions of punctuation marks, not in the sense that they mark sentence or clause boundaries, but that they mark a larger group of sentences that belong together in terms of their meaning. By creating such groupings, the paraps and initials offer a representation of the poetic meaning of the text that the scribe understood, highlighting the text's structure and its composition.

From another case study, *FranT*, we see that the graphic *divisio* is not only a representation of the *forma tractandi* that makes up *GP*, but rather the scribes' own *divisio* added to the manuscript page. In El, there are one hundred and seven initials and paraps placed throughout the tale. While some of these mark the openings of sentences, others mark more subtle shifts in meaning. Paraps indicate, for example, the rhetorical shift from Dorigen's speech to the narrator's general observations on marriage, 'For o thyng sires sauflly dar I seye' (f.124r), followed by Dorigen's example: 'Heere may men seen an humble wys accord' (f.124r). The paraps in El correspond to developments in the tale: a new movement is indicated using this mark at, for example f.124v: 'Now wol I stynten of this Arueragus' where the narrator turns to speak of Dorigen. These correspond to developments rather than divisions in the text.

Paraps are also used to separate cohesive thoughts from one another. Aurelius's complaint, for example, is marked by a paraph at each new point: a formal address to start his plea, 'he seyde Appollo god and gou[er]nour'; flattery for his sister, 'Youre blisful suster lucina the sheene'; and a final appeal, 'Lord Phebus dooth this miracle for me' (f.126v-127r). These paraps indicate a change of tack and a more subtle shift within a speech. Gg and Dd mark the

openings of speeches but only those points where there are key moments central to the interpretation of the text, rather than the beginnings of speeches or change in discussion. A paraph in Gg at f.287v for example, indicates the line: 'For in this world serteyn there no wyȝt is'. This line, along with the following, explains the tale as a whole:

For in this world serteyn there no wyȝt is  
That he ne doth or seyth su[m]tyme a mys (ll.779-80, f.287v)

It is Dorigen's hasty speech, her vow to Aurelius, that causes not only her anguish, and results in her long complaint, but also Aurelius's misery and Arveragus's masterful decision. This sentence underlines this key aspect of the text and is exaggerated by the paraph.

In El, though some paraphs do indicate textual divisions, they equally suggest a non-punctuational development in meaning. Paraphs are used to signal changes in speaker: two consecutive paraphs mark the exchange of questions and answers between Dorigen and Aurelius, 'Is ther noon oother g[ra]ce in yow quod he', 'No by that lord quod she that maked me' (f.126v). F.132v similarly has a long series of one line questions and answers that pass between Aurelius and his philosopher, each marked with a paraph: 'Yes certes wel and trewely quod he', 'Hastow nat had thy lady as thee liketh', 'No no quod he and sorwefully he siketh', 'What was the cause tel me if thou kan'. The folio, as a result, is highly decorated indicating the quick exchange of words and the alternation of speakers on the page. Equally, these paraphs signal steps in the argument, each paraph indicating another point and counterpoint that leads to the eventual conclusion (as is the case in *Mel*, see below). By breaking the text into a greater number of sections, the placement of paraphs indicates a series of cohesive parts which outline the development of the disputation.

In *FranT* in El, the scribe assigns the initials a slightly different role. On f.127v of El an initial is not placed at 'and of the sike Aurelius I wol yow telle' (a line which suggests a rhetorical shift and development in the plot) but a large initial is placed at the following line, 'In languor and in torment furyus'. Similarly, the large initial on f.129r is placed not at 'Vpon the morwe whan b[a]t it was day', the opening of the description of the illusion (which is marked by a paraph), but

at ‘Phebus wax old and hewed lyk laton’. In this tale, though similar in function, the large initials serve a slightly separate purpose to the paraphs. They indicate the beginning of poetic descriptions – in the above examples, of the long suffering Aurelius’s misery and of Phoebus’s brass-like hew. The latter is one of the main set passages of this tale, and is poetically important. The lusty May garden in which Aurelius first speaks to Dorigen gives way to the cold plan that Aurelius constructs several months later, and the affair, excusable in hedonistic spring now seems out of place in the sober winter months. The Franklin himself seems very aware of the suitability of particular months to particular behaviours and is careful to feast ‘After the sondry sesons of the yeer’ for his wellbeing (f.4v). This underlines the unhealthy obsession and potentially dangerous outcome of the plan in the tale. The initial here emphasises the tale’s poetic structure: the careful balance and deliberate disruptions of precise and appropriate timing. Likewise, the initial that marks the description of Aurelius’s suffering to balance that which Dorigen is about to experience. On ff.130r-131v, small initials are heaped onto one another throughout Dorigen’s complaint so that the exaggeratedly decorated manuscript page mirrors her hysterical piling of descriptive examples. These initials unite the high emotions that run through the tale, and contrasts the plights of the two. Equally, this distances Arveragus’s presence further so that Dorigen appears all the more alone and Arveragus all the more detached. Having set up these poetic balances, the final initials in El build up to the final question posed by the Franklin to the pilgrims, ‘Lordynges this question thanne wolde I aske now’ (f.133r). This is also marked by an initial.

The scribe of El separates the function of the paraphs and initials which are usually interchangeable in other manuscripts. In this tale, the two markers indicate a subtle distinction between the types of line that get marked by each. Where paraphs indicate both grammatical openings and more subtle textual developments and rhetorical shifts, initials indicate poetic descriptions or conclusions. The scribe establishes a difference in marking here which he does not in the other version of *CT* that he creates. The one hundred paraph marks in *FranT* in Hg are placed identically to the positioning of both paraphs and initials in El. The larger budget

allocated to El certainly allows a greater variety of decoration. But the way in which this decoration is placed indicates a shift in response to the text. While the paraphs in Hg suggest that each textual development – whether rhetorical shift or poetic description – are equal changes in the text, the combination of paraphs and initials in El suggests that there is a hierarchy in these lines. The decorated initials are used at points of high poetic art.

There are, however, two paraphs in Hg which are not reproduced in El: one at ‘By cause that he was hir neghebour’ (f.157r) and the other at ‘Is ther oght ellis dorigen but this’ (f.163r).<sup>32</sup> The first paraph highlights the excuse that allows Dorigen and Aurelius to speak; the second, the reason that causes Dorigen to submit to Aurelius’s will. Both of these paraphs indicate lines which serve a similar purpose to those lines marked in El: that is, to signal key moments in the plot: had Aurelius not had an excuse to speak to Dorigen, he would not have confessed his love and caught her in her vow; had Arveragus not instructed Dorigen to fulfil her promise, the Franklin could not have posed his final question. Whereas in El, the scribe is concerned with poetic descriptions, in Hg, the paraphs indicate plot development.

Dorigen’s complaint is, of course, central to the tale. It is indicated as central by a series of decorated initials and paraphs in each manuscript that appear as a visual block of decoration on the page. Ha4 and La have fewer paraphs than El, Hg, Gg, and Dd. Ha4 marks the beginning of the complaint, ‘Allas quod sche’ (f.158v) and both Ha4 and La mark the example of Aristoclide, ‘Lo eek the Tyraunt aristoclide’ (Ha4 f.159r, La f.149r). Ha4 also marks Lucrece’s suicide (f.159v), thereby highlighting those examples which the scribe deemed most apt to explain Dorigen’s woe. Hg, Gg, and Dd do the same using paraphs. The passage is most decorated in El: ff.130v to 131r show a lavish display of colour and text in which every new example is marked with a decorated large initial. This showcases the high rhetorical style of the piece. But it also demonstrates a response to the text. Dorigen ‘pleyne[d]...a day or tweye’ (f.131r) and intended

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<sup>32</sup> Derek Pearsall explains that other manuscripts have ‘noght’ at this point rather than ‘oght’, suggesting a different response by Arveragus. However, Hg is the only manuscript to mark this line with a paraph. Where other manuscripts have different readings, they do not indicate this meaning as one central to the interpretation of the text. Derek Pearsall, ‘The Franklin’s Tale, Line 1469: Forms of Address in Chaucer’, *SAC* xvii (1995), 69-78.

to die. However, the more she complains and the more examples of preserved chastity she gives, the more she delays her death. The paraphs and, especially in El, the initials build up the complaint on the page, offering a graphic barrier to the deed that she feels she ought to commit. The scribes respond to Dorigen's plight by indicating the rhetorical set-speeches that she uses to delay her death. Such marking of the exempla used in argumentation is common in those scholastic manuscripts that Parkes describes.<sup>33</sup> Here the scholastic nature of the text is emphasised by the initials, but this has the effect of exaggerating the stark contrast of theoretical, intellectual pursuit to Dorigen's chilling and very bodily dilemma. The rhetoric, which should instigate action, results in inactivity. The decoration on the page underlines this.

Though all scribes respond to Dorigen's complaint this way, as a central set-piece, other manuscripts mark the text less than El and Hg. El and Hg have the most paraphs and initials at this point in the text. The scribe of Dd provides sixty-two paraphs; Gg has fewer: thirty-two in total. There are only eight paraphs in Pw, three of which are unique. The remaining five are placed identically to those in El, and like those in Dd and Gg, only mark the major textual developments of the tale. This is a response to the exemplars that Pw copies, those shared by Cp and La. Though Cp and La also have fewer paraphs and initials than El and Hg, Pw radically cuts these further. Such trimming might be the result of practicality: realising the extent of the number of guidemarks, the scribe may have abandoned the task. But the result also demonstrates the scribes' response to the tale (not just the scribe of Pw but the scribes of all those manuscripts that cut down the number of paraphs and initials in El and Hg). Chaucer begs his scribe not to 'myswrite' or 'mysmetre' his text.<sup>34</sup> By cutting down on what must have been perceived as an excess of mark-up, the scribe responds to Chaucer's worries by doing exactly what the author did not want him to do, marking up his text seemingly negligently (as Chaucer fears in 'Chaucers Wordes Unto Adam'). The idea of undermining the poet's intention is examined more fully in the second half of this chapter. By offering fewer paraphs, the scribes here seem to be negligent; but the positioning of the paraphs and initials they choose to keep

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<sup>33</sup> Parkes (1992), pp.121-135.

<sup>34</sup> *TC*, ll.1795-1796.

indicates the poetic structure, development, and conclusion as clearly as El and Hg. The three unique paraps appear in Pw at f.189v, 'Siþens þilk tyme þat 3e were born', f.190r 'Myn heritage þer nys no more to telle', and f.186v 'But not wolde I telle howe me is woo bygon'. The first and last of these are straightforward: like El, the paraps here highlight moments of poetical speech and key movements of text – Arveragus's request that Dorigen go to Aurelius, and Aurelius's love declaration. The second of these, 'Myn heritage þer nys no more to telle', is unusual: the other manuscripts usually place a paraph at the following line, 'This philosophre sobroly answerde' (e.g. El, f.132v). But in Pw this is unmarked and the line before is indicated with a paraph. This is possibly a mistake or the result of blindly copying the exemplar without paying attention to the text itself. The result is that the scribe highlights the change in speaker and the climax of Aurelius's grievance – that not only has he lost his potential lover, but also his fortune. The highlighting of this line, the emphasis of Aurelius's woe, sets up the question at the end of the tale. This type of markup, if deliberate, points towards the end of the tale whilst ensuring that the vital points of the text are indicated along the way.

Such division and subdivision of the text into smaller sections is something the author might have expected in *GP*; however, the representation of plot developments as well as major textual divisions indicates that scribes felt it necessary to offer additional *forma tractatus* to that suggested by the author's *forma tractandi*. *FranT* differs from *GP* in that it is not a series of separable parts the way the individual descriptions of each pilgrim are; rather, the tale is made up of sections that relate to and build upon each other consecutively. The paraps and initials here are not provided as *divisio*, in order to suggest that the tales themselves are internally separable, in the way that the borders, large initials, rubrics and running tiles suggest of the collection as a whole. Rather, they provide an outline to the tale as a whole, indicating its movements and developments, and more subtle poetic nuances.

## Glosses

Borders, large initials, rubrics, running titles, paraphs and smaller initials exist in the margins of the text. Glosses play with boundaries between the margins and centre. As Chaucer's narrator observes in his room in *BD*, medieval texts and their glosses go firmly hand in hand:

And alle the walles with colours fyne  
Were peynted bothe text and glose  
Of al the Romaunce of the Rose (*BD*, ll.332–334)

The narrator's vision here emphasises the tradition of presenting medieval texts, with the main text accompanied often by extra-textual material, the manuscript page displaying 'bothe text and glose' together. There are a variety of types of glosses and each has a complex relationship to the main text in the centre of the page. Anthony Grafton suggests that the footnote, the modern gloss, outlines the main text's infrastructure and emphasises the importance of the source.<sup>35</sup> Derrida's 'Living on: Border Lines' complicates this relationship and demonstrates the interaction between main text and paratext: a single long footnote runs alongside the main text, offering a second parallel essay.<sup>36</sup> The footnote questions the relative authorities of the two texts and asks whether one ought to be subordinate to the other. Stephen Barney's collection of essays on annotation examines the ambiguity of footnotes and the variety of purposes and effects they produce in response to the text – they are both a strategy for interpreting the main text and a subversive disempowerment of it.<sup>37</sup> Manuscript scholars take an equally varied approach to the gloss. In general, the earliest manuscript scholars believed glosses to be purely decorative. Rather than any specific function on the page in relation to the main text, Aage Brusendorff and J. S. P. Tatlock both believed glosses to indicate simply a 'love of learning' and a pleasure in citing authorities, focusing on the self-substantial genius of the vernacular text.<sup>38</sup> Since then, the text-gloss discussion has become more complex. More than thirty years later,

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<sup>35</sup> Anthony Grafton, *The footnote: a curious history* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).

<sup>36</sup> Jacques Derrida, 'Living On: Border Lines', trans. James Hulbert, in *Deconstruction and Criticism*, ed. Harold Bloom, Paul De Man, Jacques Derrida, J. Hillis Miller, Geoffrey H. Hartman (New York: Continuum, 1979), pp.75-176.

<sup>37</sup> S. A. Barney ed., *Annotation and Its Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>38</sup> Aage Brusendorff, *The Chaucer Tradition* (London: Milford, 1925), p.127, and J. S. P. Tatlock, 'The *Canterbury Tales* in 1400', *PMLA* 1 (1935), 100-139, p.103.

Graham D. Caie proposed that glosses, rather than merely decorative or functionless referencing, demonstrate a remark upon and a response to the main text, one which influences the interpretations of its later readers: 'even to note a source reference has the effect of arresting the reader and drawing his attention to the original when he might otherwise pass on with no more than a hazy flicker of recognition'.<sup>39</sup> Equally, Doyle and Parkes commented that the manuscripts of *CT* interpret the tales as 'repositories of *auctoritates* – *sententiae* and aphorisms on different topics which are indicated by the marginal headings'.<sup>40</sup>

Similarly, with specific reference to Chaucer alongside numerous other glossators, Hanna et al. examine the long history of the gloss within which writers wish to 'locate and define' their work 'in relation to the systems and strategies of textual evaluation which scholasticism had produced'.<sup>41</sup> Hanna et al. suggest that glosses indicate the inheritance of knowledge from classical traditions to the middle ages. Susan Schibanoff argues that these glosses were for the benefit of the 'new reader' or the 'eye reader', as distinct from the 'old' or 'aural reader': 'The gloss, as well as its descendant the footnote, seems to be designed for the new reader, the visual reader, and most likely, the actual audience of the Chaucer glosses were 'eye-readers,' the educated and elite'.<sup>42</sup> Though Schibanoff assumes much about the reader and the development of reading practice, her conclusions on the uses of the gloss are helpful in highlighting their many functions.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Graham D. Caie, 'The significance of Marginal Glosses in the Earliest Manuscripts of *The Canterbury Tales*' in *Chaucer and Scriptural Tradition* ed. David Lyle Jeffrey (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1984), pp.75-88, p.77. See also Caie 'The Significance of the Glosses in the Earliest Manuscripts of *The Canterbury Tales*,' in *Papers from the First Nordic Conference for English Studies, Oslo, 17-19 September 1980* ed. Stig Johannson and Bjorn Tysdahl (Oslo: University of Oslo, Institute of English Studies, 1981), pp.25-34.

<sup>40</sup> See Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.190, and Charles A. Owen, 'The Alternative Reading of *The Canterbury Tales*: Chaucer's Text and the Early Manuscripts', *PMLA* xcvi (1982), 237-50, p.242.

<sup>41</sup> Hanna et al. in Minnis and Johnson (2005) p.419.

<sup>42</sup> Susan Schibanoff, 'The New Reader and Female Textuality in Two Early Commentaries on Chaucer', in *Writing After Chaucer: Essential Readings in Chaucer and the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Daniel J. Piniti (London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1998) pp.45-80, pp.47-48.

<sup>43</sup> Schibanoff's argument is based on conclusions by theorists such as Cavallo and Chartier (Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier ed., *A History of Reading in the West*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999) especially pp.16-17), Ong (Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the World* (London: Methuen, 1982)), Goody and Watt (Jack Goody and Ian Watt, 'The Consequences of Literacy' (1963) rpt in Jack Goody ed., *Literacy in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), especially p.30), and Saenger (Paul Saenger, 'Silent Reading: Its Impact on Late Medieval Script and Society', *Viator* xiii (1982), 370-377, and Paul Saenger, *Space between Words: the Origins of*

Glossing became increasingly common in vernacular literature of the twelfth century.<sup>44</sup>

Where it first signified a translation or explanation of an archaic or outmoded word (*glossa* in Greek meaning tongue and so language), it later became a tradition which indicated a reference to and reverence for inherited canonical material. Scholasticism of the late twelfth century required the methodical study of Biblical and classical texts, the teaching of which caused a surge in the appearance of marginal and interlinear glosses. Thus glosses came to be not only explanations or translations but also interpretations or adulterations of the central text. The Middle English term 'glosen' has a range of definitions:

1. (a) To gloss (a text, a word), comment on, interpret, explain, paraphrase...; (b) to interpret (a text) falsely; (c) to explain or describe (sth.).
2. (a) To obscure the truth of (a matter), falsify (statement), glaze over; (b) *ppl.* glosed, of words, a sentence: falsely embellished...
3. (a) To use fair words, talk smoothly or courteously; speak with blandishment, flattery, or deceit; (b) to address (sb.) with fair or deceptive words; speak smoothly to (an animal); cajole, flatter.<sup>45</sup>

Overall, glossing was seen as an action performed not only on a text, but a view imposed on its readers. Thus, glosses are employed to numerous political purposes: they provide prestige and standing for the English text which raises its value to something comparable to its authority;

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*Silent Reading* (California: Stanford University Press, 1997)) that reading 'progressed' from oral to silent, from public to private, and from 'uneducated' to 'educated' from the early to the late Middle Ages. However, there have been several arguments to the contrary: that oral or aural reading continued well into the time of Chaucer. See, for example: Joyce Coleman, *Public Reading and the Reading Public in Late Medieval France and England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.xi, xiii-xv; Ruth Crosby, 'Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* xi:1 (1936), 88-110, and 'Chaucer and the Custom of Oral Delivery', *Speculum* xiii: 4 (1938), 413-432; Nancy Mason Bradbury, *Writing Aloud: Storytelling in Late Medieval England* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998); D. H. Green, 'On the Primary Reception of Narrative Literature in Medieval Germany', *Forum for Modern Language Studies* xx: 4 (1984), 289-308, and 'Orality and Reading: The State of Research in Medieval Studies', *Speculum* lxv:2 (1990), 267-280, and *Medieval Listening and Reading: The Primary Reception of German Literature, 800-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); B. H. Bronson, 'Chaucer's Art in Relation to His Audience', in *Five Studies in Literature*, ed. Bronson, B. H., Caldwell, J. R., Cline, J. M., McKenzie, Gordon, and Frost, J. F., California: University of California Press, 1940, pp.1-53.; Mary Griffin, *Studies on Chaucer and his Audience* (Quebec: Les Éditions "L'éclair", 1956); and Albert C. Baugh, 'The Middle English Romance: Some Questions of Creation, Presentation, and Preservation', *Speculum* xlii:1 (1967), 1-31.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, the studies of Robert W. Hanning, "'I shal Finde It in a Maner Glose": Versions of Textual Harassment in Medieval Literature', in *Medieval Texts and Contemporary Readers*, ed. Laurie A. Finke and Martin B. Shichtman (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp.27-50; Smalley (1983), pp.ix-xv; and Hanna et al. in Minnis and Johnson (2005), pp.363-364. See also Parkes (1976), p.116; and Jensen in Hellinga and Trapp (1999), p.379.

<sup>45</sup> *Middle English Dictionary*. Web. 18 March 2010. <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED18852>

they provide a source for the text which positions the vernacular in a body of authoritative works, thereby suggesting that the text is an inheritor of classical traditions and wisdom.<sup>46</sup> In displaying both side by side, the manuscript page mediates between the inherited classical intellectual history of the text's sources and the vernacularity of the text itself: the two are brought together on the page. The glosses presented on the page are seen at the same time as the central text: their bulk commands the attention of the eye; however, paradoxically their position in the margins implies they are of less importance than the central text. This unclear hierarchy confuses the reader as to which text to access in which order, and what prestige to attach to either.

As described in the Introduction, glosses are sometimes placed in the main column of text rather than the margin and, where the page is heavily decorated, there is an issue as to whether or not there is a margin. In *CT* manuscripts, however, the majority of the glossing is in the margins,<sup>47</sup> often in a smaller hand to that of the main text, which creates a complex system of negotiations between the edge and the centre. The scribe of *El* always places glosses in the outer margins (on the right hand side of the recto folio and on the left hand side of the verso) in columns ruled to receive them, suggesting that these are part of the original plan for the layout of the manuscript and not later additions. The glosses here are decorated with flourished paraphs, so while the size of their script suggests that they are subordinate to the main text, their decoration suggests they have an authority of their own.

The longest glosses, usually in Latin, are positioned adjacent to the main text in a variety of tales throughout *CT* as a whole: the *El KnT* contains five short Latin glosses which are shared by *Dd* and *Hg*, two longer glosses shared by *Dd* and one long gloss shared by *Hg*. *MLT* contains nine

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<sup>46</sup> See, for example, Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, Nicholas Watson, Andrew Taylor, and Ruth Evans ed., *The Idea of the Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory 1280 – 1520* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1999), especially pp.xiv-xv, 314-330, 331-352. They suggest that the use of the vernacular is part of *translatio studii et imperii*, the 'transferral of learning and the empire' (p.317), establishing the vernacular as an 'open language', as a 'melting-pot' of classical and contemporary traditions, and as the language of a nation, thus relocating *auctoritas* to the vernacular author. This is particularly apt for the discussion of the placement of Latin and the vernacular side-by-side here. See also: Copeland (1991), especially pp.179-220; Minnis (1988), especially pp.5-7, and 160-210; Christopher Cannon, 'The Myth of Origin and the Making of Chaucer's English', *Speculum* lxxi (1996), 646-675.

<sup>47</sup> Unlike the glosses in Gower's manuscripts, as will be discussed in the next chapter (p.155 ff.).

main glosses, all of which are attested in El, Hg, Cp, Dd, and Pw, and most in La. Ha4 contains none, perhaps as Stephen Partridge posits, due to the lack of rubrication before *WBP* in the manuscript.<sup>48</sup> These glosses affirm, endorse and stabilise the authority of Chaucer's vernacular text; simultaneously, however, by providing a Latin authority of their own, they contest the authority of the main text.

Michael Camille discusses extensively the relationship of the margins to the centre of the page: writing on 'image[s] on the edge', rather than glosses specifically, Camille argues that the margins subvert the authority of the centre by drawing attention to the outside.<sup>49</sup> Camille uses examples of lewd images that challenge the authority of the central text. He explains: 'marginal images are *conscious* usurpations, perhaps even political statements about diffusing the power of the text through its unravelling'.<sup>50</sup> For the gloss itself, Camille argues that it 'interacts with and reinterprets a text that has come to be seen as fixed and finalized...Once the manuscript page becomes a matrix of visual signs and is no longer one of flowing linear speech, the stage is set not only for supplementation and annotation but also for disagreement and juxtaposition – what the scholastics call *disputatio*'.<sup>51</sup> Though he does not offer it extensively himself, there is evidence enough in Chaucer's manuscripts to support Camille's theory: the glosses that evoke an authority of their own equally decentralize the authority of the main text – the glosses challenge the authority of the tale and its teller by providing examples of the same tale by an alternative teller, one that holds a greater weight and presents a loftier *auctoritas*. They set up a dialogue or *disputatio* between the two. In this way, while attempting to authenticate the main text, the glosses undermine it.

*WBP* is the most heavily glossed, so much so that, due to the constraints of space on the page, numerous glosses in El have to be relocated away from the text which they gloss in order to fit onto the page: between ll.151 and 161, the Wife subverts the notion of conjugal debt in arguing

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<sup>48</sup> Partridge (1992), II-1.

<sup>49</sup> Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (London: Reaktion Books Limited, 1992), pp.9-10.

<sup>50</sup> Camille (1992), p.42. Camille's italics.

<sup>51</sup> Camille (1992), pp.20-21.

that she ought to have ‘power duryng al [her] lyf/Vpon [her husband’s] p[ro]pre body and noght he’ (ll.158-9, f.64v); the glosses rephrase this, claiming the authority of Jerome in stating ‘Est it[er]u[m] s[er]uus vx[or]is es noli | p[ro]pt[er] hoc h[ab]ere tristiciam’. The gloss is not adjacent to the Wife’s lines but forced to be placed a few lines below at l.160. Similarly, at l.54 the Wife gives the example of Lameth, the first bigamist; Jerome’s text, in the gloss ‘Lameth q[ui] p[ri]m[us] int[ra]uit bigamia[m] | sanguinarius [et] homicida est [et]c[etera]’, however, appears at l.62 (f.63v). This is largely the result of practicality rather than some intelligent reinterpretation by the scribe: the lack of space in the margins of the page for the lengthy glosses has resulted in the scribe moving them to where he finds the appropriate amount of space. At the same time, however, this free relocation suggests something about the function of the glosses. They are not intended to support the process of reading the main text: they do not provide apparatus for comprehending the tale’s structure or development. These glosses are not signposts through the text; rather, they point beyond the text to a cultural history and a literary past.

*WBP* is a rebuke of glossing: of (mis)interpreting scripture to suit a misogynistic purpose: ‘Men may deuyne and glosen vp and doun/But wel I woot expres with oute lye’ (ll.26-7, f.63r). She reinterprets (or re-glosses) this scripture to her own accord. On the manuscript page, however, her re-glossing is further rebutted by the glosses in the margins: El glosses the Wife’s tirade with passages from Jerome’s *Adversus Jovinianum*; Cp and Pw gloss the *Prologue* with passages from the vulgate. The manuscript page thereby becomes a battlefield: the Wife and Jerome fight for authority; central text and the marginal gloss brawl for the reader’s attention. The battle for the correct interpretation is not only instigated by the text itself, but also by the format of the manuscript page.

El provides the most extensive glossing of all the eight manuscripts in *FranT*, with lengthy Latin texts placed in the margins of the page. On the folios that contain Dorigen’s complaint, there are twenty-two glosses in El from Jerome’s *Adversus Jovinianum*. These again relocate the

authority of the central text to the margins of the page. Adjacent to Dorigen's tale of Phidon's virgin daughters, the first exemplum she gives, for example, appears as a long Latin gloss:

Atheniensiu[m] tira[n]ni cu[m] Phidonem | necassent in co[n]iuiuio filas ei[us]  
virgi[n]es | ad se ve[n]ire iusseru[n]t [et] scortor[um] more nu|dari ac sup[er]  
pauimenta pat[r]is sang[ui]ne cruentatas inpudicis gestibus | ludere que  
paulisper dissimulato do|lore cu[m] timulentos co[n]iuiuas c[er]nerent | quasi ad  
requisita nature egredien|tes inuicem se complex[er]e p[re]cipitauerunt in  
put[e]u[m] vt virginitatem | morte seruarent (El f.130r)

The Latin gloss adds little information to the English text: it is not a commentary on it but rather a Latin version of Dorigen's English example:

Whan xxx tirauntz ful of cursednesse  
Hadde slayn Phidon in Atthenes at feste  
They comanded hise doghtres for tareste  
And bryngen hem biforn hem in despit  
Al naked to fulfille hir foul delit  
And in hir fadres blood they made hem daunce  
Vpon the pauement god yeue hem myschaunce  
For which thise woful maydens ful of drede  
Rather than they wolde lese hir maydenhede  
They p[ri]uely been stirt into a welle  
And dreynte hem seluen as the bookes telle (ll.1367-1377, f.130r-v)

Though Chaucer does add some embellishments to Jerome's text – that the tyrants 'fulfille hir foul delit' in their victims' nude display, and his plea on the virgin's behalf, that 'god yeue hem myschaunce' – essentially, one text rephrases the other. This adds little to either text. Rather the English gives way to the higher authority of the Latin: in his text itself Chaucer invites his readers to look outside the main text to the Latin authority – to what those 'bookes telle'. The Latin text duly takes the reader away from the authority of the vernacular: from the centre into the margins. This complicated, competitive relationship between text and gloss is brought together on the manuscript page for readers to contemplate. Their position in the margins of the text draws the readers' eyes away from the central column to the edge of the page, and the readers' minds away from the text in the centre to the texts evoked in the margins – from the vernacularity of the text, to the inherited Latin *auctoritas* of the gloss – from the Wife/Dorigen/Chaucer to Jerome.

This is, however, part of the meaning of the main text and the complaint plays with exactly this. Dorigen's examples delay her deed. In the manuscripts, the scholastic nature of the examples she offers is emphasised by the lengthy glosses that surround them. What these 'bookes telle' delays the action in the tale, but the glosses in the margin further delay our reading of it. The scribes annotate the text and subvert the centre with the Latin authority in the margins. The glosses play with the meaning of the centre, and demonstrate their complex nature. While they subvert its authority, they simultaneously support its purpose: by causing a distraction from the centre to the margins, the glosses emphasise Dorigen's own delay through examples – and her distraction from her situation through the intellectual pursuit of further examples – which causes a delay in reading the outcome of her choice. So by distracting our attention to these glosses we too delay Dorigen's deed.

It must be noted, however, that the majority of the Latin glosses in *FranT* are only present in El. The first gloss is incorporated into the margins of Hg and Dd, but after this, the scribes seem to have given up trying to accommodate the lengthy Latin texts into their unsuitable margins. The gloss in Dd starts, rather inappropriately, at l.1358, before Dorigen begins her version of the tale (f.135v). The Latin in this manuscript therefore usurps the authority of the vernacular text before it has a chance to be told. However, this may not have been the scribe's intention: it is more likely that he was merely attempting to fit the gloss into the margins of his manuscript and so decided to move the gloss slightly higher on the page. Akin to the misplacement of the glosses in *WBP*, the glosses here are not an indication of poetic movement the way that paraphs and initials are; rather they complicate the interpretation of the text and confuse which commands the most attention. That the scribe felt the need to add these glosses to El though they are not nearly as extensive in Hg (or Dd, and not present at all in the remaining five manuscripts) also suggests something of the expectations of the patron: that more was expected of a manuscript of such great expense, that is, not only lavish decoration, but a greater supply of authoritative material considered to be part of a 'complete' text.<sup>52</sup> Manuscripts produced slightly later –

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<sup>52</sup> This is explored more fully with reference to the numerous de-luxe manuscripts of Gower's *CA*.

London, British Library, MS Additional 35286 (Ad3), London, British Library, Egerton 2864 (En3), Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 1 (Ht), and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Anglais (Ps) – do all provide the same material in their margins, perhaps a result of a more careful preparation of the manuscript page to accommodate the play between the margins and the centre.

By offering such scholastically weighty material, Dorigen's serious situation seems all the more tragic; but she reads exactly those books that the Wife of Bath disputes – and takes them far more seriously than the Wife would ever permit. Dorigen, busy with the heroic nature of her examples and her own situation, forgets that there may be some battle with interpreting these examples and uses Jerome to both her advantage (in finding exempla that delay her death) and her detriment (the exempla advocate her suicide). Despite the battle between gloss and text, there is no battle within the text, within Dorigen's interpretation of the gloss, which is a sign that something is amiss with her reading of Jerome.

As such, the margins do not always dispute the authority of the centre. There are numerous varieties of gloss found on the manuscript page. Stephen Partridge identifies seven different categories of gloss in *CT*: 'citation glosses' which cite a source for the central text but do not quote it; 'source glosses' which do quote the source for the central text; 'explanatory glosses' which clarify the English text with either translations or explanations in Latin; 'summaries' which offer single line notes as to the content of the main text; 'headings', names in the margins; 'pointers' or 'highlighting glosses', single words which draw attention to a part of the text; and 'commentary glosses' which interpret the text (though Partridge hastens to add that these are rare in the manuscripts of *CT*).<sup>53</sup> In terms of Camille's theory however, these seven categories can be divided into two: those that subvert the authority of the centre, and those that support it. In the first category, the glosses that subvert the authority of the centre, there are the long Latin glosses which claim an authority of their own: that is, Partridge's 'citation glosses', 'source glosses', 'explanatory glosses' and 'commentary glosses'. The remaining three types of glosses

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<sup>53</sup> Partridge (1992), pp.2-4.

are more appropriately called ‘notes’, single word or short marginal comments, Partridge’s ‘summaries’, ‘headings’, and ‘highlighting glosses’. These notes do not usurp the authority of the main text – they do not emphasise the margins rather than the centre; instead, they uphold the authority of the centre by pointing the attention back to the main text.

Often these short notes are clarifications of particular words with obscure meanings. Short, single-word notes are found throughout *CT*. Above the word ‘lucina’ in four of the eight manuscripts, El, Hg, Cp, and Dd, appears a single-word gloss: ‘luna’ (El f.127r; Hg f.158r; Cp f.163r; Dd, f.132r). The El version of *WBP* has an interlinear note which clarifies the word ‘foore’ as ‘i[d est] steppes’ (III.110, f.64r). In Hg, the scribe has similarly disambiguated the word ‘see’, glossing it once with ‘ad vid[endum]’, and another as ‘i[d est] mare’ in *KnT* (ll.1955-6). This serves the function of the shorter notes in the margins: it seeks to clarify and explain the main text – that Lucina is an alternative name for the goddess of the moon, that there are two meanings of ‘see’. Its location in the main body of text rather than the margins indicates further its function: it does not seek to draw the attention away from the main text, to decentralize its authority, but rather to support the central text and assist the full understanding of it.

Further short notes act as extensions of the paraphs and initials that indicate poetic movement or description. In *FranT*, the scribe of El highlights a part of the main text, the protest of Aurelius, with a note: ‘The compleint of Aurelius to the | goddes and to the sonne~~~’ (f.126v). This is placed in the margins adjacent to the start of his speech, where it locates the rhetorical piece in the body of text. Similarly, the note ‘The compleynt of Dorigene~| ayeyns Fortune~~~’ is used to the same effect: also located alongside the start of her speech in the margin of the page, the note indicates for the reader the location of her long and erudite moan (f.130r). Akin to the visual division of the page as described above, the notes here act as paraphs and initials, indicating the location of the complaint in the tale. They too emphasise the careful poetic construction and balance of the tale. Akin to the paraphs and initials in *GP* which tie together the descriptions of each pilgrim to the tale they tell (as do the pilgrim portraits in El), here too the glosses to Dorigen’s complaint link the text as a whole. Dorigen’s source is shared

with the Wife of Bath. Though the two handle the material very differently, the glosses and notes point towards the deliberate textual overlap between the two tales. This ties together the questions of virginity, 'maistry', and fidelity that the tales raise, and the lengthy debate over these subjects extends from tale to tale.

These small notes are also used in *GP* in response to the text. The scribe of Gg ensures that each key pilgrim is highlighted. Gg does not place notes adjacent to the description of the five guildsmen, the 'habirdaschere', 'carpenter', 'webber', 'dyere', and 'taphiser', and the margins in this part of *GP* are left blank (f.136v). He does, however, place notes adjacent to another group: the Reeve, Miller, Summoner, Manciple, and Chaucer himself. In the margins of f.139r is a box containing three lines of note: 'a. Reve. a. Mellere.' (adjacent to the main text line 'There was also a reue [and] a mellere'); 'a su[mm]no[r]. a. p[ar]donnere.' (adjacent to 'A somno[r] [and] a pardonnere also'); 'a. mau[n]ciple' and 'chaucer' (adjacent to 'A mau[n]siple [and] my[n] self there were no mo'). As well as placing notes adjacent to each of their separate descriptions, the scribe also felt it vital to highlight their description as a group. That there are so many notes here suggests that the scribe of Gg did not wish to provide notes in the manuscript so as only to provide a means of dividing the main text into its individual descriptions: moreover, he was attempting to provide a checklist of the important pilgrims present. At this point in the manuscript, El and Hg only have 'Millere' written in the margins (El f.6v, Hg f.8v). That Gg highlights Chaucer here suggests that the scribe was attempting to account for all the pilgrims in *GP* that go on to tell a tale: Chaucer of course tells two. Similarly, earlier in the manuscript Gg also notes the 'No[n]ne Prest' (f.133v), another pilgrim who tells a tale, and, importantly, for whom no other manuscript provides a note.

The notes differ slightly in placement in each of the manuscripts. In Gg, each note appears not on the same line as the beginning of each pilgrim's description, but in between two lines of the main text: the note 'miles' is written in the margins adjacent to both the first and second lines of the Knight's description, 'A knyght þere was [and] that a worthy man' and 'That from the tyme that he ferst began' (f.132r). This can be explained by the lack of ruled lines in the margins

of the manuscript page, causing the note to appear askew. However, the effect of this is to emphasise both the first and second lines of each description and so to visually highlight both. The main purpose of *GP*, after all, is to outline the descriptions of each taleteller. By positioning the Latin notes adjacent to both lines, the scribe indicates not just the name of the pilgrim usually in the first line, but also the descriptive line which follows. For the same reason, the paraph marks in *Gg* are also two lines high, similarly emphasising visually two lines of text.<sup>54</sup>

The content of the notes also varies from manuscript to manuscript. The scribe of *El* indicates the Wife of Bath not with a single note but one split into two, with ‘The goode wif of’ on one line with a paraph, and ‘Bathe’ on another with a separate paraph (f.5v). This is certainly a cautious reaction to the space available on the page. The margins here are not wide enough to accommodate this note in a single line. The scribe in his professional capacity has responded intelligently to this practical constraint and has avoided the mistakes in *Hg* by ensuring that the writing here is not cramped into the little space available. The narrowness of the margin has caused the line to be split in two. A decorator has added a separate paraph for each line. The effect of this split and the extra paraph is to suggest a difference in the interpretation of the pilgrim: the note characterises her as not simply ‘The Wife of Bath’, but highlights the two aspects of her character – both as a pilgrim from Bath and, separately, as a woman and wife – the second of which of course is essential in understanding her character and the theme of her prologue. The scribe of *Hg* has also indicated the Wife of Bath differently: the note follows exactly the wording of the main text: ‘The goode Wyf ~|of bisyde Bathe ~’ (f.7v). Again, the note is split across two lines, the scribe cautiously aware of the limited space available in the margins of this cramped manuscript. This allows the note to suggest a close and direct link between the margins and the main text, directing attention from the margins to the main text. Equally, the repetition of the word ‘goode’ here in the margins underlines the complicated use of that word in the text itself. The Knight is not given the epithet ‘worthy’ in his marginal notes. The Wife, though she might have a complex ethical and moral system of her own, questions the meaning of

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<sup>54</sup> Another reason for this will be outlined in Chapter 2, Rhyme scheme (p.172 ff.).

a 'goode wyf'; the tales – Dorigen's very different response to those source texts the Wife disputes, or Griselda's excessively patient suffering in contrast with the Wife's five husbands – respond to the questions she asks. The scribes interact with this complex dialogue that takes place across the tales.

The short notes in *WBP* further provide example of this response: in El and Hg the word 'questio' appears in the margin adjacent to the question the Wife poses to her listeners: 'Telle me also to what conclusion/Were membres ymaad of generacion/And for what p[ar]fit was a wight ywroght' (III.115-117, El f.64r, Hg f.59r). Akin to the notes in *FranT*, the text's structure is explained in El with the words 'Of the condiciou[n] of the fourthe | housbonde of this goode Wyf | and how she serued hym' (III.453, f.67v). Though the description of her other husbands is indicated with a single note, 'Bihoold how this goode Wyf | s[er]ued hir .iii. firste housboundes | whiche were goode olde men' (III.193, f.65r), her fourth, the most officious of the lot, provides the best example of the Wife's character and so is deemed more worthy of his own marginal note. The end is signalled by yet another note in Dd and Ha4: 'Here maketh the frere an interrupcioun of the wyfes tale' (III.499, Dd f.81r, Ha4 f.102v) and 'the sompnour speketh to the frere' (Dd III.833, f.81r). The notes here outline the structure of the prologue, dividing it into its separate rhetorical movements.

As noted above, the Wife's prologue attacks the idea of glossing, but nevertheless she herself is glossed in the manuscripts. In El shorter notes are placed alongside the longer glosses. These act as *signes de renvoie*, coaxing the eye back to the main text, to the Wife's own glossing of her sources, which is not in the margins but the main body. The short notes in El play a part in the battle between the Wife and Jerome: they support the Wife's argument in the margins of the page. Both the notes and the glosses are treated identically in terms of their design and layout: they are both placed in the margins adjacent to the main text and are both marked with a flourished paraph. The shorter notes are further decorated with pen flourishes which complete any half-finished lines of text. These increase the size of the notes, placing them nearly on a par with the longer Latin notes. This enables the shorter notes to visually highlight the

developments and movements of the text, leading the reader back from the margins to the centre to mirror the rhetorical to and fro of the two combating arguments on the page.

The two short notes in Dd and El that state 'exemplum' (Dd III.1139 adjacent to the metaphor of the fire, f.79v; El III.1146 adjacent to the explanation of the metaphor, f.75r) are an important case: these signal examples not external to the text – not long glosses in the margins that signal examples of authority– but internal to it. This way, these subvert the marginal authority and relocate it back to the centre of the page. Whereas the long Latin glosses serve the function outlined above, that is, to place the text within scholarly historical contexts, the shorter notes cannot be said to have the same function. On an examination of the interaction between overall layout and text, the shorter notes play a different role: they serve as an extension to the rubrics, paraphs, and large initials. The notes extend the divisions indicated by the rubrics, paraphs and initials inside the main body of text by dragging these divisions to the margins of the page, not as Camille suggests, in order to subvert the authority of the centre of the page to the margins, but rather to respond to the centre – to contribute to the meaning of the text on the page. The two 'exemplum' notes do just this, bringing the attention back to the centre. These notes have no alternative agenda: rather than draw attention and authority away from the text, they point towards it, ensuring that both the eye and the mind are taken from the margins and placed back onto the centre. Here the text and the marginalia do not battle for authority; rather, they reaffirm what is in the text, supporting rather than subverting it.

*WBT* is also broken down into its component parts: at III.1109, El notes 'de gen[er]ositate' (f.74v), Dd 'Nota causas generositatis' (f.79r), Cp and Pw 'Nota bene de nobilitate', Hg 'No[ta] bene' (f.71v) and Gg has a pointing hand (f.225v). These all indicate the start of old woman's long explanation of 'gentillesse'. At lines 1112-13, Dd has two notes, 'arrogance is pride' and 'Nota verissimam causam generositatis', which appear alongside the lines on arrogance: 'swich arrogance is nat worth an hen' (III.1112). Similarly, El, Cp and Dd note at III.1177 the development of the passage to a discussion of the virtues of poverty: El 'De paup[er]tate' (f.75v); Cp and Dd 'Nota de paupertate'. El also notes 'De senectute' at III.1207, f.75v, and 'De

t[ur]pitudine' at III.1213, f.75v, to locate in the long speech the beginning of the sections on old age and on ugliness. It is here that the old lady offers the knight the choice between faithful old age and unfaithful youth, and here the manuscript note suggests that 'senectute' and 'turpitudine' are the correct answers. Akin to *ParsT*, the notes act as the running titles which were commonly found in the scholastic textbooks and the careful division of the prose tractae that Parkes describes.<sup>55</sup> Here the text is also divided into topics, indicated in the margins. This raises the Wife's battle with Jerome to the level of an intellectual scholastic debate, her tale of course acting as the main illustrative example of her point.

The notes and glosses in *El* raise another issue: the language of the marginalia. In *El*, the longer glosses are in Latin, the shorter notes are in the vernacular. In *Mel*, as will be discussed shortly, the classical authorities evoked by Prudence and Melibee in support of their arguments are in Latin: 'ovidius de remedio amoris~' adjacent to Ovid's sentence on f.153v, for instance. The contents of Prudence and Melibee's speeches are glossed in the vernacular: 'Of .iii. thynges þ[a]t dryuen a | man out of his hous~' on f.156r, for example. This distinguishes between a section of the text involving the altercation between Melibee and Prudence and a section of a series of *sententiae* (as will be discussed below). The two languages work similarly in the *El FranT* and *WBP*: the longer glosses, such as those that cite Jerome's text, are in Latin; the shorter notes that summarise the main text – 'The compleynt of Dorigene~| ayeyns Fortune~~~' (f.130r) or 'Of the condiciou[n] of the fourthe | housbonde of this goode Wyf | and how she serued hym' (f.67v) are in the vernacular. *Dd* and *Ha4* have a similar distinction: at the end of *WBP*, both note in the margins 'Here maketh the frere an interrupcioun of the wyfes tale' (*Ha4* f.102v, *Dd* f.81r), and *Dd* continues to note 'the sompnour speketh to the frere' (*Dd* f.81r), signalling, as the paraphs and initials do, the development of the text. It is perhaps because *El* has such extensive marginal text that the scribe felt the need to make the distinction in language: the shorter notes, as they are bulked out by their pen flourishes so as to stand on a par with the

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<sup>55</sup> See Parkes (1976), pp.118-119, 122-124.

longer Latin glosses, must be distinguished from them by language as they serve a different purpose – to point back to the main text rather than away from it.

Equally, the language of the short notes matches the choice of the vernacular for the majority of the running titles (see above). In the way that running titles guide the reader to find sections of the text, the notes here guide the reader through it. In writing these in the vernacular, the scribes offer the readers a vernacular guide to a vernacular text. The layout plays a part in creating a manuscript of Middle English poetry: the short notes here create a text which is heavily vernacular, in which the Middle English layout guides the reading of a Middle English text, creating a vernacular tool to navigate a vernacular landscape. The longer glosses in Latin suggest that the Latinate sources are firmly outside the vernacular text, pointing away from the centre to beyond the margins.

The presence of both these types of marginalia, the longer glosses and shorter notes, indicate that the manuscripts were offering two different sets of responses to the text: one to situate the text within its source context, and the other to pull out the nuances of the textual meaning and poetic structure. This suggests two different approaches to the text: one which focuses on the centre of the page, and one which takes interest in what is beyond the centre and what transcends the text.<sup>56</sup> Despite the fact that the notes point back to the text, supporting rather than subverting it, they, like the paraphs, initials, and other decoration that surround the text are not part of it: whilst on the page, they are outside of the text. They are part of the apparatus that responds to the text rather than commanding any authority of their own. The notes mediate between the scribes and the text: they bring together the internal structures of the text as well as the sense of cultural history that the text evokes. The notes are both part of the tale and simultaneously the tellers of that tale, offering a response through the contents of the main text via the margins.

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<sup>56</sup> This point will be taken up again in the next chapter on Gower (p.155 ff.).

## Prose

The manuscript page is used most fully and extensively for the layout of prose, and each of the features work together. Reading a lengthy prose piece is a practice more modern than medieval: it is a modern notion that reading is a matter of reading predominantly prose. Prose was a relatively new format and few prominent literary prose texts in the vernacular seem to have been in circulation before c.1370. Verse has a longer history.<sup>57</sup> *Mel* is the first of the tales in the collection that is not in verse. As such, the layout of this tale demonstrates the attempts of scribes in handling a less than familiar format. Indeed the two prose works in *CT* are the only texts in which the manuscript page has been utilised in full: all of the apparatus available – paraps, rubrics, running titles, initials, notes, and the complete extent of the ruled lines – are used on the folios of *Mel*. It is in the prose that this apparatus proves most useful. The prose tale is not represented as a single mass of words and morals, but something more divided.

*Mel* has made even the most seasoned readers of Middle English impatient. Ker rather fiercely called it ‘a thing incapable of life, under any process of interpretation, a lump of the most inert “first matter” of mediaeval pedantry’; Tatlock summarised its source, the French *Melibeeus*, as a list of the ‘unspeakably trite and dry’ sayings of ‘dead wise-acres’; Paul Olson commented that the tale is laborious: ‘*Melibee* makes no concessions to its audience...and comes with the sign *caveat lector otiosus*’, and most recently, Edward E. Foster has scorned the tale as a ‘lump in our oatmeal’.<sup>58</sup>

In fact, *Mel* is not simply dull; it is purposefully plodding. Proverbs pile upon proverbs and advice upon advice until we have an impenetrable fog of text. In Prudence’s first advice to Melibee alone five authorities are quoted:

Prudence answerde Certes wel I woot attempree we|pyng is no thyng  
deffended to hym þ[a]t sorweful is amonges folk in | sorwe but it is rather

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<sup>57</sup> Godzich and Kittay have suggested that prose was more strange to medieval readers than verse and so more difficult to comprehend, see Wlad Godzich and Jeffrey Kittay, *The Emergence of Prose: an Essay in Prosaics* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p.xix.

<sup>58</sup> W. P. Ker, ‘The Poetry of Chaucer’, *Quarterly Review* clxxx (1895), 521-48, p.535; J. S. P. Tatlock, *The Development and Chronology of Chaucer’s Works* (London: N. Trübner & Co., 1907), p.189; Paul Olson, *The Canterbury Tales and the Good Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p.123; Edward E. Foster, ‘Has Anyone Here Read Melibee?’, *ChauR* xxxiv (2000), 398-409, p.399.

graunted hym to wepe ¶ The Apostle Paul | vnto the Romayns writeth...Measure  
 | of wepyng sholde be considered after the loore þ[a]t techeth vs  
 Senek:...Remembre yow þ[a]t Jhesus Syrak seith...Salomon seith...Remembre yow  
 vpon the pacient | Job...seyde he thus (El f.154r)

The second of Chaucer's own tales, *Mel* follows after *Thop*, demonstrating that Chaucer can tell both a tale of 'sentence' and a tale of 'solaas' as the Host demands (*GP* l.798). As the poet of the group of pilgrims, he is aware of the Host's (his possible patron's) request; but equally, as the poet of the group of pilgrims, though he ought to be able to do so, he cannot write a tale that brings together the two competing goals of the contest: he cannot align both 'sentence' and 'solaas'. He provides either cheery entertainment or cerebral drudgery.

The scholars above tend to justify their impatience by arguing that medieval readers would have taken a different view of the tale: E. Talbot Donaldson blamed the blandness of the tale on the tastes of its readers: that *Mel* was 'very popular in the Middle Ages when readers did not entirely distinguish between pleasure in literature and pleasure in being edified'; Tatlock justified the 'unspeakably trite and dry' sayings in *Melibee* by suggesting that the 'literature of the Middle Ages proves that [medieval readers] took a different view of such things'.<sup>59</sup> Foster takes this argument in a different direction, stating: 'My conjecture is that Chaucer never really expected most of his audience to bear with much of *Melibee*...the timeless wisdom and practical advice in *Melibee* would have to be respected, but the potential audience would have known the gist of *Melibee* and would have been much more likely to have "taken it as read" rather than to actually read it'.<sup>60</sup> Scholars offer for *Mel* one of three possible apologies: either that it is an extension of the joke Chaucer makes in telling *Thop*, reciting a tale that is so fantastically dull that the audience yearns once again for the 'drasty rymyng' of the romance (*Thop* l.930); that medieval readers were simply far more patient than modern ones and so would have enjoyed the pedantry of *Mel*; or, as Foster claims, that medieval readers would have simply 'taken it as read'.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> E. T. Donaldson, *Chaucer's Poetry: An Anthology for the Modern Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Ronald Press, 1975), p.1101, and Tatlock (1907), p.189.

<sup>60</sup> Foster (2000), pp.403-405.

<sup>61</sup> As Foster elaborates: those that support the idea that *Melibee* is a joke include: Trevor Whittock, *A Reading of the Canterbury Tales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p.213; John Gardner, *The Life and Times of Chaucer* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), p.291, and Thomas J. Farrell, 'Chaucer's Little

This second excuse is one that is quite often applied to medieval interpretation: that medieval readers were not only more accustomed to reading texts that we find dull, tedious, or impenetrable, but would have enjoyed them with a fervour that we cannot imagine. These scholars attempt to explain medieval responses by comparison to or distinction from modern responses. However, these claims are made without taking into consideration *Mel's* manuscript contexts. As such, the modern responses above fail to take into consideration the relative novelty of Middle English prose. It is in the unfamiliarity of a prose tale that the manuscripts provide the most features of layout, and it is here that we see the workings of the manuscript page in demonstrating the responses to literature of the fifteenth-century manuscript producer.

The tale lacks the 'art' of *Thop*: though *Thop* proves unpopular with the Host, its artistry is evident in its complex rhyme system, as well as in the look of the page (as I will detail below). Scribes, having copied the complex layout of *Thop*, are now faced with the challenge of copying *Mel*. The heavy use of layout demonstrates that scribes are aware of the dramatic change in the verse-form of the tale Chaucer now tells, and they display sensitivity in their layout to the meanings of the text – *Mel's* 'sentence' that counterbalances *Thop's* 'solaas'.

The prose in the printed Riverside edition of *CT* appears very different to that in the manuscript. Features of layout, more specifically the paraphs, initials, and notes (as well as guide marks, //, which have been left in the text by the scribe but forgotten by the decorator, and which I recognise as part of the original plan for the layout of the manuscripts), appear amidst the prose text in the manuscripts. These provide colour to break the block of prose. On an analysis of the placement of each of these features throughout the text in each manuscript, it can be seen that these provide three functions: firstly, the proverbs, *sententiae*, and advice quoted and given by Prudence and Melibee to support their arguments are extracted from the

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Treatise, the *Melibee*,' *ChauR* xx (1985), 61-67. Those that suggest it is a serious tale, most likely a form of political advice, include: Donald R. Howard, *The Idea of the Canterbury Tales* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp.309-315; Richard Firth Green, *Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp.140-43; Carolyn P. Collette, 'Heeding the Advice of Prudence: A Context for the *Melibee*,' *ChauR* xxix (1995), 419-29; Lee Patterson, "'What Man Artow?": Authorial Self-Definition in *The Tale of Sir Thopas* and *The Tale of Melibee*,' *SAC* xi (1989), p.151; and Paul Strohm, 'Chaucer's Audience,' *Literature and History* v (1977), 30-39. See also Judith Ferster, *Fictions of Advice: The Literature and Politics of Counsel in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), Chapter 6.

remainder of the text; secondly, the overall structure of the text is indicated by marking the alternation of speakers in the debate between Melibee and Prudence; and thirdly, marginal notes signpost the structure of the lengthy tale.

The clearest use of the layout in *Mel* is in marking the *sententiae*, the advice quoted and the additional truisms spoken by Prudence herself, and the proverbs quoted by Melibee in support of his less sententious arguments. The paraphs that mark the *sententiae* mark more than grammatical sense or sentence heads; rather, they mark the noteworthy sayings that constitute the bulk of each speech in the debate between Prudence and Melibee. It is here that the prose has the most potential to overwhelm, and here that best shows how scribes handled the prose form. Prose was typically reserved for morally weighty texts, usually scholastic or biblical materials: the speeches of Prudence and Melibee certainly do not disappoint in this. As *Mel* is a tale laden with ‘sentence’ over ‘solaas’, a profusion of proverbs is expected. Indeed, the prologue to the tale itself modestly states that it contains ‘somwhat moore/Of proverbes than ye han herd bifoore’ (ll.955-6). Paraphs and guide marks highlight the *sententiae* of the authorities quoted by Prudence and Melibee: Seneca, Solomon, Cato, Jesus son of Sirach, Peter Alphonse, St. Augustine, Tully (Cicero), Cassiodorus, St. Gregory, an unnamed poet, and several anonymous proverbs are among those cited by the two debaters to support their arguments for and against revenge. These *sententiae* are usually preceded by the phrase, ‘Salomon seith’, for example, and then followed by the precept.

El places a paraph or guide mark before the speaker, ‘¶Salomon seith’, then another before the *sententia*, ‘¶ther as thou ne mayst haue noon audience enforce thee nat to speke’ (f.155r – a guide mark is left for the second paraph to be inserted). Cp and Ha4 do the same, though less rigorously than El, and they sometimes tend to place a paraph only at the speaker rather than both the speaker and his saying (for example, ‘¶ Wherefore Tulli seith [no paraph] Amonges alle the pestilences that been in freendshipe the grettteste is flaterie’, Cp f.221v, Ha4 f.211v). More often than Cp and Ha4, Hg, Gg, Dd and La similarly place paraph marks only before the speaker and not his maxim (for example ‘¶For thus seith Tullius [no paraph] that ther is a manere

garneson þ[a]t no man may venquyse ne disconfite', Hg f.224v; Gg f.318v; La f.198v; Dd. f.168v). Pw tends to place a paraph at either the saying or the speaker, not both (for example, 'For thus seith Tullius ¶that ther is a manere garnysoun' f.236v). It should be noted that these manuscripts place paraphs in all of the above ways sporadically throughout the text, quite often forgetting a paraph where the layout of the rest of the text suggests one would usually be placed. Therefore, the variation between manuscripts as to whether the paraph is placed before the name of the authority or before the precept seems to have been irrelevant to the scribes. Each of the manuscripts does not decisively mark either only the *sententiae* or only the speaker. There is a sense, therefore, that regardless of whether a mark was placed before a speaker or his *sententia*, the overriding importance was that this part of the text was somehow marked – that it was somehow made clear on the page, flagged by the paraphs.

The contents of Melibee and Prudence's speeches are those parts which scholars assume readers would have 'taken as read', only finding interest in the gist or relying on their prior knowledge of the proverbs quoted. However, the tale is overloaded with sayings, and it seems unlikely that readers of the text could have recalled as many proverbs as there are in *Mel*. The Latin version of Chaucer's French source itself advises against remembering quite so many *sententiae*:

Solet enim plus prodesse, si pauca sapientiae praecepta memoria teneas, et illa in promptu et in usu tibi sint quam si multa quidem didiceris, et illa memoriae non commendaveris

(It is of far more benefit for you to have only a few wise precepts available and in use, than that you should learn a great deal which you cannot commit to memory).<sup>62</sup>

Instead, the tale invites the reader to marvel at just how many proverbs both Prudence and Melibee can recall and to judge the propriety and ingenuity of their usage. The manuscript layout focuses attention on the *sententiae* quoted, rather than ignoring the proverbs or taking them as read. We have already seen the overlap of the Wife of Bath's sources and Dorigen's. Here too, marking the *sententiae* recalls the use of source material to argue points – the Wife,

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<sup>62</sup> Albertanus of Brescia's *Liber consolacionis et consilii*, trans. Patterson in Patterson (1989), pp.145-6.

Dorigen, and here Prudence and Melibee use recycled material to substantiate their arguments. By marking up these *sententiae*, the scribes relate this tale to the others in the collection.

The manuscripts, furthermore, mark Prudence's own advice. Whereas Melibee relies on the proverbs of others to make his arguments, Prudence provides her own pearls of wisdom. A paraph or guide mark indicates Prudence's advice on weeping, for example: 'But though attemptee wepyng be ygraunted outrageous wepyng c[er]tes is deffended' (El f.154r; Hg f.216v; Cp f.218r; Ha4 f.207r; La f.192v). A paraph or guide mark also marks the maxim that follows: 'Mesure of wepyng sholde be considered' (Hg f.216v; Cp f.218r; Ha4 f.207r; La f.192v, and Pw f.228r). The related manuscripts, Cp, La, and Ha4, tend to mark more sections of Prudence's speeches than any of the other manuscripts: the advice Prudence gives on weeping, for example, is set out thus:

¶ And whan þou hast forgon þi frendes do diligence to gete another freend ¶  
 And þis is more wisdom than for to wepe for thy freend which that thou has  
 lorn ¶ For þer in is no boote ¶ And therefore if yow governe yow by sapience,  
 put away sorwe Out of youre herte (Cp 218r; La f.192v; Ha4 f.207v).

Cp, La, and Ha4 pay close attention to the series of *sententiae* that constitute the bulk of the text: they considered the *sententiae* of the piece vital to its understanding and so mark these rigorously in the layout: these are not lost amongst the prose text. The scribes of these manuscripts were attuned to the text as a counterbalance to *Thop*: that *Mel* is a serious tale rich in proverbs. The dense clusters of these pearls of wisdom are marked up on the page to exaggerate the 'sentence' of the text.

Each of the eight manuscripts also carefully highlights the examples of good practice Prudence cites to support her defence of women: the examples she gives of Rebecca, Judith, Abigail and Hester are each carefully marked with a paraph or guide mark: 'Iacob by good conseil of his mooder'; 'Judith by hire good conseil'; 'Abygail deliue[re]d Nabal hir housbonde fro David the kyng'; and 'Hester enhaunced greetly by hir good conseil the peple of god' (El f.156r; Hg f.219v; Gg f.311v; Cp 221r; Ha4 f.210r; La f.195r; Dd. f.164r; and Pw f.231r). These passages are also found in the *Merchant's Tale*, where they are in verse rather than prose. The

scribes handle these passages differently in the *Merchant's Tale*: El and Hg mark each example of good women with a paraph and with lengthy glosses. However, Gg, Cp, La, Ha4, Dd and Pw do not place paraphs at the examples in the *Merchant's Tale*, though they do in *Mel*. These scribes distinguish between verse and prose in their rendering of each format. They consider prose to be in greater need of mark-up than verse: it is in the unfamiliar prose that this marking is most necessary.

In *Mel*, Prudence's pearls of wisdom are not attributed to a particular source: they are spoken by Prudence and are her own *sententiae*. By marking these lines with a paraph, the scribes claim for Prudence an equal importance to those authorities she quotes. An odd occurrence can be seen in the placement of a paraph in Dd: at f.161v the scribe places a paraph adjacent to Prudence rather than Melibee: 'Melibee answered unto his wife ¶ Prudence'. Though this may have been a case of mismarking – the scribe noticing the use of the word 'Prudence' and automatically flagging her name – it suggests that here the scribe considered Prudence to be a more central figure in the text than Melibee and so was more alert to her name on the page.

An extension of this effect is the placement of those paraphs and guide marks which highlight not only the *sententiae* and Prudence's own pearls of wisdom, but also those points that have rhetorical force. 'What is better than gold. Iaspre', states Prudence (Ha4 f.210v); 'What is better than Iasper wisdom', she adds (El f.156v; Hg f.219v; Gg. f.312r); 'And what is better than wisdom woman', she continues (El f.156v; Hg f.219v; Gg. f.312r); 'And what is better than a good woman no thyng', she concludes (El f.156r; Hg f.219v; Gg. f.312r; and La f.195r). Prudence often speaks systematically, listing her points in order. Paraphs, initials, and guide marks are placed where each new point begins: 'First he þ[a]t axeth conseil'; 'The firste is this'; 'And secondely'; and 'The thridde is this' (El f.156v; Hg f.220r; Gg. f.312v; Cp 221v; Ha4 f.210v; La f.195v; Dd. f.164r; and Pw f.231v). It is possible that the placement of paraphs here are reflex reactions to repetitious sentences or to ordered points, such as those marked in the ordered text of the *GP*. The markup has, however, the effect of suggesting that the scribes deemed a

noteworthy part of the text to be its rhetoric: El, Hg, and Gg rigorously mark these highly stylised sentences with care and heightened attention.

La, on the other hand, only marks the last line of this speech: this is the highest note of the rhetorical build up, and, in keeping with the function of the other paraphs in La, here it marks the conclusion of the speech, that is, another of Prudence's *sententiae*. Prudence's aptitude for rhetoric is mentioned in the text itself: like Lady Philosophy, Prudence is an astute debater who understands the need to convince her opponent. Melibee himself notes this: 'Whan Melibee hadde herd the wordes of his wyf Prudence, he seyde thus: 'I se wel that the word of Salomon is sooth. He seith that "wordes that been spoken discretly by ordinaunce been honycombes, for they yeven swetnesse to the soule and hoolsomnesse to the body"' (l.1111-2). Prudence here brings 'sentence' and 'solaas' together, a feat that Chaucer as pilgrim-storyteller is not able to achieve: it is only at the very end of the text that this is noted – El, Hg, Gg, and Ha4 have a paraph to mark this line (El f.156v, Hg f.219v, Gg f.312r, Ha4 f.210v). Prudence's arguments are planned and timed with care: 'Thanne dame Prudence, whan that she saugh how that hir housbonde shoop hym for to wreken hym on his foes, and to bigynne were, she in ful humble wise, whan she saugh hir tyme, seide to hym this wordes' (l.1050). The layout of the manuscripts exposes this on the page, bringing Prudence's powerful rhetoric and perceptive timing to the fore by flagging such points with paraphs.

There is a similarity between this marking and the use of large initials in *Frant* to mark rhetorical parts of Dorigen and Aurelius's speeches. By highlighting such rhetoric, the layout exaggerates the contrast between Prudence and Dorigen. Both Dorigen and Prudence use rhetorical exempla to delay action – Dorigen her own death, Prudence Melibee's revenge. The initials in both tales demonstrate the neat organisation of rhetorical points and examples in order to make a point. However, where one character manages to convince using her rhetoric (Melibee does not take action, and the rhetoric 'works'), the other fails to convince and so to instigate action (Dorigen does not commit suicide because she is not fully convinced by the examples she gives and searches for more). The layout, however, shows little distinction

between the two rhetorical speeches – whether ‘successful’ or not in achieving what they set out to achieve, the layout indicates *sententiae* and source equally for each speech. In doing so, the scribes outline the extent of the overlap between the two tales. Equally, however, they also indicate scribal interests in traditional modes of marking rhetoric. Numerous manuscripts have ‘nota’ glosses or a *diple* in the margin to indicate pithy sentences or quotations to be extracted from the main text, and these were especially common in Latin sermon manuscripts full of rhetorical statements.<sup>63</sup> Scribes work within this tradition to mark the *sententiae* in literary texts.

However, the second of these three functions, to indicate the overall structure of the text, demonstrates that, though working within an established tradition, scribes also display sensitivity towards poetic structures within the tale itself. The tale is a debate between Melibee and his wife, Prudence. The paraphs and initials highlight this aspect of the tale by dividing the text into sections according to the speaker. Following the introductory tale and the beginning of the debate proper, the layout becomes increasingly regular across the eight manuscripts. From here onwards, the alternation of speakers is highlighted by paraphs, initials, and guide marks. All eight manuscripts mark the start of Melibee’s response: ‘This melibeus answered anon and seyde’ (El f.154r; Hg f.216v; Gg f.308r; Cp f.218r; Ha4 f.207r; La f.192v; Dd. f.161r, and Pw f.228r). This continues regularly throughout the tale, each manuscript marking, mostly consistently, the beginning of each of Melibee’s and Prudence’s speeches, often beginning with ‘Then Melibee’ or ‘Prudence answered’. El, Cp, and Gg do this most rigorously: El uses an initial each time the speakers alternate, forty-nine times in total. The scribe of Cp has underlined proper nouns throughout the manuscript: the names of ‘Melibee’ and ‘Prudence’ are underlined, though sporadically, throughout the text, marking for the reader the speakers of the lengthy prose. The scribe of Gg seems to be more interested than those of the other manuscripts in dividing the tale in this way: he most clearly separates the long prose text into the speeches of its two protagonists (this scribe also marks ‘Chaucer’ in the list of pilgrims in *GP*, f.139r). The scribe

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<sup>63</sup> Parkes (1992), pp.57-60; De Hamel (2001), pp.105-106.

begins a new line of text each time the speakers alternate, and often ends the previous line with a flourish ('~~~~') in order to fill the blank space remaining. The scribe has actively paragraphed the text, separating one speaker from the next. This more carefully accentuates the division of speeches on the page than does any other manuscript, and marks clearly the development of the debate. As such, the scribe of Gg gives preference to the tale's format: he does not privilege the distinction between the 'solaas' of *Thop* and the serious 'sentence' of *Mel*; rather, he is more interested in the text as a debate. By emphasising this aspect of the text, the layout suggests a further meaning to the tale: that Chaucer, in writing this tale, plays with the concept of *CT* as a whole. *CT* is a competition set up between the pilgrims: as a whole, the text is a debate between the pilgrims in a contest to convince the audience of the worth of each tale. The tales themselves are a plethora of reused *sententiae*, just as the text as a whole often recycles narrative material – and the repetition of glosses and the continuing mark up of these from tale to tale emphasises the amount of crossover between tales. Here, however, both Melibee and Prudence have an equal chance to speak: they do not squabble or disrupt each other's arguments, the way the pilgrims do. Chaucer, in choosing a debate structure for his own tale draws a parallel between the worth of stories and the ability of their tellers. The layout of Gg brings this aspect of the tale to the fore.

The debate structure is indicated in the text itself: the beginning of each speech is indicated by words denoting verbal communication, for example, 'this noble wyf Prudence...whan she saugh hir tyme she seyde hym in this wise...This Melibeus answered anon and seyde...Prudence answered', and so on (ll.979-88). Whilst translating closely from its French source, Chaucer's text adjusts its terminology in order to label the process of debate.<sup>64</sup> The tale revolves around the measured process of producing and refining convincing arguments. For this reason, its repetitive structure, the interchange between Melibee and Prudence, is made clear on the

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<sup>64</sup> See for example, Betsy Bowden, 'Ubiquitous Format? What Ubiquitous Format? Chaucer's Tale of Melibee as a Proverb Collection' *Oral Tradition* xvii (2002), 169-207: 'the resulting effect is that Prudence in Middle English sounds even more justly victorious than in French, and her husband sounds even more wrong', p.172.

manuscript page. El and Gg do this most sensitively and consistently, using large initials to note the beginning of each rebuttal and reserving the use of paraphs for the marking of *sententiae*.

These reflect the use of such features to mark those logically constructed theological disputations in the manuscripts that Parkes describes.<sup>65</sup> The lengthy glosses in the prose manuscripts of Rolle and Peter Lombard would have also been familiar models for the layout of *Mel*.<sup>66</sup> These manuscripts are divided on the page with initials and paraphs at the head of each new section to distinguish one section from the next. In the prose of the Lombard Psalter, MS Auct. E. Inf 6, and the Eadwine Psalter, Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R.17.1, the initials alternate in colour between blue or silver initials and gold initials.<sup>67</sup> El and Cp (the two manuscripts that are the most expensively produced) likewise mark the alternation of speakers on the page with an alternation of colour: they are either red and blue, or blue with red flourishes and gold with purple flourishes. This indicates more clearly the division of the prose on the page so that the reader notices more plainly that the text is a dialogue between two speakers, ensuring that the speeches of each are noted and not merged into one by the use of a single colour. The alternation of colour also ensures that each part of the text is noted – a blue initial is placed after a gold initial and vice versa, so that the text is a marked up, step-by-step argument.

This use of layout to mark the interchange between Melibee and Prudence is, as Parkes suggests, organisational and punctuational: however, though it does not mark sentences grammatically, the layout here does mark the structure of the text as whole.<sup>68</sup> However, this marking is not an end in itself. The division into speakers is the base organisation of the text. This is necessary so as to impose an order onto the flagged *sententiae*. The tale is filled with past sayings and previous wisdom. Here they are put into the context of the debate and used as evidence to support the arguments of each speaker. The paraphs that mark the *sententiae*

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<sup>65</sup> See Parkes (1976), pp.116-117.

<sup>66</sup> For Rolle's manuscript layout, see Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 953, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 12, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc 286. For Peter of Lombard's manuscript layout, see Oxford Bodleian Library, MS. Auct. D. 2.8.

<sup>67</sup> T. A. Heslop, 'The Illuminated Initials' in Gibson, Heslop, and Pfaff (1992), pp.53-59, pp.56-57.

<sup>68</sup> See Parkes (1992), pp.121-135.

quoted support the development of the text, the debate format, in a way that demonstrates the nuances of the movement of the text: the *sententiae* do not stand alone, but are part of the calculated moves of each debater. By marking both the *sententiae* and their debate context, the reader is alerted to the format of the text. The manuscripts mark not only the back and forth between the two speakers, but also the back and forth between past wisdom and its application to the situation at hand. The text retrospectively explains its arguments, clarifying them through the manuscript layout.

Furthermore, the context of the debate, the plot of the tale, is also marked in order to indicate its development. Each of the eight manuscripts marks the opening of the text with both a rubric and a large initial 'A' between two and six lines high, to announce the start of the tale. The plot portion of the text – the assault on Prudence and her daughter, Sophie, and Melibee's discovery of them – is marked slightly differently in each manuscript. Hg, Cp, La, and Ha4 mark the start of the tale itself 'vp on a day bifel' with a paraph or guide mark (Hg f.216v, Cp f.217v, La f.192r, Ha4 f.207r); El marks the following line, 'Thre of hise olde foes han it espied' (f.153v); and Cp goes on to mark 'And beeten his wyf', 'And laften hire for deed', 'he ylike a mad man', 'But nouȝt for þ[a]y he gan to wepe' (f.217v). Each manuscript, therefore, highlights the key aspects of the tale, outlining the development of the plot that leads up to the debate. However, the difference in each manuscript indicates that each scribe responded to the text differently: the scribes of Hg, La, and Ha4 felt it was vital to mark the beginning of the description of the assault (possibly as a reminder of the abrupt end of *Thop*); that of El found it more important to flag the sentence which explains that it was specifically Melibee's enemies who committed the crime; Cp marks the most lines of all, outlining stages of the assault as a whole.

Those manuscripts that share a scribe do not always lay out this section identically. The scribe of El has changed the placement of the paraph from its placement in Hg: rather than mark the beginning of the tale, 'vp on a day' as he does in Hg (f.216r), the scribe has decided to mark in El 'Thre of hise olde foes han it espied' (f.153v), indicating the line that marks the opening of the plot rather than that which refers back to the previous tale. This line marks the beginning of the

assault and the beginning of the tale itself: the repercussion of the assault is the debate between Melibee and Prudence. The scribe, in marking this line, is indicating the commencement of the text and the incident in the narrative that is fundamental to the meaning of the debate. If the scribe was aware of the reference to 'vp on a day' in *Thop*, the first line marked in Hg suggests he was deliberately trying to disassociate the two tales, the more serious from the light hearted, with his choice of placement in El.

The scribe of Cp and Ha4 (Scribe D) has marked different lines in each manuscript: in Ha4 he has only marked the beginning of the section, in Cp, he has marked more fully the outline of the narrative. It seems that when copying Cp, Scribe D felt the need to flag more sentences than when copying Ha4. He has, in Cp, marked those sentences which divide the text as far as possible into its constituent sections: the narrative is a step by step development, the way that the debate is a step by step process. In Cp, then, it seems that Scribe D was more interested in the framework of the tale than he was when copying Ha4; in Ha4 he seems to have been more interested in indicating the contents of the debate than its context.

This indicates scribal attitudes towards the exemplars they used in the creation of these manuscripts. From a comparison of layout, we can extrapolate the provisions in the lost copy texts, some of which may have been Chaucer's own working papers. The disparate markings in each manuscript, despite the overlap of scribe, could be an indication that there were a variety of exemplars, possibly fragmented papers, circulating piecemeal between these scribes.<sup>69</sup> The dissimilarity between Scribe B's two manuscripts and between Scribe D's two manuscripts suggests that they may not have copied each from the same exemplar. However, it is equally likely that they chose to alter that layout found in their copy text to clarify the text in their own manuscript copy. Cp is textually related to La, suggesting a shared exemplar. Its layout is very close to that of Cp at the beginning of *Mel*: where there is a paraph in Cp, there is a paraph in La. Even those paraphs which are unique to Cp are replicated in La: for example, Cp has a paraph at 'But nouȝt for þy he gan to wepe' (Cp f.217v); La has a paraph at the same line, though no other

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<sup>69</sup> See Introduction n.70.

manuscripts do. However, the two manuscripts are far from identical in their layout throughout the rest of this tale: La certainly has fewer glosses than Cp; moreover, after the beginning of the manuscript, La has lines marked with paraphs where Cp has no paraph and vice versa. Though it is possible that the two manuscripts shared an exemplar, it seems that the scribe's own impulse took over at some point during the copying and he flagged those lines he deemed to be central to the interpretation of the tale.

Similarly, Cp and La are related by exemplar to Pw. Again, however, the layout between these three manuscripts differs vastly, with paraphs in Cp and La that do not occur in Pw. This also suggests that despite the shared exemplar, no manuscripts are identically produced in terms of their layout. Rather, layout was an individual choice on the part of the scribe.

In addition to the paraph marks and initials, the margins of *Mel* in the eight manuscripts are filled with short notes. These contribute to the overall composition of the page and further break up the long prose work on the page. These work in conjunction with the paraphs and initials to extend the text beyond the block of prose in the central column of the page into its margins. This is the third function of this layout.

Despite the length of the prose, there are relatively few notes across the eight manuscripts: only 230 notes in total, with the majority, 174, in El. Only twenty-six of these are found in Cp, seventeen in Dd, five in Hg, three in Ha4 and in Gg, and two in La. There are no notes in the margins of Pw (see above). Generally, where there is a note in the margin, it is linked to a sentence in the main text using a paraph therein. The majority of these notes are accompanied by paraphs. Paraphs, therefore, are in the middle of the prose text as well as in the margins. Much like the colour coded glosses of the Psalter in Lincoln, Cathedral Library MS 18 (A.1.1) (c.1170), in which each verse begins with a coloured initial, the coloured counterpart of which is in the appropriate commentary, the paraphs here are a coded reference system, pointing from the notes in the margin to the *sententiae* inside of the text and vice versa.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> A comparison is made between the Lincoln Psalter and Trinity College R.17.1 in Gibson, Heslop, and Pfaff (1992), especially Gibson, 'The Latin Apparatus', pp.108 and 114.

The first function of the notes is to indicate in the margins the change in speaker. El meticulously notes each of Melibee's and Prudence's speeches with the words 'Melibee' or 'Prudence' in the margins. In Gg, the scribe of which is particularly interested in the debate aspect of the text, the majority of its notes are reserved to indicate the alternation of speakers. These are akin to those glosses that mark speakers in manuscripts of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* and those speaker markers used in the manuscripts of Gower's *CA* which mark the interchange between Amans and Genius.<sup>71</sup>

The other manuscripts more meticulously note in the margins the names of the authorities quoted by the speakers – 'Seneca', 'Cato', and the others – rather than indicating the alternation of the speakers. The two notes in La mark the maxims of Seneca and Solomon (ff.192v and 194r), though the scribe marks no more, possibly due to the inadequate marginal space. In El, the notes are aligned in the margins not with the names of each authority in the text, but with their maxim. This ensures that it is not the name of the authority but the *sententia* that is indicated by the note. Like El, the notes in Hg tend to highlight only the authorities quoted rather than the speakers: however, the scribe in glossing Hg ignores Melibee and Prudence altogether (which he does not in El) and glosses only Seneca, Solomon, and the others. The notes stop rather abruptly after f.216v with the exception of two further notes: one in the gutter of f.219v is a summary of Prudence's defence of women, 'Auro quid melius. iaspis. quid iaspide. sensus. Sensus quid. Mulier. quid mulier[e]. Nichil' (in a lighter ink than the main text); and the other in the left margin of f.222v is the word 'Melibeus', the only note for a character of the tale. Perhaps this was due to the inadequate preparation of the margins of Hg to receive lengthy text – a problem rectified on the production of El. Though short notes are present in the margins of Hg elsewhere, nothing longer is written. This second note is written in red ink, and is the only red ink to appear in the text in Hg. It is placed alongside the only initial to appear mid-text and corresponds to the only mid-text large initial in El. The scribe differentiates this from the rest of the text in order to highlight for the readers the structure of the tale: this note is placed at the

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<sup>71</sup> See Chapter 2: Gower, especially p.142 ff.

point in the tale where Melibee understands fully that he can trust the counsel of Prudence, and where the debate on vengeance begins. The marking of this central point in the text highlights the key moment, and indicates that the tale is taking a new turn.

Like those in El and Hg, the twenty-six notes in Cp tend to focus on the maxims quoted rather than the alternation of the debaters (as does the placement of paraphs in Cp, La and Ha4). As a result, hardly any of Melibee's speeches are glossed. Some notes, like those in El, are indicated with paraphs, though the majority of them are not, due to the manuscript having an incomplete scheme of decoration. There are some notes without paraphs which seem to be added in an informal hand, possibly the same hand as the supervisor (as this note hand also appears when corrections are made). These notes are, however, sporadic in occurrence and are often squeezed into the right margin where they do not fit properly, suggesting that though the notes are part of the overall plan, the page was not as carefully laid out as it is in, for example, El. The placement of notes throughout the text is identical to the positioning of the notes in El. Despite the inadequate marginal space, the fact that the scribe still incorporates the notes suggests the importance of these to the reading of the text: the scribe deemed it vital that the authorities of the *sententiae* were noted to accompany the text.

Though there are no notes in the margins of Pw, two of the notes that are found La and El do appear: 'Qualiter Ih[es]u fleuit p[ro]pt[er] mortem Lazari' and 'Ap[osto]lus a Romanos writeþ' (f.228r). However, rather than being placed in the margins of the page, these two notes are incorporated into the main text of Pw (as are Gower's lengthy glosses, which were also incorporated into the main text).<sup>72</sup> The first note has a paraph in the main text; the second does not. Though there is no extension of the text to the margins of the page in Pw, the in-text notes function in the same way here as rubrics do: the note summarises the text that precedes it, and the use of Latin highlights the authority of Prudence's cited maxims. The paraphs in Pw are, like the notes, also sporadic, and many are unique to this manuscript (the version of *Mel* in Pw is not copied from Cp but from another exemplar). Though there are many paraphs that mark the

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<sup>72</sup> As discussed in Chapter 2, Glosses (p.155 ff.).

same quotations as El, the unique paraphs tend to fall in the middle of sentences where they do not seem to have any obvious function: f.139v, for example, has a paraph in the middle of a word: 'but filfilleden her wik¶ked wille'. This manuscript is not as systematically glossed or provided with paraphs as El: there seems to be no clear plan for these unique paraphs and notes, which perhaps suggests that the scribe of Pw was less interested in marking up the text than the scribe of El.<sup>73</sup> However, the placement of the notes inside the main text has its own interest: the authority of the text is firmly placed back in the central column so that the text is not glossed, but centralised (as I have argued above).

The notes that are found in Dd are also identical to those in El, with the exception of five. The scribe of Dd, unlike the other manuscripts, and unlike in El, does not state the name of the authority quoted; instead, he simply writes 'nota'. The five unique notes indicate points made mid-speech, rather than indicating quoted authorities: 'Nota' appears adjacent to 'Ne truste nou3t' (f.165v); 'He þat may haue the lordshipe' (f.171r); 'And if thy Fortune change' (f.172r); 'he seith also' (f.172v); and 'And þ[er]fore he saiþ' (f.173v). The scribe of Dd seems to have deemed these sentences far too important to ignore: he breaks down the sayings to indicate not just the start of the *sententiae*, but also their following precepts. The use of the word 'nota' does not identify the source or explain the text. Rather, this functions in precisely the way suggested above: the reader's eye is persuaded to penetrate the long prose to find the source of the note – he is tempted into the text by the note in order to discover the purpose of the note. Akin to those in Pw, the notes here also support the authority of the centre of the page. While it is true that the notes, by mentioning Seneca, Solomon and others, do give the reader cause to pause and consider an external text, allowing his mind to wander from the page at hand, the features of the manuscript page, the notes, along with large initials and paraph marks, work together to equally mark the alternation of speakers, the debate format. In this way, the authorities are

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<sup>73</sup> The scribe of Pw does produce some carefully copied de-luxe manuscripts; this is not one of them. For a list of the deluxe manuscripts known to be copied by this scribe, see 'Scribal Profile: Petworth Scribe', Mooney, Horobin, and Stubbs. *Late Medieval English Scribes*. 5 February 2012. Web. <http://www.medievalscribes.com/index.php?browse=hands&id=3&location=Petworth&library=Petworth%20House,%20The%20National%20Trust&msid=116&nav=off>.

continuously placed within the framework of the tale, and the *sententiae* are continuously related back to it by the placement of paraphs. The scribe of Pw does this literally by placing the marginal notes in the body of the prose.

Though it is true that the layout of all of the manuscripts is not completed to the same standard as El, the paraphs and notes, though sometimes erratically laid out, are placed throughout the prose: here they break up the lengthy text. This renders the page reader-friendly and the paraphs and notes act as footholds to aid navigation through the unfamiliar format. Of the approximately 3,200 total paraphs across all eight manuscripts, there are fewer than two-hundred uniquely placed paraphs, suggesting that there is a shared concept of the way in which this text was laid out: the scribes of these eight manuscripts had in mind a plan to render this long prose text more manageable. This may have been a layout inherited from an exemplar: if so, the scribes make an active effort to maintain the paraphs and initials at the logical places throughout the text. It would certainly have been easier to copy the text without spaces for paraphs and initials; the scribes maintain these nonetheless, suggesting their importance in the rendering of the text.

Although not every paraph and note is replicated in every manuscript, the layouts of all eight manuscripts have a shared attitude towards the page: that is, to break down this 'lump in our oatmeal' into smaller, palatable sections of both the debate and the wisdom that is spoken during it. The text itself has little plot: it is more a succession of maxims – a series of bullet pointed notes rather than a tale.<sup>74</sup> The layout of the eight manuscripts exaggerates this structure. The repetitive nature of the text creates a series of sound bites – often starting with 'This is to say', 'Thou shalt', 'Then shall ye', 'And therefore', 'And moreover' – which are repeatedly highlighted by the manuscripts' apparatus in all eight manuscripts and made obvious on the page. These notes disambiguate and clarify the contents of the main text: their function is not only to identify the authorities quoted by Prudence and Melibee. Rather, on the manuscript

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<sup>74</sup> See Stephen G. Moore, 'Apply Yourself: Learning While Reading the *Tale of Melibee*', *ChauR* xxxviii (2003), 83-97, p.84.

page, they provide a different function: by locating and identifying the *sententiae*, the text is clarified – it is no longer an impenetrable expanse of prose, but a text with a guide.

The layout of the text brings this to the fore – by relating the *sententiae* to the debate by the use of paraps, initials, and notes, the two are tied together and their relationship clarified. The layout, in this way, simplifies the process of reading the text. The notes and their corresponding paraps in the body of the text act as hooks for the wandering eye: the paraps in the main text catch the attention of the reader; the notes anchor these paraps to the side of the page, ensuring that attention is directed back into the central text, back to the way the *sententiae* are used therein, rather than away from it. Contrary to Camille's suggestion that the glosses and other marginalia subvert the authority of the page, the notes in this way cause the reader not to pause to consider an external text, but rather pause to consider the central one, Chaucer's own.<sup>75</sup>

From these three functions we can posit something of fifteenth-century responses to literature through the page. Scribes here attempt to render the unfamiliar prose text into something more recognisable. The marks on the page collectively function to direct and to guide through the text. The decoration points from the closed manuscript, to the tale of choice, to a particular section or speech and to the *sententiae* therein. The hierarchy of this decoration encourages this movement: borders and large opening initials signal the beginning of the tale; smaller initials or paraps signal the change in speakers; and further paraps indicate the *sententiae* or rhetorical pearls of wisdom which build up the nuances and steps of Melibee and Prudence's arguments. The text is annotated by its layout. As such, the scribes mark up the text so that the features of the *mise-en-page* indicate its meaning: they respond to the text as needing a guide. The *forma tractatus* is thus used in support of the *forma tractandi* and the overall form of the text is fundamental to its understanding. However, sometimes the *mise-en-page* disrupts the meaning in order to indicate another aspect of the text, as I will demonstrate next.

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<sup>75</sup> See Camille (1992), p.10.

## Rhyme scheme

The second half of this chapter will revisit the question raised at the start: why the manuscripts of *TC* show more regularity in their layout than those of *CT*. Despite having a variety of disparate textual traditions, the *mise-en-page* of the *TC* manuscripts is largely similar.<sup>76</sup> This equally complicates the methods of marking the text outlined above. There is a difference between *TC* and *CT* in that the former is a whole whereas the latter is in parts. However, another aspect of *TC* that differentiates it from *CT* overrides any other layout: whereas *CT* is written in a mix of verse-forms, *TC* is completely in stanzas. As this half of the chapter will show, the layout here is not solely concerned with marking the movements of this text; often another system of marking overrides those systems of marking described above. Scribes demonstrate careful awareness of the poetic form of the text – that which distinguishes it most completely from scholastic or biblical texts, and which is central in producing a manuscript of literature. This means of layout offers another type of *divisio textus* or *forma tractatus*, not one used for responding to poetic meaning and nuance or supporting the *forma tractandi*, but one that undermines these. I will examine first the curiously formatted *Thop* which illuminates the layout of *TC*.

### The Tale of Sir Thopas

On a glance at the manuscripts of *CT*, the most obviously distinct layout is that of *Thop*. Wholly dissimilar to any of its brother texts, and especially unlike the prose *Mel*, the humorously petite *Thop* is written in tail-rhymed verses. The rhymes are purposefully terrible and often bounce out of control. It is a poem of fits and starts and, though it ought to have an energetic rhythm, it unfortunately never quite manages to gather enough pace to do so. In the majority of the manuscripts of *CT*, *Thop* is presented on the page using tie-lines: that is, lines that link

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<sup>76</sup> See Root (1914). As Root describes, Cp1 is consistently  $\gamma$ ; Gg Bk I-II.63 is consistently  $\beta$ ; II.64-1209 a 'mixed' text, predominantly  $\alpha$  in character but with frequent  $\beta$  readings; II.1210-III.398 resumes  $\beta$  character; III.399-end is consistently  $\alpha$  manuscript; Cl is consistently  $\gamma$ ; R consistently  $\beta$ ; H1 consistently  $\gamma$ ; H2 Hands 1 and 2 consistently  $\alpha$ ; Hands 3 and 4 present  $\alpha$  readings in Book I and  $\beta$  in the rest. See also Wingeatt (1984), p.51 who develops Root's work on the textual tradition of *TC*, and Hanna (1984) pp.191-205, and (1992), pp.173-88, who disputes Root.

together the tailed-rhymed verses of the text. In the printed editions of Chaucer, nothing of this curious layout is preserved. The *Riverside Chaucer* presents the tale in a simple two-column format, the same format used uniformly throughout the volume. In its manuscript context, however, the tale looks entirely alien. Tail-rhymed lines are extracted from the main column of text and are written in a second makeshift column: every third line of text is shifted to the right of the main text.

This arrangement makes the text difficult to read, the eye having continuously to skip across the page in order to access the text in the correct order. To further confuse, in addition to these two columns of text, the bob-lines (five extra rhymes added to the text to vary the rhyme scheme) are written even further to the right, forming a third column of text on the page. This complicated layout has proven somewhat difficult for some of the scribes to reproduce and the three columns are often squeezed into the margins of the page. Furthermore, the lines of the second and third columns are often placed in between the first and second lines rather than after that which it is to follow. Robert Mannyng remarks on the difficulty of fourteenth-century readers in comprehending such a text:

If it were made in ryme couwee...  
That rede Inglis it ere inowe  
That couthe not haf coppled a kowe (*Chronicle*, ll.47, 49-50)<sup>77</sup>

Despite this, the majority of the de-luxe manuscripts of *CT*, including those considered the best manuscripts, present the text in this way: of the fifty-three manuscripts that include *Thop*, twenty-nine use brackets, twenty conform to the two-column layout, and fifteen of these to the three-column layout. Furthermore, though Caxton disregarded the layout in his printed edition, his successor Wynkyn de Worde insisted on reproducing it. The layout was a fundamental part of the text.

Nevertheless, so far only two scholars, each writing twenty years apart, have paid attention to this layout. However, both these scholars focus on the source for these tie-lines, pursuing the question of where such a curious layout may have found influence: where the scribes would

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<sup>77</sup> As excerpted in Wogan-Browne et al. (1999) pp.21-22.

have got the idea to copy the tale in this way. As yet, no one has asked how the text and its layout would have functioned on the page: what purpose these tie-lines served, what they added to the text, and how they might demonstrate specific responses to the tale. Judith Tchann first took an interest in this layout: she posited that it was found in those manuscripts of romance tales that Chaucer may have used as his source for the text.<sup>78</sup> However, she found no tie-lines in these manuscripts and abandoned her theory. Twenty years later, Rhiannon Purdie took up Tchann's original proposition and did manage to find a few examples of this layout in romance manuscripts.<sup>79</sup> Based on this, she suggests that the purpose of the tie-lines in *Thop* is to imitate the look of romance manuscripts. She finds the layout in *Sir Isumbras*, another tale rhyme romance, three manuscripts of which use tie-lines: London, Gray's Inn, MS 20; Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland Advocates', MS 19.2.1; and Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 175. This last manuscript also contains *Beues of Hamtoun*, a text from which *Thop* borrows directly, which also has tale rhyme and tie-lined stanzas.<sup>80</sup> Another copy of this text is found in London, British Library, MS Egerton 2862, a manuscript copied circa 1400, around the same time as the Ellesmere Chaucer was produced. The list of tail-rhymed, tie-lined romances is fairly short: in addition to these four manuscripts, Purdie adds only four others: she finds tie-lines in one copy of the *Sege of Melayne* (London, British Library, MS Additional 31042), in one copy of *Duke Rowland and Sir Otuell of Spayne* (London, British Library, MS Additional 31042), one copy of *Sir Degrevant* (Lincoln, Cathedral Library, MS 91) and one copy of *Sir Ferumbras* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 33).<sup>81</sup> Positing that it hindered a smooth reading of the text, Purdie suggests that tie-lines were not used to facilitate the reading of the text, but rather to imitate a tradition in order to mock the 'reading tastes' of those audience members who enjoyed

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<sup>78</sup> Judith Tchann, 'The Layout of *Sir Thopas* in the Ellesmere, Hengwrt, Cambridge Dd.4.24 and Cambridge Gg.4.27 Manuscripts', *ChauR* xx (1985), 1-13.

<sup>79</sup> Rhiannon Purdie, *Anglicising romance: tail-rhyme and genre in medieval English literature* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2008), p.69, and 'The Implications of Manuscript Layout in Chaucer's *Tale of Sir Thopas*', *FMLS* xli (2005), 264-274.

<sup>80</sup> The copy of this text in the Auchinleck manuscript does not have tie-lines (ff.176r-201r). This could be due to the change in rhyme scheme.

<sup>81</sup> Two of these manuscripts, London, British Library, MS Additional 31042 and Lincoln, Cathedral Library, MS 91, are by the same scribe, Robert Thornton. See Purdie (2005), p.264 and p.272, n.14. These strongly invite the question of individual scribal practice or preference in producing this layout.

tales of romance. This line of argument is an extension of the general understanding of Chaucer's tale: that, as A. K. Moore summarises, *Thop* is a 'penetrating criticism of oral literary art', a mockery of minstrels and the genre of oral romance.<sup>82</sup> Chaucer's choice to tell a tale of old, a 'rym [he] lerned longe agoon', set in a 'fer contree' (l.709 and 718) is generally understood to be a mockery of the tradition of romance story telling: the tale is thought to display Chaucer's 'contemptuous attitude' to oral romances, scorning them as a bypassed fashion in which recitation corrupted the written form.<sup>83</sup> Purdie's argument is understandable: the layout does complicate the understanding of the tale. The great pains taken by scribes in repeatedly reproducing this elaborate layout, however, suggest that for *Thop* this may not be the full story. It seems unlikely that these scribes would have gone to such effort to produce an illegible tale. The vast effort on the part of the scribe indicates that the tie-lines were too significant to ignore, which suggests an alternate function or interest in the text.

It is important to note that tie-lines are not solely reserved for romances; rather, they are also found in the manuscripts of a variety of texts. Most late fourteenth century copies of the *Speculum Vitae* and the *Prick of Conscience* have tie lines, as do many later manuscripts such as British Library, MS Cotton Vespasian D VIII, a copy of the N-Town Cycle. This manuscript displays the use of tie-lines almost throughout. Equally, in Huntington Library, MS HM1, a manuscript of the Towneley cycle, rhyming lines are also indicated by tie-lines. Gg itself contains two non-Chaucerian texts which utilise tie-lines: two love letters, *De amico ad amicam* and *Responsio*, are laid out on the manuscript page in the same way as *Thop*. The latter half of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 86 also has tie-lines for a variety of miscellaneous texts.<sup>84</sup> It seems more often than not, tie-lines are used to demonstrate, not just a romance-genre format,

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<sup>82</sup> A. K. Moore, 'Sir *Thopas* as Criticism of Fourteenth-Century Minstrelsy', *JEGP* liii (1954), 532-45, p.532. See also D. L. Greene, 'The Hunt is Up, Sir *Thopas*: Irony, Pun and Ritual', *Notes and Queries* new series xiii (1966), 169-71.

<sup>83</sup> Moore (1954), p.539.

<sup>84</sup> Tie-lines are found at ff.162r-163r, 'Ragemon le bon'; ff.177r-182v, 'Ci comence le doctrinal de enseignemens de curteisie'; ff.186v-190r, 'Ci comencement les aues noustre dame'; ff.191r-192v, 'Bone preere a nostre seignour iesu crist'; ff.192v-195v, 'Ci comence lestrif de ii dames'; ff.195v-200r, 'Hic incipit carmen inter corpus et animan'; f.200r, 'Ci comence la manere quele amour est pur assaier'; f.200v, 'Chauncoun de noustre seignour'.

but to exaggerate another feature of the text: the rhyme of the text is indicated visually on the page.

These manuscripts represent visually something that ought to be most obvious in a performance of the text. The tale is commonly thought to be a burlesque of the oral storytelling of unskilled and absent-minded minstrels. While the most celebrated early manuscripts of *CT* have tie-lines for each rhyme (El, Hg, Gg, Dd, and Pw), three of the earliest manuscripts do not. These will be discussed briefly here before returning to those manuscripts with tie-lines. Ha4, Cp, and La do not lay out the text in the same format as El, Hg, Gg, Dd, and Pw. The scribes of Ha4, Cp, and La struggle with the layout of this text: the scribes of Ha4 and La attempt the format somewhat but give up half way through each folio, and the scribe of Cp decides to ignore the tie-lines altogether. The scribes of El, Hg, Gg, Dd and Pw, and the scribes of Ha4, Cp, and La in this way provide different responses through the apparatus they offer: as a result, the two different layouts of the text demonstrate different attitudes towards *Thop*.

Ha4 does not set out the text in the three-column format of the other manuscripts, but has the majority of its text in a single column. The scribe does attempt a few tie-lines at the beginning of the text (f.203v) and on f.204v. Curiously, the last few lines of f.204v are set out in two columns and have tie-lines. This suggests that the scribe did have some awareness of the tie-line layout of the text and attempted to reproduce it; but as this is in the middle of the text and not the beginning, we cannot conclude that he attempted the layout and gave up in frustration. It seems more likely that he discovered the layout midway through copying the text and then returned to the beginning in order to introduce tie-lines throughout. This seems to have proven unsuccessful and so the scribe continued with his original plan, laying out the text in a single column. La similarly has only a few tie-lines: these are half completed lines that appear at the top of ff.189v, 190r, 190v, and 191r. The text is also in three-columns at these places. Again, the layout suggests that the tie-lines were part of the plan for the manuscript but were only partially executed, possibly due to complexity.

Cp, on the other hand, has no tie-line layout. The text is decisively in a single column (though the bob-lines are marked with a paraph which places them in a pseudo-second column, as outlined above), and there are no tie-lines throughout the text. It may be that these were part of the decoration which has been left unfinished (though this is unlikely as flourished paraphs have been completed for this section of the manuscript). If Cp is related to La, it is possible that the scribe was aware of the tie-line format of the tale. However, he seems to have decided that a non-tie-line layout is the best method of presenting the text. The scribe of Cp set out his page in a way which presents a linear text: not one which skips from column to column, but one which can be read from top to bottom. In this way, the focus of the scribe is on telling the tale: of exaggerating the development of the text so as to emphasise when the tale is ordered to a halt, that it was particularly badly told and cliché-ridden. The paraphs that are present in Cp mark particularly noticeable romance phrases: f.214v marks 'and so bifel up on a day' and further paraphs mark the stiling bob lines. The scribes of Ha4, Cp, and La wish to emphasise the comic brevity of the tale. Nothing really happens in the tale: the effeminate Sir Thopas, after a lengthy description in which we are assured in good faith that he has a 'semely nose' (l. 729), decides that he must fall in love with an elf-queen. Halted by a giant, Sir Olifaunt, Thopas does not fight but promises to return with the armour that he has (perhaps rather conveniently) forgotten to carry. The tale is then brought to an abrupt end before it gets going. The joke of the text, of course, is that Chaucer, the only pilgrim who is a poet by vocation, is cut off before he finishes.

However, the scribes that do take the pains to set out the tie-line format realise the potential for another meaning: there is a different joke to be emphasised in this tale. Five of the eight earliest manuscripts reproduce the tie-lines throughout the text. It is for this reason that Tchann dubbed the format the 'landmark layout'. El, Hg, Gg, Dd and Pw ensure that each rhyme is tied to its brother with a line. No rhyme is ignored. The tale itself becomes secondary in importance. The tale is, of course, ended prematurely by the host as outlined above. However, this is specifically for the reason of Chaucer's terrible rhyme: his 'eres aken' by the 'drasty rymyng', which is, of course, famously declared 'nat worth a toord' (ll.23 and 930). In other words, the

emphasis of the piece falls not onto the content of the tale, but on its terrible verse-form. The rhyme is stressed by the fact that it often does not work: the bouncing tale rhymes often bounce too far and the tale continuously screeches out of tune. Rhymes are often forced to fit into this tuneless scheme at the expense of correct phraseology: despite the fact that in both medieval and modern idiom the correct phrase is 'in good faith', the poet is forced to use the phrase 'in good certayne' in order to rhyme with the previous line, 'scarlet in grayn'. Equally, the tale is written in convoluted syntax in order to keep to the rhyme scheme: the often used phrase 'as I may tell you' is twisted into the rather more unusual 'as I yow telle may' in order to rhyme with 'up on a day', a clichéd oral phrase (which will be discussed in further detail later). The tie-lines here invite us to imagine Chaucer-the-pilgrim inventing his rhymes whilst he delivers his tale, the onward drive of the storytelling causing him to desperately pick words which best fit the rhyme, with the result of nonsensical phrasing.

The tie-lines bring this rhyme scheme to the fore. The rhymes are made visually obvious on the page. Indeed the entire function of the page is here solely to indicate the 'drasty' rhymes. That we cannot read the tale in a linear and straightforward manner is irrelevant: the difficulty in reading the text on the page brings out further the rhymes, as the rhymes act as a guide as to which line to read next.

In addition to a complete set of tie-lines, El, Hg, Gg, Dd, and Pw have extensive paraphs throughout the tale. Here, unlike their use in the other tales discussed above, the paraphs do not highlight larger divisions or plot developments, but support the effect of the tie-lines. El, as can be expected, has the most: every stanza is marked with a paraph to indicate its beginning. This is mirrored closely by Hg, which also marks the first line of every stanza with a paraph. These paraphs cut across the text to stilt the bouncing rhymes as the pilgrim Chaucer struggles with his tale, and demonstrate the quickening pace of the rhymes as the tale spirals into disaster. Towards the end of the text, El and Hg differ in their layout: the scribe has added to El a number of paraphs not present in Hg. After f.152v, just before the beginning of the third fitt (a division ascribed by later editors of the text), every second line is marked with a paraph. The scribe has

decided that the increase of paraphs in his second version of the text better represents the deliberately disastrous structure of the tale.

The bob lines (those lines in a third column of text) additionally highlight the rhyme on the page. Hg has two extra paraphs (not reproduced in El) at f.214v, 'With mace' and 'Thy mawe'. The paraph marks on this folio ensure that these words are not part of the lines in the second column but are deliberately separate. Dd, Cp, Ha4, La, and Pw also mark the above two bob lines with a paraph. In addition, they also mark 'In towne' (both Hg and Dd have a guide mark to indicate a paraph '//', ff.214r and 159r respectively), 'So wylde' (Cp f.215r; Ha4 f.204v; La f.190v; Pw f.225v), and 'In londe' (Cp has a mark for paraph '// f.216v; Ha4 f.205v; La f.191r; Pw f.226v). This introduces a break between the established stanza and the extra words, adding to the stilted sound of the text. The tale jerks to a halt on the introduction of the bob lines:

An elf queene wol I love ywis  
 For in this world no woman is  
 Worthy to be my make            In towne            (ll.790 - 93)

There is no reason for the phrase 'in towne' here: Thopas has already stated that there is no woman worthy enough for him in the whole world – he does not need to add that there is no worthy woman both in the whole world and in the town. Such lines are usually extraneous and here the line resonates as if he has hit the wrong note to halt what little flow the piece had managed to gain. The only reason for adding this line to the tales seems to be purely for the sake of having a bob line, which emphasises the poor style and the bad rhyme of the tale. Though extraneous in its meaning, the indication of the bob line 'In towne' has an alternative purpose. It is laid out on the page thus:

An elf queene wol I loue ywis	}	Worthy to be my make	}	In towne	_____
For in this world no woman is					
Alle othere women I forsake	}	}	}	By dale [and] eek by downe	_____
And to an elf queene I me take					

(El f.152r)

The third line 'Worthy to be my make' is set out in a separate column of text, so that the bob line, 'In towne' is to the far right of the main text. This way, extra tie-lines can be added to the manuscripts. The stanza itself is a bit of a mess: the poet has mistakenly, it seems, fused together two types of rhyme – tale-rhyme and bob and wheel. He has used and repeated a rhyme that should go with the tail: the three lines ending 'make', 'forsake' and 'take' accidentally all rhyme, jarring the pace of the tale. The extra syllables in the bob attempt to remedy the mistake. The layout, however, does not allow these extra rhymes, off-key notes in the stanza, to go unnoticed. The tie-lines are used to indicate not only the rhyming pairs, 'ywis/is', 'forsake/take', 'towne/downe', but also the rhyme of 'make' with 'forsake/take'. In this way, the rhymes internal to the lines of the stanza are made explicit, we are shown exactly where all the rhymes of the passage are hidden, exposing them visually on the page. The off-key rhyme scheme is exaggerated by the tie-line format so as to exaggerate fully the joke of the text.

This suggests something of scribal responses towards the text and attitude towards the page. The words on the page and their out-of-tune sound are linked together in the manuscript context of the tale. The tie-lines indicate visually the rhyme; however rhyme is better recognised by the ear, in performance – such as the mode of receiving those cliché tales that *Thop* mocks. The tale is full of cacophonous and tuneless comedy. The tie-lines suggest a relationship between the oral and visual formats of the tale. On the manuscript page, the telling of the text, the comedy of the out-of-tune rhymes, and the written form of the text are linked together and exaggerated by tie-lines.

The tale plays with the idea of orality, of jokes that work in performance rather than on the page. There are numerous phrases which incite the listener to be silent and hearken a tale, such as each fit beginning with a plea to a listening audience: 'listeth, lordes, to my tale', or 'Now holde youre mouth, par charitee' (ll.833 and 891). This does not imply a real listening audience: the tie-lines do not necessarily suggest that the tale was told orally; conversely, it is the performance that is put on the page. What should be heard by the ear is seen by the eye.

In *Thop*, the off-key rhyme scheme, the joke and point of the text, are exaggerated and emphasised by the tie-lines on the manuscript page. The last stanza provides a good example as to how these tie-lines work on the page and out of the ear. The last stanza ends abruptly in a half line, the host cutting off Chaucer before he can finish the line and complete the rhyme:

Hym self drank water of the well  
 As dide the knyghte sire Percyvell  
 So worly vnder wede  
 Til on a day ——— (ll.915-918)

The rhyme is the key to the comedy of the final line. As Burrow first observed, the tale is broken off by the host's cry for 'Namooore of this, for Goddes dignitee', just before a predictable expression.<sup>85</sup> As the rhyme is so clichéd, the reader anticipates the coming words. From the bouncing verses that have preceded this stanza, the audience would have expected the incomplete line to rhyme with 'Percyvell'. A reader could easily complete it with the recognisable and clichéd romance phrase, 'Til on a day - as it bifell'. A reader can foresee this rhyme – as it is indicated by the preceding lines – and suddenly has his expectations left unfulfilled by the abrupt ending. The joke works on the fact that we do not hear what we expect to hear, but see the abrupt end.

The scribes, in rendering the text as it is in the manuscripts, with tie-lined tail rhyme, are playing along with the author in creating a clichéd romance tale. They too wish to lay emphasis on how jarring the text sounds and, in doing so, ensure the joke is not lost when it is taken out of performance and put into a visual rendering of the text. The complicated three-column format, makes the tale a challenge to read – the rhyme is vital in understanding the order of the lines, or to read the tale. This rhyme is understood through the eye. In this way, the manuscripts demonstrate that the scribes had an interest in the physical means of conveying the entire meaning of a text. Here, they desired a synaesthetic reading experience: a visual manuscript which simultaneously evoked a sense of the oral. The purpose of this curious layout of the text on its manuscript page suggests a cross-sensory approach to reading. In visualising the sounds

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<sup>85</sup> J. A. Burrow, "Sir Thopas": An Agony in Three Fits', *RES* xxii (1971), 54-58, p.57 n.1.

of the text, the scribes, through their layout, imitate the telling of such jaunty and clichéd tales. *Thop* uses the sound and rhyme scheme of the text to substantiate its fuller meanings. In doing so, the scribes of each of these fifteen manuscripts have included the oral within the visual rendering of the text: they have provided the sound of the text visually in the page. As such, the scribes here put the telling of a ‘drasty’ rhyming tale – the performance of the text – onto the page. To Chaucer, the sound of his text was part of the joke; to the scribes, this sound is central to the layout.

### ***Troilus and Criseyde and the Monk’s Tale***

*TC* and *MkT* are both texts written in stanzas: *TC* in rhyme royal (one of the first poems to be written and to circulate entirely in this verse-form)<sup>86</sup> and *MkT* in eight line stanzas consisting of two quatrains, abab bcbc. The scribes of the eight earliest manuscripts of *CT* and the six earliest of *TC* have various methods of processing and presenting the stanza form. The overarching commonality between all fifteen is the desire amongst scribes to present above all other features the stanza format: poetic form is the most obvious visual aspect of the text on the page. This section will discuss *MkT* before examining why the layout of *TC* is far less complicated and far more standardised than that of any of the *CT* manuscripts.

The earliest witnesses of *MkT* are remarkably similar in layout. Having broken down the text into its constituent tragedies, as outlined above, the layout which stands out most clearly is the repeated placement of paraphs or initials at the beginning of every single stanza in the tale. Despite the irregularity of the manuscripts of *CT*, and regardless of the change in order of stanzas from one manuscript to the next (the movement of the four ‘Modern Instances’ – Peter of Spain, Peter of Cyprus, Barnabo, and Hugelyn), this presentation is remarkably regular throughout all eight of the earliest manuscripts. There is not a single unique paraph or initial in any of the eight manuscripts and the layout is entirely stable.

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<sup>86</sup> The *Parliament of Fowles* may have circulated before *TC* but there is no manuscript evidence for this before Gg.

Initials and paraps here serve the same purpose: though Cp and La have paraps to mark each stanza whereas Ha4 and Pw have flourished initials (a mark of expense rather than scribal interpretation) both provide the same function of highlighting the stanza format on the page. Gg similarly has line spaces, with occasional *litterae notabiliores*, rather than paraps or initials to indicate the stanza form. This does not suggest that the stanza format is any less clear than in the other manuscripts which provide paraps and initials. Hg is the only manuscript to demonstrate a hierarchy, using paraps to mark each stanza and initials to mark the beginning of each narrative. This hierarchy, however, is not repeated in the layout of El, which has blank line spaces between each stanza, rather than paraps, to emphasise the stanza form: the secondary or subsidiary indication of narrative structure, as marked by the initials, is not used in the more de-luxe version (and therefore, more likely candidate for these markings). Thus, in El, where the patron must have specified a certain expense, and certainly a greater one than the funds available for Hg, there is an emphasis on marking verse-form. Though El usually has grand flourished initials and paraps, the scribe here has chosen specifically to use line spaces: white spaces amongst black ink are no less clear a marker of verse-form (and are certainly no less luxurious due to the expense of blank vellum) than paraps or initials.

Seven manuscripts have pre-ruled lines for the entire text of *CT*, designed to incorporate the non-stanzaic tales: as such, there are usually four to five full stanzas on a folio with a few lines of the remaining stanza. However, the scribe of Hg has utilised the page fully to exaggerate the stanza-format: he carefully ensures he only has five stanzas to a folio. Each folio is ruled to have forty-four lines, that is, five eight-line stanzas and four line gaps. He rigorously adheres to this format to ensure that full stanzas are preserved per page and not broken across two folios.

This preservation of the stanza scheme does not fit as neatly with the meaning of the text as it does in *Thop*. The layout is not integral to comprehending the more nuanced aspects of the tale or its *forma tractandi*. The Monk declares openly that he will tell a tale in 'exametron' (*MkP*, l.1979), and this is indicated on the page. The rigorous ordering of the tale into neat exempla is complemented by the stable marking of stanzas. This is a bookish form which contrasts with the

Monk's less than scholarly activities: 'What sholde he studie and make hymselfen wood,/Upon a book in cloystre alway to poure... As Austyn bit? (*GP*, ll.185-185, 187) rather – as is emphasised by an initial in *GP* in Cp – 'Lat Austyn have his swynk to hym reserved' (*GP*, l.188). The bookish form of the tale highlights the misallocation of efforts. The marking of the verse-form works alongside the tale to exaggerate the connection between tale and teller; however, the rhyme is not as integral to the tale's meaning as it is in *Thop*. Rather, the marking of the stanza forms here suggests a concern with marking rhyme rather than marking the nuances of poetical meaning within that stanza. The scribes aim to represent rhyme scheme on the page. This is demonstrated more noticeably by the marking of stanzas in *TC*, which are often indicated to the detriment of clear meaning.

Nearly all scholarship on *TC* manuscripts begins by stating that each of the sixteen surviving manuscripts lays emphasis on the division of the text into five books, the first of this type of division in English.<sup>87</sup> The next feature to be observed is the indication in each manuscript of the major set-pieces, the *cantus* and *litterae* of *Troilus* and *Criseyde*, by marginal notes or central-column rubrics.<sup>88</sup> The scribes of three of the manuscripts, Cp1, R, and (in Book IV and V of) Gg, take pains to indicate both the songs and letters and the movements of the tale, such as changes in speaker, using blank spaces, marginal notes, and large initials respectively. Much resembling the format of *Mel* or *CT* as a whole, the text here becomes a compilation of extracts or an anthology of letters and songs, as Chaucer's minor poems are in anthologies such as Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 16 or Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch Selden B.24. Rubrics in the margins of the folio highlight this compilatory nature: Cp1 and H1 label the first song in Book I 'Cantus Troili (f.12r and f.5v respectively), Gg as 'Cant[us]' (f.18v), and R as 'The Song of Troylus'

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<sup>87</sup> See for instance, M. B. Parkes and Richard Beadle ed. *Poetical Works: Geoffrey Chaucer: A Facsimile of Cambridge University Library MS Gg.4.27*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1979 (v. 1); 1980 (vv. 2-3), v.3, p.41; Julia Boffey, 'Annotation in Some Manuscripts of *Troilus and Criseyde*' *EMS* v (1995), 1-17, p.2.

<sup>88</sup> See for example, Butterfield (1995), pp.51, 55-61; and the introductions to the facsimiles of Cp1: *Troilus and Criseyde, Geoffrey Chaucer: A facsimile of Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 61 with introductions by M.B. Parkes and Elizabeth Salter* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1978), pp.4-5; Gg: (1979 (v.1); 1980 (vv.2-3)), v. 3, pp.41-42.

(f.5r).<sup>89</sup> It seems, in the first instance, that the scribes of *TC* manuscripts mark up the text so as to indicate meaning, the way they do in the manuscripts of *CT*. The placement of the large initials is for the same purpose described above: the scribe of Gg further indicates developments in the text using them. At IV.659 the scribe places an initial to mark a rhetorical piece on Fame and a stanza which indicates a shift from a description of Troilus to a description of Criseyde (f.89v). Equally important to meaning is the large initial at IV.1597 which flags ‘And now so þis be soth q[uo]d Troilus’, the moment in which the Criseyde promised Troilus to return to him in ten days (f.101r).

However, several key moments in the text are left unmarked by either large or small initials, or paraphs in the way that they are never ignored in *CT*: the scribe of Gg does not mark the description of Diomedes, V.799, for example, in any way.<sup>90</sup> Equally, several changes in speaker are left unmarked by a paraph or large or small initial: at V.1121, 1128, and 1135, for example, where Troilus and Pandarus each speak a stanza, no feature of *mise-en-page* marks the alternation of speakers, even though the scribe of Gg takes extra pains to mark just this in *Mel*. Similarly, there is no paraph or initial to mark the end of either letter in Book V and the recommencement of the tale. Clearly, then, the indication of movements and developments of the text were not the main focus of the scribes in producing this particular text.

Unlike the layout of *Mel*, for example, the main purpose of which is to subdivide the text by its two speakers (especially in Gg) and secondly by the *sententiae* they speak, the manuscripts here do not divide the text neatly by meaning. A stanza at I.771-777 contains a series of questions posed by Pandarus and Troilus’s responses. These are not indicated in any way by the manuscript layout – unlike *Mel*, there are no large initials or paraphs to signal the change in speaker; similarly the stanza at III.119-125, an exchange between Pandarus and Criseyde, no

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<sup>89</sup> Butterfield (1995) suggests that the layout of the songs in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 638, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 346, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 16 and Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.20 of *TC* imitates the layout of ballad collections in, for example, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS f.fr25458, London, British Library, MS Royal 16 F.ii, and London, British Library, MS Harley 682, in its use of initials supplemented by paraphs and end-of-section *positurae* to indicate songs, pp.61-75.

<sup>90</sup> Only R has a gloss here, ‘The dyscripsioun of diome[d]’, which may have been added by a later hand. See C. David Benson and Barry A. Windeatt, ‘The Manuscript Glosses to Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde*’ *ChauR* xxv (1990), 33-53, p.50.

paraphs mark the change of speaker. Instead, what is immediately noticeable as the overriding use of layout at first glance at these manuscripts is the emphasis of the stanza form. Paraphs and initials are placed at the head of each stanza on the page. These are planned into the layout: scribes often leave gaps for an initial at the opening of the stanza by indenting the first word which has the first letter omitted. Where the scribe of Cl, for example, has mistakenly forgotten to leave a gap for a decorated initial at the head of the first stanza on f.52v, the mistake is carefully corrected with the addition of a paraph in the margin to ensure that the stanza form is emphasised.

Additionally, the number of lines per folio in these manuscripts is a deliberate choice. Most of the early manuscripts, with the exception of Gg and Ph, contain only *TC*. These are thus designed and ruled for only this text. Cp1, for example, has thirty-nine lines ruled per folio (except for those folios which have blank spaces for illustrations, which are not ruled); Gg, Cl, and H2 are ruled to have thirty-five lines per folio; and Harley 2280 has forty-two lines. Each of these divide neatly by seven so that they each contain only full rhyme royal stanzas – Gg, Cl, and H2 contain five full stanzas per folio; H1 has six full stanzas per folio; and Cp1 has five full stanzas with blank line gaps between each. The manuscripts were thus planned from the earliest stages of production to ensure that the stanzaic form of the text was displayed on the page. The ruling here ensures that no stanza is split across two pages.

Indeed the majority of *TC* manuscripts – even those produced later in the fifteenth century – take pains to depict the verse form on the page: St John's College, Cambridge, MS L1, for example ensures each of its stanzas are clearly marked using square bracketing or alternating red and blue ink paraphs that extend the entire length of the stanza so as to separate one from the next.

Likewise, those initials that indicated plot development, as outlined above – where an initial at IV.659 marks a rhetorical piece on Fame and a stanza which indicates a shift from a description of Troilus to a description of Criseyde (Gg f.89v); and where the large initial at IV.1597 flags 'And now so þis be soth q[uo]d Troilus', the moment in which the Criseyde promised Troilus to return to him in ten days (Gg f.101r) – are not in fact employed in order to

indicate solely a plot development. Each of these lines occurs at the beginning of a new stanza. The initial here indicates, as usual, the head of a stanza; in these two stanzas, the opening line happens to coincide with the beginning of a plot turn. It is the stanza that is indicated, not the plot turn itself.

Furthermore, the positioning of the numerous pictorial spaces in Cp1 demonstrates that this presentation of stanza form was considered of greater importance than the meaning of the text. Often blank spaces do not correspond to subdivisions in the text (where we might expect a large initial to appear, for example) and so interrupt the flow of the narrative or stilt the meaning of the text. In the stint of the second scribe, there are pictorial spaces of three-stanza height placed regularly on the verso of each folio between ff.17 and 67. This decorative scheme is maintained despite that the spaces often interrupt the meaning of the text. A space appears after I.784, for example, one stanza after the opening of Pandarus's speech (f.20v), though in order to make best use of the spaces to preserve meaning, the space should have been placed one stanza higher, before his speech begins. Similarly, a space is placed before I.638, right in the middle of Pandarus's reply to Troilus (f.17v), and another at II.533, exactly one stanza into the two stanza rendition by Pandarus of Troilus's woe, thus destroying the rhetorical force of the tale (f.37v). A space is placed between Criseyde's list of the admirable qualities of Troilus: between 'His p[er]son his aray his look his chere' and 'His goodly man[er]e and his gentillesse' (II.1267-8, f.52v). Similarly a space is placed at III.238, between 'To Troilus as I shal 3ow deuyse' and 'Myn alderleuest lord and brother deere', where the sentence continues over the stanza break (f.67v). The spaces do sometimes happen to fall into the correct place – a space appears at II.238, after the end of Pandarus's speech and before Criseyde's reply (f.31v), for example – but more often than not, the spaces disrupt the narrative. Often, where modern editors of the tale place a colon at the end of a stanza to suggest the immediate occurrence of a development or explanation in the following stanza, the scribe places a picture space. At II.1120, the scribe places a space between 'He seyde hire this and out the l[ett]re plighte' and 'Lo he that is alle holy 3oures free', between Pandarus showing Criseyde the letter and explaining to her what it is, an unusual place

for a break in narrative (f.49v). Similarly, a space is placed between 'And sette hire down and gan a l[ett]re write' and 'Of which to telle in short is myn entente', two lines which make most sense when placed one after the next (f.51v).

The manuscript's other scribe leaves more useful spaces: at IV.218 and IV.334 two spaces separate the narrative from a description of Troilus's woe, and, in turn, Troilus's woe from Pandarus's remedial actions. Similarly at III.1814, the last stanza of Book III, which explains that the book is coming to an end, is separated from the rest of the narrative by a space (f.92r). However, the placement of such useful spaces is not common: more regularly, the spaces interrupt the narrative flow. This scribe too places a space where a modern editor places a colon: the scribe leaves a three-stanza space before III.1421, 'Myn hertes lif my trist al my plesaunce', a line which ought to follow directly from the previous stanza, which ends, 'With herte soor to Troilus thus seyde' (f.86r-v).

Equally, there are often no spaces where one would usually expect them: there is no space at IV.379 to separate Troilus's cry from Pandarus's reply, nor is there a space at IV.426 after Pandarus's speech ('Absence of hire shal dryue hire out of herte', f.99v, a saying which, if in *Mel*, would have attracted a paraph). Similarly I.155, 'And so bifel whan comen was the tyme', a phrase marked in the majority of the early manuscripts of *Mel* is here not marked with a space (f.6r). There is no space before 'Now lat vs stynte of Troilus a throwe' (II.687, f.41r) as we would expect before a change of narrative direction. Spaces are rarely placed to indicate changes of speakers or after the end of speeches (which would be the most logical position for them) but rather are in between key moments in the text: a space is placed just after Pandarus begins to tell Troilus he is in fact related to Criseyde, which ruins the movement of the piece. Had the space been positioned one stanza before (by I.882) it would have coincided with a pause in the narrative. Similarly, there is no space after Pandarus's news of Troilus's love (II.589), but rather one stanza before he finishes recounting the tale, again disrupting the narrative force. And a space is placed just before the description of Criseyde's dream (II.925, f.45v), though a better

placement would have been one stanza later where the narrative moves to speak of Troilus: 'Now lat hire slepe and we oure tales holde/Of Troilus' (II.932-3, f.46r).

The spaces are not, therefore, provided to support the narrative meaning of the poem. Unlike the paraps and initials in *Mel* or *GP*, they do not indicate developments in plots, changes in speakers or descriptions, or rhetorical set-pieces. As such, the narrative structure of the tale becomes subsidiary. Chaucer's text often crosses over two stanza units: the sentences and meanings often run on from one stanza to the next, suggesting that Chaucer did not want the stanza form to preside over the sentence structure and so the meaning of his poetry. The gaps, however, cut these sentences in two, suggesting that scribes responded to exactly that which Chaucer did not want – the stanza form. Likewise, the first two books, for example, mirror one another: in Book I Troilus first scorns lovers, then falls in love with Criseyde and writes her a letter; in Book II Criseyde hears of Troilus, falls in love, and then scorns marriage (II.750). The structure of the text, the inverse relationship of one book to the next, is not made obvious by the layout of the manuscripts (in the way that the structure of *GP*, *Mel*, or *FranT* are): the structure and development of the narrative is of secondary importance in the manuscripts of *TC*. What is emphasised, and quite determinedly stressed, is the stanza format of the piece: the verse structure is given priority over meaning.

It is, of course, possible that this preservation of stanzas may simply be because of the ease of maintaining stanzaic units when moving sections of text from one page to another in order to create gaps in the manuscript (if there were none in the exemplar). It is far easier to copy out an entire stanza and indicate a paraph at its head than it is to change and split the stanza. However, simplicity of replication was not the main concern of these scribes when producing the layout of the text: often complex layouts are stubbornly produced, despite lack of scribal ability, as with the majority of the copies of *Thop*, demonstrating the interests of the scribes and scribal practices in producing manuscripts that showcase poetic form.

The later manuscript R demonstrates this more clearly. Though this manuscript is coarse in production, its inclusion of certain features of layout suggests the bare essentials that scribes felt

they should include as their response to the tale – those features not included for decorative purposes. The four scribes of the manuscript have left spaces for large initials (two or four lines high) by indenting two or four lines of text at the beginning of each book. As suggested by most scholarship on *TC* manuscripts, the manuscript labours the division of the text into five books. These are not, however, filled in. More regularly placed, and given more importance, are the horizontal dashes that separate stanzas. Rather than use paraps or initials to indicate stanzas (possibly due to lack of patron demand or cost-efficiency) the scribes of R include horizontal, elongated ‘2-shaped’ dashes in the line spaces between stanzas to clearly distinguish one stanza from the next. All four hands in the manuscript rigorously do this. In addition to these dashes, like the square brackets in L1, R has large zigzags to indicate the stanza format (though these are sporadic in appearance).

A particular section midway through the manuscript stands out from the rest. Between f.20r and f.47r the scribes begin to use red ink. This ink is used for the ‘2’-shaped dashes which become more visually noticeable as markers of stanza separation on the page. Moreover, red-ink tie-lines are used in this section. In the way they do in *Thop*, as outlined above, these lines link together the rhyming lines of the piece, emphasising the verse-form of the text. As the manuscript is not ruled, stanzas often start on the foot of one folio and continue on the top of the next: here, tie-lines also run from one side of a folio to the next, ensuring that no rhyming lines are lost. Their appearance in the same red ink as the dashes that separate stanzas suggests that the tie-lines were thought of as part of the presentation of the text: that the dashes which indicate stanzas and the tie-lines which indicate the verse-format were vital to responding to the text and imperative in the minimum layout of the page. It seems, then, the main impetus of this layout, which privileges stanzas at the expense of narrative meaning or textual development, was to exaggerate verse-form on the page. Thus, whereas the layout of those tales described above marks firstly the division of the text into tales, and, secondly, the more subtle movements in each tale itself to indicate the meaning of the text, the layout of *TC* exaggerates the rhyme scheme to the detriment of meaning.

Phillipa Hardman has posited that the layout of *TC* manuscripts exhibits an attempt to imitate the layout of the majority of the manuscripts of the *Teseida* and *Il Filostrato* in their placement of initials to indicate major plot turns.<sup>91</sup> She suggests that Chaucer may indeed have been working from these manuscripts and so reproduced not only the text but also the layout. However, the indication of major plot turns does not seem to be the dominant feature of the layout of the *TC* manuscripts, which instead suggests something of the emerging responses of scribes to the text: the visual accentuation of verse on the page. Instead of imitating the indication of major plot turns from exemplary models, scribes may have found influence for accentuating rhyme scheme in these older manuscript layouts. This is an aspect of layout that has an amplified deployment during the fifteenth-century increase in Middle English literary manuscript production. A few Anglo-Norman texts, for example, pay attention to the verse-form of the text in the layout: the mid-twelfth century copy of the *Chanson de Roland*, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 23, for example is marked in this way. This manuscript has large initials to mark the beginning of the laisses of unequal length, and so indicate the rhyme of the text on the page. The Auchinleck and Vernon manuscripts (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates', MS 19.2.1 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. poet. a.1 respectively), that are closer in date to fifteenth-century commercial book production, also offer this marking of stanzas. The second and third parts of *Guy of Warwick* in the Auchinleck manuscript, for example, are marked throughout with paraphs to indicate the head of each stanza (see ff.147r ff.) Likewise, the *Golden Trental* and the *King of Tars* in the Vernon manuscript have twelve- or six-line stanzas respectively indicated by paraphs (ff.303r and 304v ff.). The scribes of these pre-Chaucerian manuscripts do indicate rhyme scheme, the verse-form of the text, to an extent on the page; however, none of these do so as rigorously as the scribes of *TC* or *MkT*, where the stanzaic form is the only regularly indicated feature of the text throughout the manuscripts. None ensure, as is the case of *TC* especially, that the page has been designed with the stanzas first and foremost in mind. The reason for this rigorous accentuation of the stanzas is the desire to indicate, above the meaning of the text, its

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<sup>91</sup> Phillipa Hardman, 'Chaucer's Articulation of the Narrative in the *Troilus*: The Manuscript Evidence', *ChauR* xxx (1995), 111-133, p.112.

rhyme. The concern to label with an internal rubric a change in form, 'Ca[n]t[us] Troili' in red ink (e.g. Ph f.198v) or 'Lit[er]a Troilii' (e.g. Cp1 f.141r) to indicate the beginning of a song or letter mid way through a book, also demonstrates a sensitivity to the verse-forms of the text. Rhyme scheme is seen as the basic unit for the literary text, and, as such, is most clearly depicted on the page. The layout here plays with the inherited idea of rhyme – of those texts contained and indicated in pre-Chaucerian manuscripts – to place upon this manuscript a sense of literary heritage. By accentuating rhyme over meaning, the *forma tractatus* over the *forma tractandi* – the layout defines literature in this way: it is not poetry because of its poetic meaning, its play with characters, themes, voices, but rather simply because it contains rhyme. The manuscript page thus offers a specific response to the poetic text – the layout suggests that its meaning was secondary to its verse-form.

## Drawing Conclusions

The content of the text itself is highly influential for the layout of these manuscripts. As they contain texts of poetry, the manuscripts aim to indicate, using layout, poetic meaning. Where the borders, large initials, rubrics, and running titles evoke Chaucer's play with the idea of *compilatio*, the paraps and initials link together the collection of tales into one coherent text. Likewise the glosses support the nuances of meaning evoked across the tales and locate these within their literary contexts. These features respond to the texts, often in similar ways, by exposing and broadening their underlying meanings. The layout plays with the concept of the multiple voices in *CT* as a whole and there are numerous layers of fiction. Paraps are used to outline the development of the text: they mark not only the development in the plot of the tales, but also the lines which link the tales to their framework. In *FranP*, the scribe in El places a paraps at 'But sires by cause I am a burel man' (f.123v). This paraps mark flags the description of the pilgrim, forging a link between this text and the descriptions in *GP*, referring the reader back to the opening of *CT*. The placement of this paraps reaffirms the text as a series of told tales: in marking the Franklin's self-description, the layout focuses the reader's attention to the makeup of the text. The paraps, in this way, build the layers of fiction that constitute the text as

a whole: they outline not only the structure of each of the tales, but also the structure of the larger tale that Chaucer tells – that of the incongruent band of pilgrims on a journey of varying religiosity. The layout plays a role both as part of the tale and in the telling of it and it exists both inside and outside the text.

The mass of fragments and exemplars is processed and repackaged by the layout in a range of different ways. Only Scribe B in *El* and *Hg* marks the line above, for example. There is no single operative programme but the manuscripts demonstrate a multitude of responses to and interests in the text. These suggest a sophisticated level of scribal interaction with complex texts. However, when it comes to indicating the form of the text, the majority of scribes agree and indicate the verse-form almost identically in each manuscript: the most stable feature of the manuscript page in the *TC* manuscripts is the indication of stanza divisions, which are almost identically marked in each of the manuscripts examined here. The layout often privileges poetic form over poetic meaning. By indicating rigorously the stanzaic form of *TC* and *MkT*, and the tail rhyme of *Thop*, often the meaning of the text – the mechanics of the tale – are secondarily indicated, if at all. The confusion over the layout of the *CT* manuscripts and the fixed regularity of the *TC* manuscripts suggests that the layout of poetic texts was concerned firstly with representing poetic form. Where it is easy to do this with *TC* and *MkT*, indicating each stanza in turn, it is less straightforward in the rest of *CT* (especially the complex layout of *Thop*), where scribes struggle to indicate rhyme, especially the couplet. This is not the case, as I will demonstrate, with the couplet form in Gower's manuscripts. In marking the poetic makeup of the text, the scribes are marking something that they felt it was vital to indicate on the literary page, suggesting the centrality of the poetic verse-form of the text. Where the meaning of the text is open to interpretation, the verse-form is not.

D. Vance Smith believes the medieval expression of *forme* to be addressed not through the layout of poetic structures, the 'visual and pictorial register' of the text, but through the combination of *forma tractandi* and *forma tractatus*, which he names its 'poetic practices'.<sup>92</sup> The

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<sup>92</sup> Smith in Wolfson and Brown (2007), p.60.

manuscripts here suggest a more nuanced approach. The broad definition of *forme* that I evoked in the Introduction, which expresses the *forma tractandi* neatly through *forma tractatus*, is here limited. Layout, that which indicates the meaning of the text, for the most part seeks to integrate *forma tractandi* with *forma tractatus*, and to anatomise each part of the text in order to interact and evoke particular aspects and nuances of meaning, such as complex plot structures or variations in tone and character. However, the method of expressing meaning ought to be bound tightly to verse-form – the serious meanings of the *MkT* expressed in a serious stanza form. On the manuscript page, however, often there is a separation of *forma tractandi* from *forma tractatus*. Scribes privilege the verse-form over its meaning.

At the same time, scribes producing texts in this period of the rise of the commercial book trade were not free agents but had numerous external influences that affected the layout of the page they produced. This is where the disparate nature of Chaucer's manuscripts is particularly useful. We start to get a sense of the extent of a variety of influences on the production of the text, and in turn, how these created the overall literary page. Patrons stipulated the cost of the manuscript, which directly affected the layout, including the provision of borders and the wording of incipits. Equally, the exemplar influenced the layout. It is tempting to argue that scribes unthinkingly reproduced the positions of paraphs and initials exactly in order to simplify the process of copying. However, the disparate placements of the features across the manuscripts demonstrate that the exemplars did not influence the layout completely. The papers behind Cp and La were used in the copying of Pw: in theory, if we examine the correspondences in layout between Cp and La and relate these to the layout of Pw, we should be able to see how much of Pw is influenced by the exemplar and how much is scribal innovation. However, if we look back over the layout of each of these three manuscripts as described throughout this chapter, Pw very rarely imitates the layout of Cp and La, which themselves are not identical. In *Mel*, for example, Pw has far fewer paraphs and initials than Cp or La, and, for instance, where Cp and La indicate speakers, Pw indicates the beginning of *sententiae*. Cp and La themselves often place paraphs adjacent to different lines, some of which are unique to each

manuscript (see the description of *Mel* above). Equally, in *Thop*, the scribe of Cp ignores tie-lines altogether, whereas the scribe of La attempts the layout on occasion before giving up. The scribe of Pw takes on the three-column layout wholeheartedly and reproduces it throughout the text. Likewise, in *FranT*, the placement of paraphs and initials is rarely identical in Pw, Cp, and La: the three manuscripts, though their exemplars overlap, by no means show a perfect match in layout. Similarly, where El and Hg are remarkably similar in layout, the two manuscripts are not identical. Though it would have been far easier in a complex text such as *Mel* to simply reproduce an exemplar rather than providing extensive paraphing based on the text, El and Hg do not agree. El has far more paraphs than Hg in this tale: on El f.156 and Hg f.220r, at equivalent points in the text, El has five paraphs where Hg has none, and Hg has one paraph that El does not contain. This suggests that the exemplar – even if that exemplar might have been authorial as is possibly the case for El and Hg<sup>93</sup> – is not entirely responsible for the layout and that there was room for scribal improvisation.

The scribe was equally influenced by inherited practices – established traditions of manuscript production which he, as a professional scribe, would have learnt and practised. Some aspects of layout are used automatically and accidentally, such as the marking of pronouns as if speech markers in *GP* of Hg (which are fixed in El). However, despite that the scribe followed instructions from numerous sources, none of these sources stipulate everything, and no one source determines the overall look of the page. Where cost can determine borders, or initials instead of paraphs, the patron very rarely (if at all – there is certainly no evidence for it) stipulated the placement of every single paraph or initial. This suggests that they might not have needed each of these marks; wealthy patrons would not have been much less literate than the scribes that produced the manuscript themselves. The presence of these features in the text suggests rather that patrons did not need but desired these features (each of which they had to pay for) that offered guidance to the meanings of the text and exposed its rhyme.

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<sup>93</sup> As Mooney argues: Mooney (2006).

Neither patrons nor exemplars had entire influence over the layout of the page, and the manuscripts were never completely copied without scribal intervention at some stage: the decision to attempt the complicated layout of *Thop*, in La for example, where Cp does not. Though it offers tantalising hints about the state of the exemplars, the placement of features of layout also attracts a great deal of scribal addition and alteration and so cannot be the basis on which we find any conclusive evidence for the look of the exemplar or the influence of the patron. Rather, the layout of the page offers a broader sense of the influences in play on book production practices, and offers clues as to how those features of layout – influenced from all directions, including patron, exemplar, scribal improvisation – function in producing the literary manuscript page. The combination of all of these sources, including the scribe's own will, demonstrates a reaction to the text itself: though interpreting the text variously, the scribes attempt to mark up poetic meaning; but moreover their concern in creating a literary manuscript page was to indicate poetic form.

## CHAPTER 2: GOWER

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The earliest surviving copies of Gower's *CA* are often de-luxe and show a great deal of consistency in both their text and in their programme of decoration. The layout of those manuscripts produced in the first quarter of the fifteenth century is so similar in appearance that Derek Pearsall has labelled it a 'standard'.<sup>1</sup> Unlike Chaucer's manuscripts, which have no uniform plan for the look of the page, Gower's manuscript *mise-en-page* displays a strict regularity. As Macaulay describes:

The average excellence of the Gower MSS. stands high, and there is a surprisingly large proportion of well written and finely decorated copies, which attain to more than a respectable tandard [sic] of correctness. Manuscripts such as L or B2, which stand in the third rank among copies of the *Confessio Amantis*, would take a very different place among the authorities for any of Chaucer's works, second only to the Ellesmere MS...It is evident not only that Gower was careful about the text of his writings, but also that there was some organized system of reproduction, which was wanting in the case of Chaucer.<sup>2</sup>

This regularity led both Macaulay and John Fisher to claim that Gower supervised the copying of his text in a scriptorium.<sup>3</sup> Doyle and Parkes disputed the theory, as did Peter Nicholson later in a series of articles.<sup>4</sup> The consistency of Gower's manuscript page certainly suggests less interpretative control on the part of the scribe than Chaucer's manuscripts do and, though we do not know for certain, perhaps also hints at some level of Gower's influence. Equally, it suggests a certain 'standard' cost for production, with less scope for bespoke copies than there was for Chaucer's texts. This chapter will examine what the uniform layout, the limited scope for scribal interpretation, and the standard production practice of Gower's manuscripts suggests both

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<sup>1</sup> Derek Pearsall, 'The Manuscripts and Illustrations of Gower's Works' in *A Companion to Gower* ed. Siân Echard (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004), pp.73-97, p.80.

<sup>2</sup> Macaulay (1900), I, p.clxvii.

<sup>3</sup> Macaulay (1900), I, p.clxvii; John Fisher, *John Gower: Moral Philosopher and Friend of Chaucer* (London: Methuen, 1965), pp.66, 92, 116-117, 124-127, 303-306.

<sup>4</sup> Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.200 and n.98; Peter Nicholson, 'Poet and Scribe in the Manuscripts of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*', in *Manuscripts and Texts: Editorial Problems in Later Middle English Literature*, ed. Derek Pearsall (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1987) pp.130-142; and Peter Nicholson, 'The Dedications of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*', *Mediaevalia* x (1988), 159-180.

about commercial book trade practices and the interpretations of the text. It will argue that there was strict control over the poetic meaning of the text which manifests itself in the layout of the manuscripts, limited by the lack of interpretative freedom – as depicted by standard placement of borders, rubrics, running titles, and even initials. It will also demonstrate that, despite the regularity, where scribes had the most interpretative freedom in the placement of the glosses, they too created a *mise-en-page* that showcased verse-form over meaning – and so also demonstrate the same fifteenth-century response to the literary text as do the scribes of Chaucer’s manuscripts despite the difference in production circumstances.

### **Borders, Large Initials, Rubrics, and Running Titles**

The combination of the de-luxe quality and the regular *mise-en-page* of these manuscripts has prompted Siân Echard to ask, ‘was anyone in fact reading Gower?’<sup>5</sup> She argues that the programme of decoration in the early de-luxe manuscripts creates a *mise-en-page* which subordinates the text and emphasises the decoration, and suggests that these manuscripts were more akin to ‘coffee-table books’ than anything that would have proven more practical for reading.<sup>6</sup> The twenty-six earliest extant manuscripts of *CA* examined here all have decorative borders, large and small initials, flourished paraphs, and illustrations and are finished to a de-luxe standard.<sup>7</sup> Where Chaucer’s *CT* manuscripts, being disparately laid out as the last chapter

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<sup>5</sup> Siân Echard, ‘Designs for Reading: Some Manuscripts of Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*’ in *Sources, Exemplars, and Copy-Texts: Influence and Transmission: Essays from the Lampeter Conference of the Early Book Society, 1997*, ed. William Marx, *Trivium* xxxi (1999), 59-72, p.61.

<sup>6</sup> Echard (1991), p.61.

<sup>7</sup> Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 307 (Pem307); Cambridge, St. John’s College, MS B.12 (J); Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2 (T); Cambridge, University Library, MS Mm.2.21 (M); Geneva, Foundation Bodmer, MS 178; Glasgow, Glasgow University Library, MS Hunterian 7 (G); London, British Library, MS Additional 12043 (Ad); London, British Library, MS Egerton 1991 (E); London, British Library, MS Egerton 913 (E2); London, British Library, MS Royal 18 C.xxii (R); London, British Library, MS Stowe 950 (O); New York, Columbia University Library, Plimpton Collection, MS 265 (Plimpton); New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M690 (M690); New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M125 (M125); Nottingham, University Library, Middleton Collection, MS Mi LM 8 (Nott); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 35 (Ash); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 294 (B); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 693 (B2); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 902 (A); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc 609 (L); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 3 (F); Oxford, Christ Church, MS 148 (CC148); Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 67 (C); Oxford, New College, MS 266 (N); New Jersey, Princeton University, Firestone Library, Robert H. Taylor Collection, Medieval MS 5 (P2); Private Collection (formerly Mount Stuart, Rothesay, Marquess of Bute, MS I.17) (Y). Further reference to these manuscripts will be by their sigla. The last two manuscripts remain to be examined in detail. Though Kate Harris dates Ash to the second half of the fifteenth century (‘Ownership and Readership: Studies in the Provenance of the Manuscripts of Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*’, Unpublished

has shown, demonstrate a variety of responses to the text, the uniform layout of Gower's text suggests otherwise.

The text itself is large and complex, comprising of a series of tales on a variety of themes and a framework which is somewhat differently inflected. Further, there is a lengthy prologue at the opening of the text which has yet another distinct textual flavour. This extensive text seems an impenetrable mass of words. However, it is not left as a mass on the manuscript page but divided into nine sections by large three-quarter-page or full-page borders. These borders appear on the opening page of each of the eight books and at the prologue. Akin to the presentation of Chaucer's *Mel*, the manuscripts here divide the text as a whole into its constituent parts, signalling the framework of the text – the opening description of the dreamer's woe, his meeting with Venus, Cupid and Genius, and the typically unresolved ending (I.1-332 and VIII.2008–end) – that surround the Ovidian tales that make up the central text and the bulk of the work as a whole.

The regularity of these borders throughout each of the twenty-six Gower manuscripts examined here implies that there was certainly less scope for change by the producers. As shown in the last chapter, in Chaucer's manuscripts borders were expendable and largely a sign of expense; here, however, this expense is standard. Minor changes in the look of the borders suggest some flexibility of expenditure: there are (declining in size) either full-page, three-quarter page, or central bar borders. This is often based on the starting point of the text: if a book starts in the second column, the border will be a central bar (see Figure 5, p.121). Even those manuscripts considered 'economy de-luxe' have borders so that patron-demand seems not to have had a large influence on the production of these manuscripts. Unlike in the production of Chaucer's manuscripts, there is a lack of patron-input in the production of the manuscript page: patrons seem to have been here offered a fixed set of features in the manuscripts they

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D.Phil. thesis, University of York, 1993), Pearsall suggests an earlier date of the first quarter of the fifteenth century (2004), p.75. I will follow Pearsall in including this manuscript in my selection. Where I have quoted without indicating a manuscript from which I have quoted, I follow Galloway and Peck (Andrew Galloway and Russell A. Peck ed., *Confessio Amantis*, TEAMS Middle English Texts Series (Michigan: Medieval Institute Publication, 2000-2006)) and Macaulay (1900), I, p.1, in taking F as my base text.

commissioned. This suggests a different outlook on the production practices in laying out this particular text – one that is driven largely by the look of the exemplar and only secondarily by the innovations or abilities of the scribe.

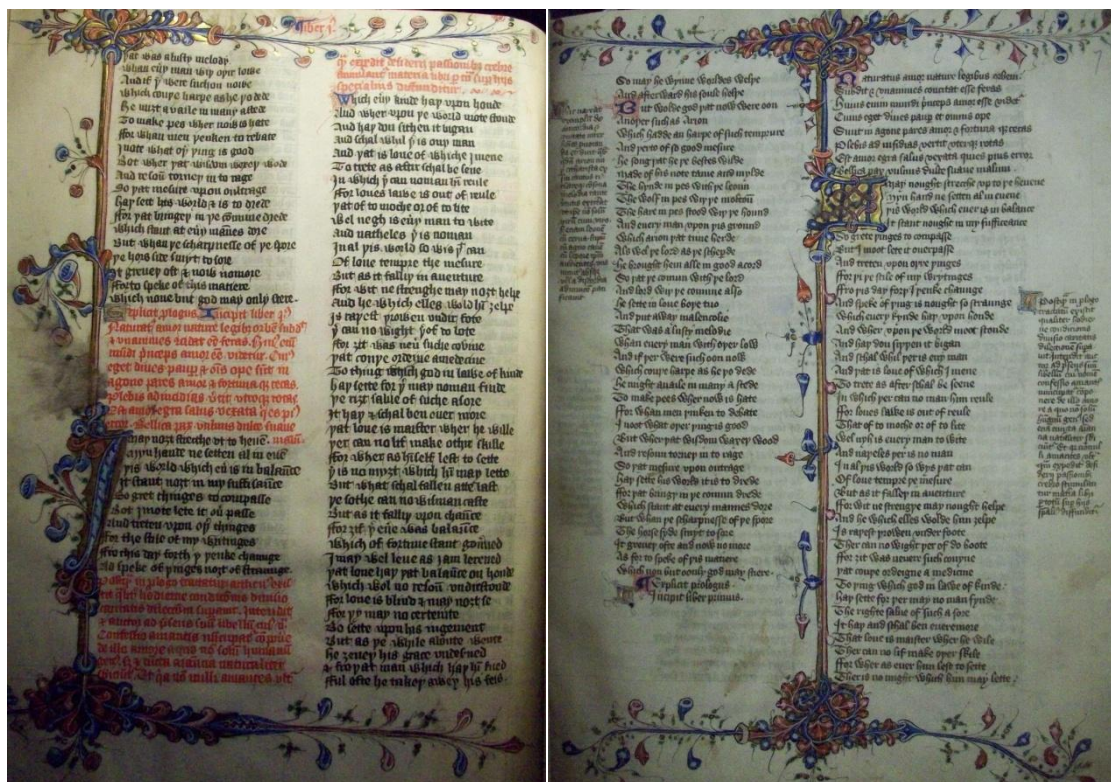


Figure 5: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Bodley 693 (B2), f.7v and Bodley 902 (A), f.7r (with permission of the Bodleian).

If we relate the use of borders to that of large initials, the standard use of these throughout the manuscripts suggests that borders here have a function on the page rather than being only an expendable sign of wealth. As they do in Chaucer's manuscripts, here too the large initials indicate these major divisions in the text. These are swept up into the borders and – unlike in Chaucer where the two do not necessarily appear together, and initials substitute borders – here the two work together in a systematic manner. The initials that open each book are between four and seven lines high: four lines high in A for example (f.7r), and six in E (f.6r). In B2, the initial is a staggering ten lines high (f.7v), where it is part of the decorative border. This, however, does not cause the initial to be consumed by the decoration; conversely, where initials are part of the border they appear exaggerated by it. As such, they are not only initials that introduce a line of text, but are inflated to the size of the whole folio, enabling them to mark

appropriately a large point of division in the text. The opening initial for Book I in C (f.8r) is only two lines high, and the decorative border is incomplete. However, were the decorative border finished, the initial would no longer appear smaller than those at the same place in the other manuscripts; rather its status would be raised in importance to play its part in the larger sign, the folio as a whole indicating the opening of a new section of text.

The sheer size of Gower's endeavour made this division necessary and the borders and initials support the intention of the author. As Rita Copeland argues, Gower creates rhetorical and logical divisions and classifications in his text based on Aristotelian models.<sup>8</sup> This, she suggests, is Gower's 'principle expression of meaning in the work'.<sup>9</sup> By dividing his text into thematic sections based on the Seven Deadly Sins, he bestows upon his sources new meanings. At the same time, he bestows on his work inherited sources of *auctoritas* while claiming for his own *intentio* a supportive authority. Like Chaucer, Gower too plays with the idea of *compilatio* – in dividing his work into books, he orders it into parts or tales to both claim and deny authority. Unlike Chaucer's tales, however, these tales are not ascribed to a multitude of voices but to Genius speaking to the narrator, acknowledged in an opening gloss to be Gower himself (as I will discuss further later). Gower receives these stories from a higher authority in his text as he does in the construction of his text. Using *compilatio* and *divisio* as principles of organisation, Gower uses academic models of discourse to shape the work.

By dividing the book into sections, scribes respond to this textual organisation: the borders and large initials bring the *forma tractandi* and *forma tractatus* together. The layout identifies the neatly divided text: the page brings out the internal poetic balance – the division of the confessional text into each category of sin. Where in Chaucer's manuscripts scribes try to impose an order onto a non-standardised text, here they emphasise the standard and fixed division internal to Gower's text. In producing this layout for the book, the text and the margins work to a combined effect: the divisions in the central text are extended to the margins where they are exaggerated.

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<sup>8</sup> See Copeland (1991), especially pp.207-221 and (2009) p.814ff.

<sup>9</sup> Copeland (1991), p.207.

However, the manuscripts also respond to the text in a way not specified by the textual organisation. The framework that surrounds the tales (I.1-332 and VIII.2008-end) and the tales themselves are not divided into different sections by the large initials and borders. Instead, the end of the opening framework in Book I, in which Genius begins to tell Gower the tale, and the beginning of the closing framework in Book VIII, after the last tale of the compilation is told, remain unnoticeable. They do not coincide with the beginning and endings of each of the books and so are not marked: none of the twenty-six manuscripts examined here has borders at either of these points. However, far from missing a major division in the text, the lack of borders here shows equal sensitivity to the poetic makeup of the text. The framework and the tale flow into one another and are informed by one another: the Ovidian tales are shaped around the lover's longing in the opening framework and are bent (to various degrees, as will be discussed later) to this theme; equally the closing framework, the lover's final plea to Venus, is informed (again to varying degrees) by the tales that precede it. Though there seems to be a division at these points, where the text's tone changes from narration to tale-telling, the framework and tales flow into each other. By not placing borders at this point, the manuscripts demonstrate an awareness of the text's poetic structure. But, moreover, in doing so, the scribes offer more than a response to Gower's own divisions, but a literary response to the meaning of the texts. Gower's Prologue calls for 'unite' to remedy the division, diversification, and strife of the man (and the church and the state) (Pro.967ff). This is, of course, a different division from that which Gower employs as a principle for organising his text. Scribes demonstrate awareness of this, offering unity where there might be textual fracture.

Rubrics are placed alongside each border and large initial. These elucidate the beginning of each of the eight books: from the borders and large initials alone, we do not know what these sections contain; the addition of rubrics clarifies this. On those folios which have borders are the rubrics 'Explicit prologus' followed by 'Incipit Liber primus', for example so as to indicate the contents of the preceding and proceeding parts (see Figure 5, p.121). These are emphasised on the page in a variety of ways. Immediately noticeably, they are marked with a flourished paraph

or initial that usually alternates in colour, the first blue and the next gold. This alternation in colour ensures that one rubric is separate from the next, the 'Explicit' from the 'Incipit'. Furthermore, in the majority of the manuscripts the rubrics are most often written in red ink or as in M, have a red box around the text. Where they are in text ink rather than red, as they are in Ad and N, these are emphasised by the use of a larger and more formal hand. R does not include flourished paraphs to mark these rubrics; instead, to exaggerate them on the page, the rubrics are surrounded by a line gap above and below the text. The rubrics of F combine these two methods: they are also in text ink but are emphasised by their position centred within the text-column, thereby leaving a gap on the left and right of the text.

In about half the manuscripts examined here, the 'Explicit' rubric is placed on the same line as an 'Incipit' rubric.<sup>10</sup> The effect is to place the words in close proximity, rather than on separate folios, and so emphasise the contrasting words 'Explicit' and 'Incipit', exaggerating the division of the text. In the remaining half of the manuscripts, the rubrics are placed on two lines, where the words 'Explicit' and 'Incipit' are directly on top of one another. This stretches the division between the two sections. The cause of this, however, may be the practical difficulties in accommodating the rubrics rather than the deliberate creation of meaning on the part of the scribe. There is often limited space available for the red ink text once the text ink has been written with gaps left for the red.<sup>11</sup> The scribe of B2 (see left-hand image of Figure 5, p.121) seems to have had to fit both the red ink Latin and the red ink rubrics into the gap left. There is too much red text required for the space available and so the rubric has been placed on a single line. Economy here is key to layout rather than interpretation. Equally, where red ink is not used for the rubrics, such as in A (see right-hand image of Figure 5, p.121), the scribe has calculated that he may take up to two lines for the rubric. Thus each rubric in A is on a separate line. Indeed, the majority of the manuscripts which have their rubrics across two lines do not have the problem of accommodating both the rubric and the gloss in the space left over after the black ink has been inserted. This is because they have marginal rather than text column Latin,

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<sup>10</sup> For example, E, R, F, B2, N, L, C, CC148 (sometimes), B (sometimes), M125, M (sometimes), J, Nott, M690.

<sup>11</sup> On the process of including the red ink, see below on Glosses (p.155 ff.).

which does not need to distinguish itself from the main text by its ink colour. Instead, it does so through its marginal position. As red ink is not required here, there is no two-step ink process. The rubrics are added at the same time as the text and do not need to fit into a pre-prescribed space, so are free to spread out over two lines.

Through a variety of means, then, these rubrics are visually distinct from the surrounding main text, as are the borders and large initials. In being present in every one of the twenty-six manuscripts examined here, unlike in Chaucer's manuscript, they are standard. Again, there is some scope for patrons to request particular types of incipits – (indicated with red box instead of red ink, or written in a formal hand in text ink with a line gap instead of paraph) – but the time taken to write a formal hand in text ink, rather than return to a gap left for a red ink rubric, would have caused little difference in cost.<sup>12</sup>

Unlike borders, however, the rubrics are written words rather than pictorial signs, and thus, they are also part of the text. The visual distinction of the rubrics plays with the text. Being both part of the text and part of the decoration, the rubrics indicate some interplay between text and layout. They further exaggerate the end of one section of text and the beginning of the next – the poetic division of the text into thematic parts, which is emphasised by the visual difference between rubric and text. The rubrics display the order Gower has imposed onto the Ovidian tales. By being exaggerated in this way, the rubrics signal the beginning of each book. Whereas borders and large initials signal the large divisions with exaggerated decoration, the rubrics explain roughly what these divisions are. By numbering the books and labelling the opening the 'Prologue', the rubrics clarify further what the borders and initials signal. Though they do not explain exactly what each book contains (most do not state 'Liber Primus de superbia', for example), in being numbered, the manuscript is ordered, and indicates that there is progression through the book – the lengthy text is fixed into a particular order and (in contrast to *CT*), one particular book will always precede the next. This establishes the work as a step-by-step guide through its particular meaning or purpose.

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<sup>12</sup> On the time taken to write, see Daniel Wakelin, 'Writing the Words' in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.34-58.

In addition, along the top of each page, there are running titles which further clarify the division. With the exception of O, Ash, J, and Nott where they may have been cropped, each manuscript has running titles. These are mainly in red ink and are further emphasised by flourished paraps. Though a few manuscripts such as F and N have text ink running titles without paraps, their position at the top centre of the folio, between both the columns of text, draws to them the attention that the red ink in other rubrics demands. In the majority of these manuscripts, the word 'liber' is written on the verso and the number of the appropriate book on the recto of each folio.

Working across a double-page spread, the position of these running titles indicates what part of the text each opening contains. The exceptions are B2 and L, where the running titles are not across a two-page spread but on each folio: they do not refer to the entire opening, but to the page.<sup>13</sup> These are heavily abbreviated, appearing only as 'lib pm' (B2), or 'l vii' (L) (see Figure 6, p.126), possibly because of scribal impatience whilst writing so many.<sup>14</sup> These summarise the contents of each folio separately, rather than the contents across an opening. Whereas the borders, large initials, and rubrics offer only nine divisions in the book as a whole (in a text of nearly two hundred folios), here the running titles offer a folio by folio guide.



Figure 6: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 693 (B2), f.8r (with permission of the Bodleian).

The provision of running titles, customarily only book numbers, seems to presuppose that each sin is carefully tied to the number of each book. Only a single scribe takes this to be a

<sup>13</sup> The similarity in layout here may be due to the fact that these two manuscripts are by the same scribe.

<sup>14</sup> As argued for Bible layouts in Matti Peikola, 'Aspects of Mise-en-Page in Manuscripts of the Wycliffite Bible', *Medieval Texts in Context*, ed. Graham D. Caie and Denis Renevey (London: Routledge, 2008), pp.28-67.

problem and alters the running titles: the scribe of M inserts running titles with the name of the appropriate sin rather than only book numbers. This offers more than numbers do, explaining the contents of the text from outside the text.<sup>15</sup> That the running titles in M are unique suggests that the scribe added these to an exemplar that did not have them. In doing so, he is more clearly relaying the author's vision of the text – of a book divided into thematic parts. This further and more plainly brings together the *forma tractandi* and *forma tractatus*.

The scribes of the numbered rather than thematic running titles, however, seek to impose a different type of order onto their text. Akin to the numbering of rubrics, these running titles indicate that there is a particular way of navigating the text, and that one book should always precede the next. The manuscripts here fix the text into a particular order. Unlike the scribes of Chaucer's manuscripts, this ordering suggests that the parts in Gower are not moveable.<sup>16</sup> The difficulty in accessing the fragmentary exemplars for Chaucer's manuscripts resulted in piecemeal construction with a great deal of flexibility in the ordering of tales or groups of tales, and borders and rubrics helped to separate each tale into a self-contained unit. In Gower's manuscripts, however, the scribes are not free to rearrange the text. The borders and rubrics do not create units of text but rather create an ordered and inflexible whole.

The similarity in the placement of borders, large initials, rubrics, and (the majority of) running titles also indicates the heavy use of standardised exemplars. The division of the text into books is logical and commonsensical, but the regular and fixed placement of borders, large initials, rubrics and running titles indicates that there was another reason besides logic for such placement. After all, the logical decisions of scribes govern the layout of Chaucer's manuscripts, which very rarely are identical. The fidelity to the exemplar, therefore, suggests a greater degree of clarity on the part of the author for the look of his manuscript page. However, this does not automatically imply a scriptorium overseen by the author (as Fisher argues and Doyle, Parkes, and Nicholson reject).<sup>17</sup> Rather, it implies that there was strict control over the representation

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<sup>15</sup> See below on Glosses for a fuller discussion of this (p.155 ff.).

<sup>16</sup> See discussion in Chapter 1, especially p.37.

<sup>17</sup> See above, nn.3 and 4.

of the text on the page, limiting the interpretative freedom of the scribe and the patron. The poetic meaning of the text on the manuscript page is vigilantly controlled. The careful arrangement of the compendium of tales into thematic sections, and the flow of meaning between the framework and the texts, is brought to the fore. The poetic arrangement of material is exaggerated and emphasised. This desire to impose a particular poetic interpretation upon the text is Gower's own: as we will see, the complex arrangement of glosses in and around the text – often which add little beyond a summary of the contents – ensure that the text has been doubly told. The borders, large initials, rubrics, and running titles fix the text in this way: where interpretation is limited, so is interpretative layout.

### **Paraphs and Smaller Initials**

In addition to the larger initials that indicate the beginnings of major sections in the text – the start of each of the eight books – smaller initials are found mid-text. There are two types of small initials: those which are three- to four-lines high, and those that are one- to two-lines high. As Macaulay describes, 'the size of the illuminated capitals indicates precisely the nature of the various divisions of the work'.<sup>18</sup> These initials, therefore, create a code: as well as borders and large initials that indicate major sections, smaller initials do not just indicate smaller divisions, but a spectrum of hierarchical divisions – major, intermediate, and minor fluctuations in the content of the text. These intermediate- and small-sized initials mark intermediate and minor divisions in the narrative respectively. In the less expensively decorated manuscripts, sometimes a paraph replaces the smallest initials. Unlike borders and large initials, which can only be inserted into a limited number of places, these intermediate and smaller initials can be placed on numerous lines across the entire text according to individual interpretation as I have demonstrated with Chaucer's manuscripts. In Gower's text, however, they are not: where an initial is found in one manuscript, an initial is found in another. The placement of these initials is

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<sup>18</sup> Macaulay (1900), I, p.clvii.

rigorously fixed and uniform: the majority of the initials are placed identically throughout the manuscripts, again demonstrating the inflexibility in producing a *CA* manuscript.<sup>19</sup>

Zumthor and Cerquiglini have argued for the lack of fixity of the medieval text, believing in the ‘mobilité essentielle du texte médiéval’ (‘the essential mobility of the medieval text’).<sup>20</sup> Based on a series of case-studies, Zumthor argues for the ‘mouvance’, the essential fluidity, of the medieval text. This, he suggests, is caused mainly by those who recited the texts: the text is ‘la synthèse des signes employés par les “auteurs” successifs (chanteurs, récitants, copistes) et de la littéralité des textes’ (‘the complex unity constituted by the collectivity of its material versions; the synthesis of the signs employed by the successive “authors” (singers, reciters, copyists) and of the literality of the texts’).<sup>21</sup> In his comparison of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 23 and of Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana fr.IV (225), Venice 4, of the *Chanson de Roland*, Zumthor locates the cause of difference to those oral transmitters of the poem.<sup>22</sup> Cerquiglini’s argument hinges on written transmission rather than oral, preferring the term ‘variance’ to ‘mouvance’.<sup>23</sup> The text is formulated of ‘incessante réécriture’ (‘ceaseless rewriting’) rather than incessant rereading or re-performing.<sup>24</sup> More recently, McGann and Machan have argued for the ‘socially produced’ text which moves beyond the author’s intentions.<sup>25</sup> The text, therefore, is a ‘non self-contained res inseparable from the supplements of others’.<sup>26</sup> Overall, these theories have led to the assumption that all manuscripts are variable throughout and not fixed or rigid in any way.<sup>27</sup>

Though these theoretical arguments are based on the variability of the text itself rather than layout, the variability of Chaucer’s manuscript *mise-en-page* certainly supports them. At the opening of *Mel*, for instance, each manuscript uses paraps and initials to highlight a different

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<sup>19</sup> With the exception of a few, as will be discussed below, pp.137-142.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), p.71.

<sup>21</sup> Zumthor (1972), p.73.

<sup>22</sup> Zumthor (1972), pp.20-21.

<sup>23</sup> Bernard Cerquiglini, *Éloge de la variante* (Paris: Cerf, 1989), trans. Betsy Wing (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p.120, n.19.

<sup>24</sup> Cerquiglini (1989), p.57.

<sup>25</sup> Jerome J. McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1983), p.75. And Tim William Machan, *Textual Criticism and Middle English Texts* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), especially p.165.

<sup>26</sup> Machan (1994), p.165.

<sup>27</sup> See Introduction, especially The Layout of the Literary Manuscript Page.

aspect of the text. Hg, Cp, La, and Ha4 mark the start of the tale itself ‘vp on a day bifel’ with a paraph or guide mark; El marks the next line, ‘Thre of hise olde foes han it espied’; and Cp goes on to mark ‘And beeten his wyf’, ‘And laften hire for deed’, ‘he ylike a mad man’, ‘But nouȝt for þ[a]y he gan to wepe’.<sup>28</sup> The difference in each manuscript suggests a variety of interpretations by each of the scribes. Moreover, those manuscripts that share a scribe do not lay out this section identically in each of their manuscripts. The scribe of El has changed the placement of the paraph from its placement in Hg: rather than mark the beginning of the tale, ‘vp on a day’, as he does in Hg, the scribe has decided to mark in El ‘Thre of hise olde foes han it espied’, indicating the line that marks the opening of the plot rather than that which refers back to the previous tale.

In Gower’s manuscripts, however, placement of paraps and initials does not vary. Whilst the last section analysed the extent of the fixed use of the features, this section will examine why that might be. Initials demonstrate most clearly the extent of the layout’s sympathy to poetic meaning: by limiting the interpretative freedom, the manuscripts demonstrate the strict control over which meanings are emphasised. This rigorousness in layout demonstrates further the relationship between author, text, and producer.

Paraps and initials in Gower’s manuscripts do not appear to be interchangeable. Rather, paraps in Gower’s manuscripts only appear, as described above, alongside rubrics and running titles – they indicate apparatus, not the text itself. Initials are used within the body of the text. As this section will demonstrate, the initials here, akin to the rubrics discussed above, are more than pictorial pointers: in being written letters, they are both part of the central text and part of the marginal layout of that text. In being both, the initials here emphasise further the meaning of the text, exaggerating particular lines of text not with a symbol of decoration but using the first word itself.

Following the large initial at the start of Book I, an intermediate initial begins the tale of Acteon. A three- to four-line ‘O’ indicates the opening line, ‘Ovide telleþ in his bok’ (I.333, e.g. F

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<sup>28</sup> See Chapter 1, Prose (p.74 ff.).

f.10r). This signals the beginning of the next section of text. The largest initial of book one is often five- or six- lines high. As this is an 'I', one decorator, B2, has merged the initial into the border so that the initial is ten-lines high (f.7v). The next initial in the hierarchy, the intermediate initial 'O' that follows, signals a move away from the discussion between the confessor and the lover which precedes most tales, as it does here, and towards the tale itself. Each of the initials that signal a line that begins a tale is three- to four-lines high and so is intermediate in size. This brings to attention the structure of the text. The largest initials, along with the borders, indicate that the text is primarily divided into a series of books; the intermediate initials suggest that it is, secondarily divided into a series of tales.

The framework is also divided into large and intermediate initials. The beginning of Amans's own story is also marked by an intermediate, three- to four-line initial: the 'U' of 'Upon þe point þat is befallē' (l.93, e.g. F f.8v) is decorated in all manuscript witnesses. This marks the beginning of the narrator's weeping, his prayer to Venus and Cupid, and the shock that signals the arrival of Genius and the beginning of the tale-telling. Similarly, the introduction of the Confessor's speech is marked with an intermediate, three- to four-line initial: the 'T' of 'This worþi prest þis holy man' is decorated in all manuscript witnesses (e.g. F f.9v). In the framework of Book I, a final intermediate initial is placed in all manuscript witnesses at 'Betwen þe lif and deþ I herde', the point in which the narrator, now Amans, responds to the Confessor's words.

These lines are central to the concept of Gower's text: the confessional dialogue format, the interchange between the Confessor and Amans, will continue throughout the next eight books of tales. These final two initials, therefore, mark what is key to the structure of the text. These intermediate initials flag those parts of the text that are vital to the format of *CA* as a whole: that is, the structure of the text, that the narrator decides to take on the universally experienced issue of love, himself one of those lovers who tells of his own woe, and confesses to Genius through a dialogue of tales and questioning. As these manuscripts do not contain a colophon, only the initials (and the speaker markers as will be seen in next section) indicate the confessional format, and it is only from these that Gower's vision to write the Confessions of the Lover is

brought out on the manuscript page. The placement of the initials gives a broad overview of the framework: if we were to read only those lines signalled by an initial, we would gain a skeletal understanding of the occurrences in and structure of the text as a whole.

There is also a tertiary level in the divisions. Immediately following the large initial that opens Book I, a smaller initial 'W', one- or two-lines high, begins I.11, 'Which every kind hap vpon honde'.<sup>29</sup> The narrator here states that he will cease to discuss foreign matters (those political matters discussed in the Prologue) and turn to more simple matters which all nature has experienced, love. The small initial here flags this statement: it signals the movement of the text towards the theme that underlies *CA* as a whole (see Figure 7, p.132).

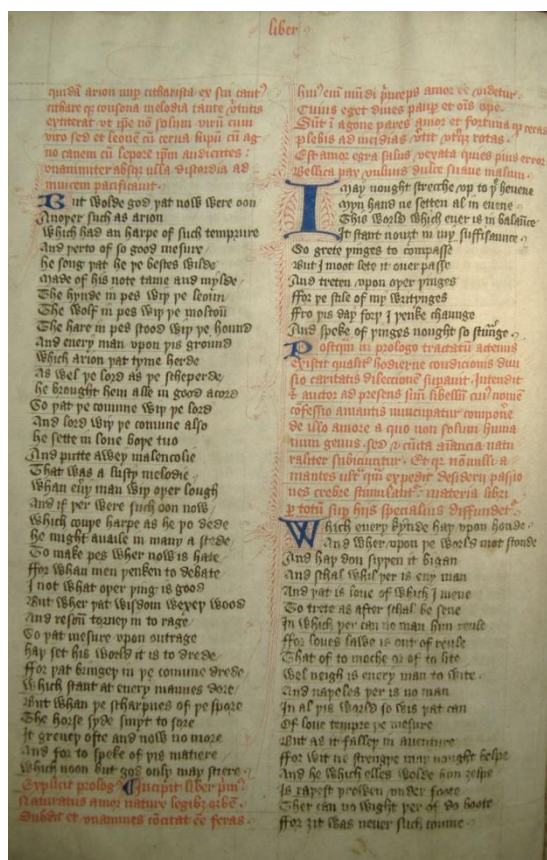


Figure 7: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 294 (B), f.7v (with permission of the Bodleian).

The initial at I.11 is placed mid-sentence, suggesting the initial here is not grammatical: its purpose is not to signify the beginning of a new sentence or clause. Indeed, not every sentence or clause is given an initial: the sentence following I.11, for example, is left blank and the next

<sup>29</sup> See those manuscripts that have their Latin glosses in the text columns: E f.6v, R f.8v, B2 f.7v, L f.8v, C f.8r, CC148 f.5v, B f.7v. This will be discussed in further detail below in Glosses (p.155 ff.).

initial is not for another fifty lines. Rather, in the way that the larger initials indicate the beginning of a new book, it marks sections of the argument, signalling the development of the text: the discussion of love rather than politics.<sup>30</sup> Where large initials indicate major beginnings, the smaller initials indicate smaller movements and developments. The next small initial confirms this development of topic: at l.61, a small initial 'A' of the same size, one- or two-lines, begins the line 'And forto prouen it is so/I am miselven on of þo'.<sup>31</sup> This initial points to the part of the text in which the narrator claims himself to be a lover, his guise that prompts the Confessor to tell the Ovidian tales that make up the majority of the text.<sup>32</sup> Such initials here signal minor developments of the text and the changes in theme or topic. By signalling the points at which the text changes pace or theme, the manuscript ensures that the movements of the text are made clear on the page.

The continued regularity of the initials throughout the manuscripts as a whole suggests that there is a smooth transition between all parts of the text. The initials here act in place of those borders missing between the end of the framework in Book I (l.332) and the tales to come, and after those tales in Book VIII (l.2008) the closing framework. As outlined above, these places do not have a border in order to preserve the flow of the narrative from confession to tales and to imply that there is a smooth transition from one to the other. The initials support this: initials are placed throughout the framework to emphasise the progression of the text. Likewise, after the intermediate-sized initials that signal the start of each of the tales, identical smaller initials, of two- to three-lines and of identical decoration, are used throughout the manuscript to indicate developments in the tales. The same initials are used to indicate the dialogue between Amans and the Confessor (see next section). These indicate the structure of the text, the development from the framework of the tale (the Lover's plea, the dream vision setting) to the central Ovidian tales in Book I, and from the Ovidian tales back to the dream vision framework in Book VIII.

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<sup>30</sup> For a discussion of the placement of this initial here, mid-sentence and in addition to the large initial which opens the section, see Glosses (p.155 ff.).

<sup>31</sup> In all manuscript witnesses, except those with missing folios at this point: eg. O, Ad, Ash, and N.

<sup>32</sup> This complicated disguise will be discussed in greater detail in the section on Glosses (p.155 ff.).

The text itself is fragmented and the tales do not fit neatly within the framework of the text. The lover begs Venus to grant him mercy, and she does so by allowing him to confess his sins in Love. The tales do not support this aim. The tale of Canace, for example, is intended to be a tale of 'Melancholy', a subdivision of 'Wrath'. However, the tale is told in such a way as to focus pity on Canace: she writes a sorrowful letter to her brother and makes a plea to her father that Gower adds to Ovid's tale. Rather, the emphasis falls on Aeolus's cruel vengeance. The melancholy then, is that of the father, not that of the lovers:

Anon into Malencolie...  
 He [Aeolus] fell...  
 And for he was to love strange,  
 He wolde noght his herte change  
 To benigne and favourable (III.209-215)

Here, falling into melancholy is counter to falling in love: melancholy is set against love in this tale, so that the incestuous love seems a virtue. Aeolus's lack of love results in a lack of mercy, which in turn results in melancholy and wrath. As such, the lovers in the tale have not sinned but are subject to the sins of others. Love in the tale is born of Nature who 'tok hem into lore/And tawht hem so' (III.175-176) and thus far from comforting Amans in his guilt and enabling him to understand the sin, he is left feeling confused and reproached. Ellen Shaw Bakalian suggests that 'Nature' here is sexual desire so that Genius's overall message of exercising reason in love is logical.<sup>33</sup> However, the tale does not completely support this view – Ovid's tale in Gower's text is manipulated towards Canace and is instead a woeful tale of forbidden love (sexual or otherwise) with sympathy clearly lying on Canace's side. Her naivety and not her desires lead to her lack of reason, and she is a victim of circumstance rather than a subscriber to the irrational. Reason, therefore, is not set against love, but wrath, and we blame Aeolus for the tragedy, not Canace. As Gower outlines at the outset of Book I, it is love 'wherupon the world mot stonde' (I.12): anything that impedes this is the reproached sin. There

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<sup>33</sup> See Ellen Shaw Bakalian, *Aspects of Love in John Gower's Confessio Amantis*, from *Studies in Medieval History and Culture*, xxv ed. Frances G. Gentry (London: Routledge, 2004), pp.7-8, 11.

is a break here between the aim of the prologue and framework, and the tale itself. The mode of confession seems inappropriate in light of the story told here.

The tales are told for their own sake although Gower tries, unsuccessfully, to superimpose onto each a moral relevant to both the sin and the Lover. The tale is thus in disjunction not only with the mode of Confession, but also in its application to the Lover. The manuscripts do, however, attempt to clarify Gower's meaning here (and this chapter will explore the function of these glosses subsequently). The gloss that precedes this tale reads:

Hic ponit | Confessor ex[emplum] | contra istos | qui cu[m] vires | amoris  
non sunt realit[er] | experti cont[ra] | alios ama[n]tes malen[colia  
seue]ritate ad ira|cundiam vind[ic]te pro|uocantur

(Here the Confessor presents an instructive example against those who, although they have not really experienced the powers of love, are vindictively provoked to wrathfulness against lovers, in a melancholic severity) (e.g. F f.47v)

Offering an exemplum of one who has 'not really experienced the powers of love' seems at odds with the text's aims of hearing the confessions of a lover. The confessions of the lovers in the tales themselves are left unconsidered: the taboo of incest is left by the wayside. In providing these glosses, as it is commonly believed he himself did, Gower however, attempts to smooth over the meanings of his text so that the tales and the framework do not appear fragmented. The manuscript does likewise: the initials, in their rigorous uniformity throughout the manuscripts offer a veneer of homogeneity of meaning, covering the gaps in sense and smoothing out the various directions of the component parts. Gower's desire for uniformity is echoed in the layout.

This continues as the framework reappears at the end of the text. A similar system of intermediate, three- to four-line initials can be seen in Book VIII, which further outlines what is now the conclusion of the story of the lover-narrator, Amans. With tears instead of ink, the lover writes a lengthy supplication to Venus. Each stanza of this prayer is marked with a small initial of one- to two-lines in every manuscript witness, the first, the "T" of "The wofull peine of loues maladie" is an intermediate initial in each manuscript (e.g. F f.180v), followed by smaller initials to begin the following stanzas. After the completion of the supplication an intermediate initial

'W' is placed at VIII.2301, 'Whanne I þis supplicacio[u]n' which signals the end of the prayer (e.g. F f.181r).<sup>34</sup> Following this, all manuscripts place an initial 'V' (Ash has a space for an initial to be added later at f.181r) at 'Venus which stant wipoute lawe' (VIII.2377, e.g. F f.181v), the beginning of the description of the fickleness of Venus's favour, eventually leading to the conclusion that Amans, now identified as Gower, is too old for love. Upon the narrator's swoon, the vision of lovers is outlined by the layout: the beginning of each description is indicated by a small one- to two-line initials. Again, where the intermediate initials signal major developments in the text, the smaller initials indicate minor and more nuanced developments in topic or theme. More importantly, the initials here demonstrate the meticulous standards by which these manuscripts were marked: every initial is placed by every manuscript. The editors of modern editions of *CA* indent their text at the points at which the manuscripts place an initial; though the indentation might have been derived from the initials, their placement also corresponds with the development of the text: the initials and indentation are placed in such a way as to create smaller units that concur with meaning. These initials flag the start of each new description: each initial indicates the beginning of a description of a group of lovers that the narrator sees together, first men, then women, and then lovers of old age. This particular section lists numerous archetypal lovers: its layout, the steady build up of initials, depicts the directory of lovers on the page. This flags the progression of the text: the text has considered and discussed youthful lovers both male and female, and it goes on to discuss elderly lovers after the revelation that the narrator himself is old. The initials link these two descriptions of elderly love visually on the page. Again, the consistent appearance of the initials here causes Gower's text to seem a preserved, neat whole with some narrative consistency between its component parts.

The entire premise of confession, and writing and reading about confession, is questioned in the very first tale of the text. The intermediate initial which introduces the tale of Acteon, follows directly from the large initial that opens the book as a whole. After the lover is informed

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<sup>34</sup> The indication of each stanza of text is comparable to the layout employed by scribes of *TC* manuscripts. This comparison will be explored more fully later in this chapter (p.172 ff.).

he must confess, and after he has been warned 'thin yhe forto kepe and warde' (l.331), Genius tells a tale of seeing that which should not be seen:

Lo now my Sone what it is  
 A man to caste his yhe amis  
 Which Acteon hap dere aboght  
 Be war forthi and do it noght (ll.379-382)

The tale is a curious choice since the text offers exactly what the tale condemns – the reading of a private confession scene that equally should not be seen. The following tale also concerns the sins of sight (the tale of Medusa, ll.389-435), and the next two of overhearing that which ought not to be heard (of Aspidis the Serpent, ll.463-480, and of the Sirens, ll.481-529), which are immediately followed by Amans's tantalising confession: 'Mi fader I am gultyf there' (l.558). The choice seems to be a comment on the structure of the text, with tales that fit uncomfortably with the confessional mode. However, the initials here, and their size, suggest a smooth progression from one to the next. In providing a large initial to start the book and the introduction of the confessional mode, and an intermediate initial to start the first tale, we assume this is a logical next step in the discussion that naturally ought to follow the first. The disjunction between confession and tale is glossed over by the hierarchical initials, and the fracture seems unquestioned by the manuscript layout.

Towards the end, the manuscripts differ: there are two alternate endings to the text.<sup>35</sup> Most manuscripts have a dedication to Chaucer. The 'A' of 'And gret wel Chaucer whan ye mete' (VIII.2941, e.g. R f.204v) is exaggerated to indicate this line. Equally, these manuscripts again indicate the narrator's acceptance that he is old, highlighting 'But now that I am feble [and] olde' (VIII.3071, e.g. R f.205v) with an initial 'B'. F, B, N, T, Nott, P2, and A (related to the Nott manuscript which has only blank spaces left for initials as it is unfinished) have an alternate ending, indicating Venus's farewell, 'Adieu for y mot fro þe wende' with an initial (e.g. F f.184v). Following this is a review of the state of England: an initial marks the discussion of the clergy, 'Ferste forto loke þe Clergie' (VIII.2995, e.g. F f.185r), that of chivalry, 'To seche and loke how þat it is/Touchende of the cheualerie' (VIII.3006-7, e.g. F f.185r), that of laws, beginning 'And forto

<sup>35</sup> See Macaulay (1900), I, p.cxxvii-ccxviii.

lokyn ovyrmore' (VIII.3029, e.g. F f.185r), that of the corruption of men by division, 'And if men sechin sikernesse' (VIII.3036, e.g. F f.185r), the balance of the perfect state, beginning 'Bot yit to loke in opre wise' (VIII.3054, e.g. F f.185r), and then the numerous farewell paragraphs, 'And now to speke as in final' (VIII.3106, e.g. F f.185v) and 'But now vppon my laste tide' (VIII.3138, e.g. F f.185v). These, like those initials in the framework of Book I, indicate the development of the meaning of the text. The text's impetus changes between versions – it is either a 'book for Richardes sake' or for 'Engelondes sake' (Pro.24). The initials at the end that signal the change in the framework equally indicate the difference in versions and outline the changes made to the text. As such, they too smooth over the fractured parts of the text, indicating those lines which clearly show cohesion of meaning within each version. In doing so, the initials bring together those lines altered in the opening of the text with the lines altered at the end, promoting the understanding of a unified authorial vision for each manuscript as a whole.

Very occasionally, a scribe takes his own path. Colour is sometimes used inventively on the page: the scribe of N writes many proper nouns in his text in red ink. The initials of proper nouns in Book I, for example, each have red line highlights: the 'P' of 'Prest', the 'G' of Genio, the 'C' of 'Cedres', and the 'D' of 'Diana' (f.7v). The scribe of a later manuscript, Harley 3869 (1425-1450) shows a similar concern, highlighting most of the proper nouns at this point of catalogued lovers in Book VIII (f.349r). This again flags the meaning and development of the text visually: the manuscript signals the discussion between the priest and Amans, as well as the contents of that discussion, the tale of Cedres and Diana.

Similarly, B2, L, C and Pem307 have an extra initial which is not in the remainder of the manuscript witnesses, at I.209, 'What thou er this for loues sake/Hast felt ...Tell pleinliche'. These manuscripts here mark the line in which the Confessor instructs Amans to confess openly his feelings sins of love, once again signalling the premise on which the remainder of the text is based. The scribe of Ash (somewhat of a maverick, who insists on translating the Latin prose into the vernacular, as will be discussed later), places a guide mark ('cc') for a paraph at I.211, 'Tel playnlich as hit is bifal' (f.5r). This indicates the same point, but also emphasises the mode

of discussion – plain speaking. The trope of plain speaking – seen often in prologues to eschew the complexities of Latin and justify the use of the vernacular – here serves to justify the scribe’s choice to avoid Latin in his copy altogether. In addition, the scribe of Ash places another guide mark at ‘My sone y am assigned as y said be for’ (f.5r) in order to mark the Confessor’s reply to Amans’s first plea. These extra markings further clarify the structure of the text: they indicate the important lines of the text and thus sketch an outline to the structure of the text as a whole. The scribes of B2, L, C, Pem307 and even the eccentric scribe of Ash, conform to this way of marking the text but do so in a way that goes beyond the ‘standard’ version.

These examples are more in line with the theoretical approaches of Zumthor, Cerquiglini, and Machan: though very slightly altering its overall appearance, the scribes here preserve the ‘res’, the content of the text. Indeed, by adding such extra features of layout, they further support and evoke the meaning of the text. However, this is not quite ‘mouvance’ or ‘variance’. The scribe of M690 adds another feature to his manuscript which illuminates the difference between the layout of Gower’s manuscripts and the theories of Zumthor and Cerquiglini. In addition to borders, rubrics, and large initials, the scribe adds chapter numbers to the text. Akin to the scribes of Cp and Pw of *CT*, each book and each tale in *CA* is given a number: these appear in the margins adjacent to the beginning of each tale.<sup>36</sup> This unique move, however, creates even less of a unique interpretation of the text. Rather, in its uniqueness, this layout reinforces what is not unique about each manuscript: that they are unchanging. Far from being made up of movable parts as Chaucer’s manuscripts seem to be, the text is stubbornly and rigorously fixed. Even when the scribe takes the initiative to provide his own interpretation, this does not offer any new version of the text. This scribe reinforces what the layout already provides.

In offering chapter numbers, the scribe of M690 especially creates the sense that each tale is neatly and orderly part of a whole. The scribe here fixes the text so that the book contains an unchanging order of tales: this scribe organises the text so that it is not a composite of

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<sup>36</sup> Chapter numbers are not rare. They also appear in the following manuscripts of the *CT*: London, British Library, MS Sloane 1685, Philadelphia, Rosenbach Foundation MS 1084/1, Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS McClean 181, Cambridge, University Library MS Mm.2.5, London, British Library, MS Royal 17 D.xv, and numerous others.

changeable parts but a single ordered work. Where book numbers in the rubrics fix the order of the work as a whole, chapter numbers fix the order of tales within each book. Far from detracting from Gower's intentions, these chapter numbers support the initial plan for the text: they do not change the order of the tales, they do not suggest 'mouvance' and 'variance', but rather they further fix Gower's composition.

Gower's text is long and complex: its prologue and eight books are divided into smaller sections, the tales, each on a different topic that relates to a general theme. Within these tales are even more small sections, each of which has its own topic or theme that is a development of or a movement away from the last. Each of these offers numerous interpretations. This complex text suggests a need for such markers and guidance. Modern editions of Gower's text offer guidance by indicating the theme of each section of text with a subheading. The manuscripts do this to a greater extent, the scribes presenting their texts in such a way that it explains the development of meaning. Should it be then that, because of the importance of this role, these initials ought to be larger in size – in other words, higher in the hierarchy of decoration – than those large initials which indicate the beginning of a new book? In terms of their practicality, possibly; in terms of their function as part of the larger scheme of decoration, not so. Whereas smaller initials are a guide to the nuances and developments in the framework and the tales, the intermediate and larger initials are a guide to the text's composition as a whole. This hierarchy of decoration expects a particular interpretation: the decoration guides us from the closed manuscript, to one of the eight books of interest, to a particular tale of interest, and then to a section of significance: the hierarchy of decoration indicates books first, then tales, then developments within those tales. It follows logically that as the reader's field of search and interest becomes conceptually smaller, that is more narrow and focused as he reaches and reads his section of choice, the decoration would correspondingly and literally become smaller. The regularised format across *CA* manuscripts means that there is a clear and understandable hierarchy of initials. This offers a guide to the long and complex text which would have appeared, as does *Mel*, an impenetrable mass of words without the decoration. Far from being

merely ornamental as Echard suggests, the decoration is provided to be useful and flags the structure and meanings of the text. Indeed particular later fifteenth-century scribes found these divisions so useful that they created an index in their manuscript based on the placement of the initials and paraphs. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS 213 (flyleaves i v – ii v, f.187v a – flyleaf i v b, pp.378a-380b), P2 (added a little later than the manuscript's production, flyleaf i v), and Oxford, New College, MS 326 (f.7v) each have an index based on the English text that is flagged by an initial.<sup>37</sup>

Despite being copied around the same time as Chaucer's texts, and often by the same scribes (Scribe D, for example), the difference between the highly interpretive layout of Chaucer's manuscript page and the rigorous similarity of Gower's page is visible. In Gower's manuscripts, even on the minute level of the initial, the copies remain identical. At the same time, however, this demonstrates a similarity in scribal response to Gower's text and to Chaucer's. The addition of chapter numbers demonstrates that the scribes of both authors felt the need to fix the text into a particular order. Where in Chaucer's fluid and fragmented text and exemplars this is necessary to create order and offer interpretation, Gower's text is already fixed in the exemplars and through the authorial glosses. Where Gower's text is not fluid, the scribes felt they ought to provide features of layout that fix the text even further. Both Chaucer's and Gower's texts evoke similar response: their parts need to be fixed.

In Gower's text, these initials suggest that the text works together as a whole to create a single poetic vision – of Gower's book for King Richard or for England's sake. In doing so, they paper over the cracks in the text – those various meanings that do not fit neatly together. They provide a structure for Gower's text that unites its parts into one smooth whole. In this way, they both display the mechanics of the text, elucidating the relationship between the framework and the tales, and at the same time, smooth over any disjunction between the two. The uniform use of the hierarchy of initials, intermediate and minor, demonstrates a concerted effort to

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<sup>37</sup> For discussion of Oxford, Magdalen College, MS 213 and P2, see Sian Echard, 'Pre-Texts: Table of Contents and the Reading of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis*', *Medium Ævum* 66:2 (1997), 270-286. For a full description of Oxford, Magdalen College, MS 213 see Derek Pearsall, 'Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts of the Works of John Gower', *John Gower Newsletter*, xxx: 2 (2011), 28-35.

systematically organise the presentation of the long and complex text across numerous copies. The chapter numbers suggest that each tale fits neatly into an organised text; that they are topical subsections of each book, and that each book is a subsection of the work as a whole. The numbers link together the tales– even if they appear disparate in content when read side-by-side.

Book producers envisioned the literature they copied in a particular way. They did, of course, imitate their exemplars, but they also demonstrate a particular response to literary texts – that is, to fix the text into a particular order. This demonstrates a different response to the page: the manuscript is not a repository of individual readings and interpretations in the way that Zumthor and Cerquiglini argue, but is rather a more widespread response to texts and to producing books of literature, that is, to provide a solid structure onto a fluid text. Though this suggests that the production of Gower’s manuscripts was less bespoke than those of Chaucer, it also indicates that there was a standard of layout in order to emphasise the poetic meaning that Gower worked carefully to fix.

### **Speaker Markers**

Siân Echard writes most extensively on what she terms the ‘speaker markers’ in *CA*, the short one word notes that indicate the speaker of a particular section of text.<sup>38</sup> The majority of these are usually either ‘Amans’ or ‘Confessor’ and are placed in the margins of the manuscript page. Echard compares this visually to the layout of Boethius’s *Consolation*.<sup>39</sup> Further parallels can be drawn to the Latin Boethius, in Augustine, in Gregory’s *Dialogi*, in Chaucer’s *Boece*, in Walton’s *Boece*, and in a variety of other texts of dialogue. Echard believes decoration to have an inverse relationship to the frequency of speaker markers: that the more lavish the borders and initials in a manuscript, the lower the number of speaker markers. Along the same lines as her suggestion above, here too she indicates that the more that manuscripts were decorated, the more they demonstrate a concern with the aesthetic and not with textual meaning:

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<sup>38</sup> See, for example, Echard (2001).

<sup>39</sup> Echard (2001), p.59.

in general, those manuscripts which qualify most as *objets d'art* seem also to be the least reader-friendly, at least if one assumes that the speaker-markers offer a way to navigate the long text. It is striking that although the modest manuscripts are smaller, there are more markers crammed into their pages than on the much larger and more spacious folios of many of the de-luxe manuscripts.<sup>40</sup>

Echard categorises all Gower manuscripts into either 'high', 'mid', 'mid to low' or 'low' speaker marker frequency groups.<sup>41</sup> According to Echard's argument above, all of the manuscripts examined here are de-luxe and so ought to have fewer markers thus falling into her 'low' category. However, the manuscripts examined here are listed under all four of Echard's categories. The lavishly decorated M125 is described as 'high frequency' for speaker markers, and the equally de-luxe F and A are also both 'high frequency' manuscripts. Conversely, the relatively plain O, which has little decoration, no flourishing on its initials, very little red ink, no running titles, and relatively simple decorative borders, is classed as a 'low frequency' manuscript.

Though it may be true that the plainer manuscripts (e.g. Ash) have extensive programmes of speaker markers, this does not seem to be a common trend for the de-luxe manuscripts of CA. Moreover even those manuscripts with fewer speaker markers still provide the same function by other means: the initials, paraphs, and other apparatus work together on the page to replace missing speaker markers.<sup>42</sup> Speaker markers, in this sense, cannot be considered independently; they need to be viewed alongside the function of the initials as discussed above.

Book III of CA contains the most dialogue. Frequently, speaker markers and initials work together to emphasise the interchange between Amans and the Confessor. Book III opens with a request from the narrator: 'My goode fader tell me þis' (III.19). B2, Ash, R, Nott, G, Plimpton, and L have a speaker marker, 'Amans', at this point; all other manuscripts mark this line with an initial (e.g. F f.47r). Similarly, when the lover begins his confession proper, each manuscript marks the line 'Ye fader be Seint Julian' (III.34). F, B2, Ash, R, M, J, Nott, G, Plimpton, M690, P2,

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<sup>40</sup> Echard (2001), p.71.

<sup>41</sup> Echard (2001), p.61 nn.10-11.

<sup>42</sup> Echard alludes to this briefly (2001, p.62) but develops the observation no further.

and A have speaker markers here; the remainder have a small initial 'Y'. The Confessor's response, 'Mi sone for þin hertes ese' (III.134), is marked by a speaker marker, 'Confessor' in E, R, F, B2, A, Nott, G, Plimpton, M125, and L; it is marked by an initial 'M' in all other manuscripts. The only manuscript to lack either a speaker marker or initial at this point is Ash, which has a speaker marker at the next line, 'I shal fulfil þi praier' (III.135, f.43r), to mark the Confessor's promise of a tale.

Following the tale, the dialogue resumes and so do the markers of that dialogue. At III.472, the Confessor challenges Amans to respond to his question: 'Now tell me sone þin ansuere'. The majority of the manuscripts have a speaker marker, the words 'Opponit Confessor' in their margins at this point (e.g. F f.49v); only N, C, CC148, E, O, Ad, T, M125, and B have an initial. The lover's response 'Fader nay' (III.475) is also marked by either a speaker marker, 'Confessio Amantis' or a small initial (e.g. a speaker marker in F f.49v). Similarly, all those manuscripts which have speaker markers at III.471 and III.475 have a speaker marker, 'Confessor', at III.597, 'Mi sone if that thou wistest al' (e.g. F f.50r); the remainder, those that have initials in at III.471 and III.475, have an initial 'M' at this point (e.g. B2 f.52r). This suggests that the initials and speaker markers work as replacements for one another: those manuscripts that tend to have speaker markers use them fairly consistently; those that do not still mark the same parts of the text, but prefer to use a different code, that of initials, to indicate the beginnings of Amans's and Confessor's speeches. Though these provide less information as to the speaker ('Confessor' or 'Amans'), the initials serve a similar function in indicating dialogue and the movement of the text from one speaker to the next.

Sometimes the choice between initial and speaker marker is largely practical. The end of Book III is most densely populated with speaker markers: all but seven manuscripts mark meticulously the alternation of speakers without missing a single marker: 'Confessor' at III.2718, 'Lo, this ensample is mad therefore'; 'Amans' at III.2740, 'Mi fader I wol do youre hestes'; 'Confessor' again at III.2750, 'Mi sone er we departe atwinne'; 'Amans' again at III.2752, 'Mi goode fader be your leve'; 'Confessor' at III.2758, 'Mi sone art þou coupable of Slowþe'; 'Amans'

at III.2760 'Mi fader of þo pointz me longeb'; and finally 'Confessor' at III.2763, 'Now herkne I shal þe pointz deuse' (e.g. F f.62r). The seven manuscripts that do not have speaker markers here (B2, N, C, O, Ad, M690, and CC148), have initials at each of these lines instead. However, it is possible that the rigorousness with which this section is marked with either speaker markers or with initials (or both) is due to the fact that this is the final folio of the book. The final folio of each book is decorated with a border to indicate the beginning of the next book (as described above). As this page is highly decorated, it is likely that scribes were more aware of the decorator's needs here and so indicated with guide marks more carefully those lines that require initials, demonstrating the practical skills and cautions that were required for the craft. Likewise, aware of the space needed for the borders to be added onto the final page, the seven manuscripts which do not have speaker markers are careful to provide initials at each of the speech openings, indicating the speeches in a way that does not impose on the space required for the decorator's work. Thus, often the most decorated manuscripts have speaker markers, especially on those folios which are most ornate. At the point of high decoration, the page layout is considered most fully and carefully. Speaker markers which may have been forgotten or missed by scribes at other points in the text are meticulously executed on this last folio. This suggests that the decoration had a use greater than aesthetics: that it was related more deeply to the function provided by speaker markers and initials.

Thus, regardless of whether the manuscripts fall under Echard's 'high', 'mid', 'mid to low' or 'low' frequency categories, each witness marks with care the alternation of speakers on the manuscript page. Each manuscript, using a combination of speaker markers and initials, has a full programme of markers and the division of the text into dialogue is indicated uniformly and thoroughly. As a result of this thoroughness, there are very few manuscripts with extra speaker markers that do not exist in most of the manuscript witnesses.

Thus, those manuscripts that appear to have fewer speaker markers but have a high standard of decoration are not necessarily produced to be aesthetic books that are impractical for reading; the decoration that is deemed by Echard to be impractical is in fact rather useful for

interpretation. These marks show an attention to textual detail and an attempt to clarify its contents. On the page, speaker markers and initials signal the dialogic structure of the text, and its confessional format. Those speaker markers which state the names of the speakers, 'Confessor' and 'Amans', indicate what it is likely to contain: either a lovesick declaration from Amans, or admonition from Genius. Occasionally longer speaker markers, 'Opposit Confessor' and 'Confessio Amantis' appear in the margins. These less frequent but more detailed markers indicate a particular type of speech that passes between the two speakers: the text is a confession and a debate in which Genius opposes the narrator and in which the narrator discloses his crimes and admits to his failings. These explain further the speeches and define fully the matter in the central column. Rather than speaker alone, these clarify the mode of speech – either an opposition by the Confessor or a confession of the lover. In doing so, they limit the interpretations possible for the text and elaborate the roles of both Genius and the narrator: they are not here Genius and the narrator (who is later revealed to be Gower himself), but play the roles of Confessor and Amans. By labelling the speakers thus, they are tropes throughout the text: not only are the contents of their speeches fixed to confession and opposition, their characters are fixed to lover and priest. Each speaker marker thereby clarifies both the content of the speeches and the nature of the speaker: they restate the relationship between the two speakers and define the contents of the text. The speaker markers ascribe to the speakers their function in the dialogue that makes up the framework to the tales. Just as rubrics elaborate on the divisions created by borders and large initials, explaining the content of the text to come, so speaker markers elaborate on the initials that mark the beginning of each speech.

The speaker markers thus play with the boundaries between the text and the margins in the way that the short notes in Chaucer's manuscripts do. They are divisions which indicate the technical mode of each speech. In this way, they are akin to those features that Parkes describes in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century scholastic texts which organise the technical scholarly

material of theological disputation: the speaker markers here indicate scholastic dialogue.<sup>43</sup> Equally, however, these markers do not deprive the centre of its authority. Akin to the short notes in Chaucer's manuscripts, and the rubrics in both Chaucer and Gower's manuscripts, the speaker markers here direct attention to the main text. In explaining the contents of the main text, and defining the speakers, the speaker markers support the contents of the centre of the page: they guide the attention back to the text at hand, bringing the eye from the margins to the centre. Thus, the entire page supports rather than subverts the meaning of main text.

Akin to the layers of narration in Chaucer's texts, which are elucidated by the layout, Gower's text is also complex and multi-vocal. In *CT*, for example, the voice of the characters in each tale are in the voice of the pilgrims, which is in the voice of Chaucer-the-narrator, which is ultimately in the voice of Chaucer himself: each of these is portrayed through the layout (the rubrics which state 'Chaucers tale of Melibee', for instance). Here, the voice of the narrator and the voice of the lover are portrayed as the voice of Amans and that of Genius takes on the role of the Confessor. The speaker markers, like the initials discussed above, smooth over the mechanics of Gower's poetry, so that the characters (like the contents of the text) flow between the framework and the tale: the narrator and Genius smoothly take on the roles of Amans and the Confessor.

This is put onto the manuscript page. The speaker markers are not used solely for understanding the meaning of the text because the text itself explains clearly the dialogue between Genius and Amans: most speeches begin 'My fadir' or 'My sone' and so can only be spoken by one of the two. The elaborate and rigorous marking in the margin suggests that scribes may not have been as interested in the dialogue and framework as they were in the tales. The later fifteenth-century Findern manuscript (Cambridge University Library, MS. Ff.1.6), for example, contains extracts of the Tale of Tereus (ff.3r-5r), of Rosiphelee (ff.7r-10v), of the Three Questions (ff.45r-51r), of Apollonius (ff.84v-95r), but little of the dialogue between Amans and Genius (ff.5r-7r, 81r-84r).<sup>44</sup> In copies of the whole text, the speaker markers ensure that the

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<sup>43</sup> Parkes (1992), pp.121-135.

<sup>44</sup> See Beadle and Owen, *The Findern Manuscript: Cambridge University Library MS.Ff.1.6* (London: Scholar Press, 1977), pp.xix-xxx.

sections that are read are not just tales but rather also the narrative interventions: marking the dialogue here ensures that some sense of the narrative, moral framework of the text, is absorbed alongside the tales. The speaker markers signal those parts of the text that are not the tales, and by breaking these parts into their constituent speeches, indicate the confessional format of the text. As such, like those in Chaucer's manuscripts, the speaker markers here act as those short notes, outlining the text.

In doing so, the speaker markers explain Gower's text. Akin to the initials discussed above, the speaker markers here clarify the contents of each section of text, equally covering over the disjunctions between the framework, the confessions, and the tales. The relationship between the Prologue and the appearance of the lover is strained. Love, in the Prologue, is used in a very different sense: the narrator exclaims that love has 'falle into discord' (Pro.121), alluding not to the love between a man and a woman, but between mankind itself and within the church. The beginning of Book I comes as a surprise: love takes a different shape and is expressed in the manner of the conventional Lover's plea. There is a disjunction in aims here, with part of the framework focusing on Gower's intention to write a political text, and the other on his *amour courtois*. Gower wishes to write a tale 'Somwhat of lust somewhat of lore' (Pro.19). However, the two aims are fractured. The speaker markers, however, attempt to present the text as a single poetic vision and hide this disjunction. The dialogue between the lover and the confessor is repeatedly indicated with either initials or the words 'Amans' and 'Confessor' or 'Opponit Confessor' and 'Confessio Amantis'. By repeatedly stating this in the margins of the page, the tales are firmly placed in this framework. The speakers are again defined as a lover and a confessor, though the narrator is not a lover at the opening of the Prologue. The carefully identical nature of these manuscripts is therefore highly necessary: the layout has been cautiously produced to offer this singular interpretation across all manuscript witnesses of a singular poetic vision. In this way, they demonstrate producers' sensitivity to the meaning of the text (or possibly to the author's demand, as will be elaborated in the next chapter). Here, the layout was concerned with fixing Gower's meaning.

## Latin Short Notes

In addition to the speaker markers, initials, and paraps, the manuscripts also have a series of short notes. These append the function of the initials and speaker markers in two different ways. Whilst the initials and speaker markers indicate the developments of the text, the movement from tales to dialogue, the Latin short notes indicate more subtle movements which showcase Gower's poetics, akin to those in *Mel* which indicate the beginning of a new *sententia*. This section will argue that they do so by both emphasising the mechanics of the poetry and by elucidating Gower's meanings, so emphasising his ability as the scholarly *auctor*.

After Book VI, the format of *CA* changes: instead of a dialogue punctuated by lengthy tales, Book VII contains lengthy descriptions. This book is thought to link better to the framework, connecting the theme of self-governance here to the overall theme of the governance of a king or of England.<sup>45</sup> All manuscript witnesses have a full set of short notes in this book.<sup>46</sup> This book does not concern itself with one of the deadly sins but is 'Of Aristotle and ek the fare/Of Alisandre hou he was taught' (VII.4-5). As the frequency of the dialogue between Amans and the Confessor falls, there is an increase in another feature on the manuscript page: the speaker markers that signal the dialogue in the margins are replaced on the page by short notes in the margins.

Adjacent to Confessor's statement that he will imminently discuss 'thre forms of beinges' (VII.92), a Latin note explains:

No[ta] q[uod] t[ri]plex | d[icitu]r essencia | p[ri]ma te[m]pora|nea que  
i[n]cipit [et] desi[n]it s[e]c[un]da | perpetua | que incip[i]t | [et] no[n] desin[i]t  
| tercia sem[pit[er]na que | nec incipit | nec desinit  
(Note that being is called triple: First temporal, which begins and ceases;  
Second perpetual, which begins and does not cease, and Third eternal, which  
neither begins nor ends) (e.g. F f.139v)

The text then goes on to detail what is summarised in this short note. Following this appears a Latin note stating, 'No[ta] de secu[n]da parte theorice que phisi|ca dicitur' (Note concerning the second part of Theory, which is called Natural Science ['Physics'], e.g. F f.139v), adjacent to the

<sup>45</sup> See Rita Copeland (1991), p.207.

<sup>46</sup> Barring Ash, the scribe of which cuts all Latin prose by this point in the manuscript.

opening of the Confessor's discussion of Physics: 'Phisiq[ue] is aft[er] þe seco[un]de' (VII.135, e.g. F f.139v). Similarly, adjacent to VII.145, where the Confessor discusses the 'þridde point of theoriq[ue]/which cleped is mathematiq[ue]', a note reads: 'No[ta] de t[er]cia p[ar]te theorice que mathematica d[icitu]r cui[us] condicio quatuor in se co[n]tinet intelligencias scilicet arsmeticam musicam Geometriam [et] astronomiam set p[ri]mo de artismetice natu[ra] dicere intendit' (Note concerning the third part of Theory, which is called Mathematics, whose nature contains in itself four branches of knowledge, namely Arithmetic, Music, Geometry, and Astronomy; and first he intends to speak about the nature of Arithmetic, e.g. F f.139v). Within this description are two subdivisions: music at VII.163; and geometry at VII.175. Again a short note indicates this subdivision. At VII.163, where the Confessor considers 'the seconde of Mathematiq[ue]/which is the science of musiq[ue]', a note states, 'No[ta] de musica q[ue] s[e]c[un]da pars artis mathematice dicit[ur]' (Note concerning music, which is called the second part of the mathematic art, e.g. F f.139v). At VII.175, the third division of mathematics, a note states, 'No[ta] de t[er]cia specie art[is] mathematice qua[m] geomet[ri]am vocant' (Note concerning the third species of the Mathematic Art, which they call Geometry), adjacent to the Confessor's description of the 'thridde intelligence...[that] cleped is Geometrie' (VII.176-178, e.g. F f.139v). Likewise, short Latin notes divide the following descriptions of the four elements, the four complexions, and the division of the world: each note breaks the section into its relevant subsections. The four elements, for example, are broken into four parts – 'No[ta] de terra quod e[st] prim[um] elementum' (note concerning the earth, which is the first element, VII.223); 'No[ta] de aq[ua] quod e[st] secundu[m] elementum' (note concerning water, which is the second element, VII.237), 'No[ta] de aere quod e[st] terciu[m] elementu[m]' (note concerning air, which is the third element, VII.254); and 'No[ta] de igne quod est qu[ar]tu[m] elementum' (note concerning fire, which is the fourth element, VII.375) (e.g. F f.140r-141r). Some of these sections are further broken down into subsections: air, for example, has three layers, each labelled 'De p[ri]ma aeris periferia' (concerning the first layer of air, VII.265), 'De s[e]c[un]da

aeris periferia' (concerning the second layer of air, VII.280), and 'De t[er]cia aeris p[er]iferia' (concerning the third layer of air, VII.285) (e.g. F f.140v).

Though this layout may seem repetitive, the regularity of the short notes indicates a specific reaction to Gower's text here. It is at this point in *CA* that Gower's text is most ordered. This book breaks away from the tale-telling of the rest of the text to focus on, as Rita Copeland outlines, the Aristotelian divisions of the theoretical and practical sciences and of morality and ethics.<sup>47</sup> The manuscripts respond to this order by offering an inherited layout. Parkes outlines the way in which thirteenth- and fourteenth-century books organise material so as to organise the content within.<sup>48</sup> Aquinas, for example, often takes the fixed structure of *disputatio*: it outlines a problem, an opinion, three points rising from it, three adversarial points, and a conclusion. The textual arrangement of Latin disputation is displayed as the systematic organisation of a work into ordered parts, which suggests intellectual agility. The layout of the page offers structural support for this textual and intellectual system. This scholastic system of textual breakdown is imitated here: those divisions which are in the text are exaggerated by the Latin short notes to the margins of the page. As such, the system of organisation is translated from theological and philosophical books where it originated to the organisation of the literary text. *ParsT* offers a similar systematic system where the overwhelming prose text is organised through a series of rubrics into thematic sections. By exaggerating Gower's organisation of this section of *CA*, his text is aligned with those scholastic texts which merit such organisation. It is thematically ordered so that it imitates the look of the learned book: an appropriate medium for the teachings of Aristotle, as is Book VII.

The notes also function as a contents list: each of the notes enumerates the text, cataloguing it in a systematic way. Each of the seven planets, for example, is given a number by the Latin short notes. The notes list the planets in order: 'No[ta] hic de p[ri]ma planeta que aliis inferior luna dicit[ur]', VII.721; 'De secunda planeta q[ue] M[er]curi[us] d[ic]itu[r]', VII.755; 'De tertia planeta q[ue] Venus d[ic]itu[r]', VII.771; 'No[ta] de qu[on]ta planeta que Mars dicitur', VII.889; 'No[ta] de

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<sup>47</sup> Copeland (1991), p.207.

<sup>48</sup> Parkes (1976), p.115.

sexta planeta q[ue] Iupit[er] d[icitu]r', VII.907 ; 'De septima planeta q[ue] reliq[ui]s celsior Saturnus d[i]c[t]us est', VII.935 (e.g. F f.142v-144r). The main text here does not itself numerically list the planets: the first planet is introduced by the line 'Beneþe alle oþre stant þe mone', VII.721; the third as only 'Next to M[er]curie', VII.771, the fifth as 'Mars þe planete bataillous', VII.889, and the seventh simply as 'The heyeste and abouen alle', VII.935. The short notes here organise these descriptions into a regimented list, and so offer an ordered system in the margins. The book is a series of descriptions. Though the main text does not provide within it a numerical list of planets, the descriptions are systematic. The short notes expose this systematic ordering of the main text, clarifying on the page, firstly that there are seven planets, and secondly that each of these is discussed in turn. The same system is used for the sections following: the twelve signs of the zodiac (VII.955-1270) and the fifteen stars (VII.1271-1438) are listed and given short numerical notes as the seven planets are above. This again fixes the text into a set order, reflecting the organisation of the central text in the margins. Akin to the provision of chapter numbers, here too the scribes have placed upon the text their own interpretation – and again that interpretation provides no unique reading of the text but reinforces what is within it. In doing this, they both expose the order within the text, and subject it to an external order, thus further emphasising that the text is unchangeable and the parts are unmovable.

Some of the descriptions are numbered within the text itself. The second and sixth planets are given numbers – 'Of þe planetes the secounde', VII.755, and 'Above Mars vpon þe hevene/The sexte planete of þe sevene', VII.907-8. It would seem here that the numbered short notes are unnecessary. However, the in-text numbering here is only provided because it happens to fit into the rhyme scheme – the numerical word, 'secounde' and 'seven' at the end of the line to fit into the couplet. The text itself is thus varied: unlike the rigorous fixity of the short notes, each description within the main text begins in a different way. The sixth and seventh descriptions as outlined above allow the text to maintain its rhyme whilst at the same time allowing a variation of style. It breaks the repetitive pattern by doing so, demonstrating Gower's

poetic range. The short notes, in these instances, do not change: they remain fixed in noting the number of the planet being described. In being so fixed, these notes ensure that the overall progression of the text – the list of descriptions – is indicated on the page: the text, no matter how varied, is ordered into a series of numerically organised descriptions. These ensure that the overall meaning – the numerical list of the planets – is not disrupted by the rhetorical change in the text.

The notes, however, are also sensitive to the nuances of the poetic change and of Gower's composition. The fourth note indicates the sun. The text itself offers a long description of the 'brihte sonne [which] stant aboue [all others]' (VII.801-802). This description is longer than the others, the planet considered by the text to be superior to the others in order to merit such a description. The short note adjacent to this demonstrates sensitivity to the meaning: the note does not detail the number of planets in the list of descriptions but reads: 'No[ta] de sole qui medio planeta[rum] reside[n]s astrorum principatu[m] obtinet' (Note concerning the Sun, who residing in the middle of the planets possesses a princely authority over the Stars) (VII.801). The short notes, therefore, demonstrate an awareness of the poetic mechanics of the text, and, in providing their own (albeit slight) variation, bring out the nuances of the poetry and of Gower's composition.

Thus, Book VII has two aims: to be orderly so as to showcase its Aristotelian, scholastic order; and at the same time, to demonstrate Gower's poetic abilities by displaying his skilfully varied composition. Though it seems that these two aims are incompatible, the short notes allow the two to work side by side. Where the main text in the centre of the page demonstrates poetic variation, the short notes organise this into a logical order, exerting control over the poetic text. The two function together to showcase both Gower's intellectual scholastic ability, which merits the order of the theological books that Parkes describes, and also the poetic variety within that strict order. In this way, the page and the text work together to allow Gower's text to be both poetic and varied, as well as strict and controlled.

The manuscript witnesses vary in two ways: F, A, and N place their short notes in the margins of the page; the others, conversely, place their short notes in the main text-column (thereby taking up the space normally reserved for a line of the verse). These become rubrics rather than marginal notes. The difference between reading the notes in each location and their function in the text column as opposed to the margin will be considered in more depth with reference to the longer glosses in the following section. Here, both placements offer the same result: to flag the numerous subsections of the text. These notes aid the process of the ‘ratiocinative scrutiny’ of the text which Parkes demonstrates was the function of the page in scholastic or theological manuscripts.<sup>49</sup> These notes mark out the logical steps in the movement and development of the book, illuminating the contents of the main text. In this way, they do not take the attention from the text to another source, the way the glosses in Chaucer’s *WBP* and *WBT* do: they do not comment on, expand, or develop the main text causing a movement of the eye away from the main text and to its source. Rather, they are the ancestors of the modern subtitle, directing the eye to the main text, explaining its contents and its structure. Galloway and Peck’s edition of the text places words in square brackets and bold font – ‘**[Four Elements]**’ – before the appropriate section in order to both summarise and divide the text; the short Latin notes do the same, though they offer not only a larger breakdown into thematic sections, but also a further breakdown of the text into subsections of each theme.<sup>50</sup>

By breaking down the text in this way, the notes also define the contents of those passages: just as the speaker markers restrict the meaning of the text to confession or opposition, the notes here suggest what one ought to find of interest in a particular section. These notes signal sententious parts of the text that are potentially extractable from the main text and the text appears a compilation of references.

As such, the manuscripts contain different codes for marking different meanings. Whereas the borders divide the text into its constituent books, and the initials indicate the smooth continuity of the text as a whole, the short notes here flag parts of the text which contain

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<sup>49</sup> Parkes (1976) p.115.

<sup>50</sup> Galloway and Peck (2000-2006).

sententious statements and exert order on the poetically varied lines of text. These fix the interpretation of the text into something standard. In doing so, they provide the same function as those initials in the prose *Mel*. In prose, this is necessary to break down a new format into something digestible. Gower's text, however, is written in verse. These features are provided nonetheless and the manuscript here offers a programme of layout that is carefully fashioned in order that each feature functions in combination with the others to create a system of decoration. This may suggest a strict adherence to an exemplar, possibly an authorial exemplar; moreover, it suggests a strict adherence to the meanings and nuances of the text. The text is large and complex; the layout offers an explanation central to portraying Gower's main text.

## Glosses

Alongside Gower's lengthy vernacular text are a series of long Latin glosses. This is one aspect of the layout that varies from manuscript to manuscript and is not produced to a 'standard' finish. Here scribes seemed to have struggled with Gower's confusing intentions. There are five categories of Latin: the verses that open larger sections of the text, the prose passages which summarise the narrative, the speaker markers and notes, the Latin at the end of the poem, and the rubrics and running titles.<sup>51</sup> The third and fifth have been discussed above. While stable in terms of its text, in terms of the layout, the Latin prose is the most complex. The scribes of some of the manuscripts place it in the margins of the page; others in the text column itself, amidst the vernacular verse text. The two placements each suggest a variety of different expectations and responses to the written page. Whereas the initials and speaker markers elucidate the meaning of the text as a single whole, and the short notes showcase Gower's scholarly nature and poetic abilities, the glosses here demonstrate directly Gower's own intentions for the reading of his text. However, the layout of the Latin prose questions the

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<sup>51</sup> See Pearsall (1989), p.13, and Siân Echard, 'With Carmen's Help: Latin Authorities in the *Confessio Amantis*', *Studies in Philology* xcv (1998), 1-40, p.17.

response to the text: and demonstrates two different interests and interpretations on the part of the scribe.

Gower's manuscripts differ the most from Chaucer's in the use of the Latin verses that rhetorically expound the forthcoming dialogue between Amans and Confessor (though these are somewhat akin to the short epigram found at the head of *MkT*, 'de casib[us] viror[um] Illustrium' in El, Cp, La, and Dd, and the citation of Statius at the head of *KnT* in El, Hg, Cp, La, and Dd). Equally, manuscripts of Gower also have lengthy Latin prose that, in more simplistic Latin, summarises and explains the contents of the vernacular text. On the surface, these seem to be most like the longer glosses found in the Chaucer manuscripts. However, whereas some of Chaucer's glosses distract from the main text to its literary heritage or contexts, or counteract the main text with alternative readings (the Wife of Bath's voice is questioned rather than supported by the scribe's glosses, for example), Gower's Latin prose functions in a different way. The first gloss in the first book offers an example:

Postq[ua]m in | P[ro]logo t[ra]c[tatu]m hacten[us] | existit quail|ter hodiernel  
condicio[ni]s di|uisio carita[tis] dilecc[ion]em | sup[er]auit in|tendit auc|tor ad  
p[re]s[ens] | suu[m] libellu[m] | cui[us] nome[n] | Confessio | Amantis  
nu[n] | cupat[ur] com|pone[re] de illo | amore a q[uo] | non solu[m] |  
human[um] | genus sed | eciam cunc|ta a[nim]ancia naturalit[er] subiciunt[er]  
[et] quia nonnulli aman|tes ultra q[uam] expedit desiderii passionib[us]  
crebro stimulant[ur] ma|t[er]ia libri p[er] totu[m] s[upe]r hiis specialius  
diffunditur

(After he has set forth to this point the treatment in the Prologue of how the division of today's condition has overcome the love of charity, the author presently intends to compose his little book, whose name is 'The Confession of a Lover', concerning that love by which not only the human species but indeed every living thing is naturally subjected. And since some lovers are often goaded by the passions of desire beyond what is appropriate, the matter of the book throughout is set forth for these especially. I.10ff, e.g. F f.8r)

This gloss is found in all early *CA* manuscripts.<sup>52</sup> Unlike the longer glosses in the Chaucer manuscripts, the gloss here outlines the text that is to come and in doing so, supports a particular interpretation of it. The Latin phrase, 'after he has set forth', clarifies the methodological structure of the English text. It then details the contents of the main text as one

<sup>52</sup> With the exception of those with missing folios: N, O, Ad, and Ash.

'concerning that love by which not only the human species but indeed every living thing is naturally subjected'. Rather than pointing to an outside source, the Latin invites the eye to look more deeply into the text and to expound its meaning. Most of the Latin prose passages begin with either 'Hic declarat', 'Hic loquitur', or 'Qualiter' suggesting that the purpose of the Latin is to clarify and support the ensuing vernacular text. The word 'hic' points directly to the text, mapping the topography of the work. Unlike Chaucer's glosses, the Latin here does not dispute the main text, and so does not directly detract from its authority. Chaucer's manuscript page depicts a battle between the Wife and the glossator over the 'correct' reading of the source text: the Wife deliberately misreads her source text and the glossator attempts to 'correct' her reading with a reading of his own. The gloss in Gower's text, however, explains the mode of the text, the correction of passion, and so establishes the confessional format. It does not direct the attention to sources of external *auctoritas*, but points back to and clarifies the vernacular text. The page is not a battlefield but attempts to be the schoolroom. In imitation of the more serious practice of commentary, the Latin here seems to attempt to quash misreading and so showcase Gower's own scholasticism.<sup>53</sup> However, as this section will argue, this is not the extent of its function and it does not always successfully do so. The layers of interpretive meaning are here undone: rather than build a variety of interpretations on top of one another, the Latin here untangles these meanings and thus clarifies the main text.

The nomenclature chosen by scholars for the Latin prose suggests their interpretation of its function on the page.<sup>54</sup> Jeremy Griffiths entitles the Latin prose the 'summaries' thereby outlining their function in relation to the verse; Pearsall argues that the prose instructs as to the 'correct reading' of the text and suggests the prose passages are 'not "summaries", therefore, as they are usually called...but are commentaries with instructions for correct reading', thereby

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<sup>53</sup> For further examples of Biblical exegesis see Smalley (1983).

<sup>54</sup> Jeremy Griffiths, 'Confessio Amantis: The Poem and its Pictures' in *Gower's Confessio Amantis: Responses and Reassessments*, ed. A. J. Minnis (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1983), p.172; Pearsall (1989) p.23; Winthrop Wetherbee, 'Latin Structure and Vernacular Space: Gower, Chaucer and the Boethian Tradition' in *Chaucer and Gower: Difference, Mutuality, Exchange*, ed. R. F. Yeager (Victoria, B. C.: University of Victoria, 1991), p.9; R. F. Yeager, 'English, Latin, and the Text as "Other": The Page as Sign in the work of John Gower' in *Medieval English Poetry*, ed. Stephanie Trigg (London: Longman, 1993), p.210. The ideas in this paragraph were inspired by Echard (1998), p.12.

demonstrating the serious character of the Latin prose; Winthrop Wetherbee names them the ‘marginal glosses’ and likewise R. F. Yeager calls them ‘marginalia’ to similarly emphasise their ‘serious nature’. Peck also names the Latin prose ‘Latin marginalia’, though with a different agenda: rather than to imply its seriousness, he suggests that the prose is disconnected from the main text and so justifies his decision to relocate the Latin prose to the ‘Notes’ section of his edition. Echard, uniquely, names the prose the ‘glosses’ in order to demonstrate both their relationship with, and derivation from, traditional marginal glossing.<sup>55</sup> By choosing a more neutral term, ‘Latin prose’, this section will demonstrate the producer’s own attitudes to the prose.

Critics who discuss the Latin prose often focus not on its function in the manuscript but on identifying its origins.<sup>56</sup> Two related and recurring questions are asked: the relative statuses of the Latin prose and the vernacular main text; and Gower’s reasoning behind his unique ‘auto-exegesis’.<sup>57</sup> The purpose of these investigations is to discover some lingering evidence of Gower’s expectations of how he himself wished his text to be understood. The first of these two questions is taken up by Pearsall, who argues that the Latin prose serves to ‘stabilize’ the ‘precarious, slippery, fluid’ vernacular main text in order to ‘allude to the existence of a body of authority that stands outside the author’s text’, and thereby evokes an authority and an ‘ostentation’ which is not evoked by the vernacular.<sup>58</sup> Yeager, along the same lines, argues that the Latin draws attention away from the ‘low’ style of the vernacular to a higher authority that outlines ‘the business of the poem’.<sup>59</sup> Akin to the relationship of Lady Philosophy to Boethius, Wetherbee believes the Latin prose to ‘oscillate between the poles of authoritative commentary... and a dogged, schoolmasterly moralism’.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Echard (1998), p.13.

<sup>56</sup> See R. F. Yeager, “‘Oure englishe” and Everyone’s Latin: The *Fasciculus Morum* and Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*’, *South Atlantic Review* xlvii (1981), 41-53 and ‘Learning to Speak in Tongues: Writing Poetry for a Trilingual Culture’ in Yeager (1991), pp.115-129; Wetherbee in Yeager (1991); Siân Echard, ‘Gower’s “Bokes of Latin”: Language, Politics, and Poetry’, *SAC* xxv (2003), 123-156.

<sup>57</sup> See for example, Copeland (1991), pp.202-220.

<sup>58</sup> Pearsall (1989), pp.18, 15, and 16 respectively.

<sup>59</sup> Yeager (1981), p.45.

<sup>60</sup> Wetherbee (1991), p.9.

Despite the various nomenclatures given to the Latin prose, the general scholarly consensus seems to be that it imposes an order and authority onto the text that the vernacular alone cannot command. This has led to the second broad question that scholars pose in examining *CA* manuscripts: what was Gower's purpose behind his glossing? In claiming an authority for the Latin prose, scholars suggest a variety of voices on the page: Amans and Genius of the main text and the disembodied voice of the Latin prose. An extension of their above argument, the Latin prose is considered the 'didactic' voice which showcases Gower's moralisation of Ovid's tales and so presents Gower himself as a suitable *auctor*.<sup>61</sup> As Yeager phrases it, Gower's purpose is summarised as simply wanting to demonstrate that he 'can sing as well at the top as at the bottom of the scale'.<sup>62</sup> Conversely Echard suggests that Gower's use of Latin alongside English demonstrates that 'all language is...radically unreliable and both the Latin prose and the English main text claim equal authority'.<sup>63</sup> Whereas Pearsall argues the Latin 'stabilizes' the English, Echard argues that the Latin prose 'destabilize[s] the physical linguistic features of paradigmatic authoritative texts', that the combination of Latin and vernacular calls into question the authority of either language.<sup>64</sup>

As outlined in the Introduction and Chapter 1, historically, glosses performed three functions: they imposed a particular interpretation, a 'correct' reading, onto the text; they claimed an authority, usually through the hierarchy of layout; and they suggested a particular approach to the book. The appearance of Gower's Latin prose is very similar to the glosses detailed above and is a product of such inherited traditions. However, though it may indeed imitate the look of serious exegesis, it does not quite fulfil the traditional gloss function.

If we look in detail at the contents of this Latin prose, unlike the examples of glosses quoted above, the Latin prose does very little in terms of interpreting the text – the first of the three functions of glosses. As demonstrated by the opening quotation of this section, unlike the glossator of *WBP* who disputes the scholarly basis of the Wife's diatribe, the Latin prose in *CA*

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<sup>61</sup> Yeager (1981) p.41 and Pearsall (1989), pp.13-14; Minnis (1988), p.275.

<sup>62</sup> Yeager (1993) p.211.

<sup>63</sup> Echard (1998), p.9.

<sup>64</sup> Echard (1998), p.14.

does not disagree with the contents of the main text. Rather, like the long glosses in Chaucer manuscripts such as that adjacent to Dorigen's exemplum of Phidon's virgin daughters, it often just restates the contents of the tale. A long gloss in Book I does just this:

Hic in speci|ali tractat Confessor cu[m] Amante con|t[ra] illos q[ui] de|  
p[ro]p[ri]a formosi|tate p[re]sume[n]tes amore[m] |mulieris de|dignant[ur]  
Et | narrat ex[emplu]m q[ua]l|it[er] cuiusdam | Principis fi|lius nom|ine  
Narcizus | estiuo te[m]po|re cu[m] ip[s]e ve|nac[ion]is cau|sa quendam |  
ceruu[m] sol[us]| cu[m] suis can|ib[us] exagita|ret in gra|uem sitim |  
inc[ur]rens ne|cessitate co[m]pulsus ad | bibendu[m] de quoda[m] fon|te  
p[ro]nus se i[n]|clinavit vbi | ip[s]e facie[m] sua[m]| pulcherrima[m] in aqua  
p[er]cipiens puta|bat se p[er] hoc | illam Nim|pham qua[m]| Poete Ekko|  
vocant i[n] flu|mine coram | suis oc[u]lis po|cius conspex|isse de cuius | amore  
co[n]fes|tim laqueat[us]| vt ip[s]am ad | se de fonte ex|traheret plu|ri|bus  
blandi|ciis adulaba|tur Set c[um] ill[u]d p[er]ficere | nullatenus | potuit pre|  
nimio la[n]guo|re deficie[n]s co[n]|tra lapides | ibide[m] adiace[n]tes caput  
ex|u[er]berans ce|rebrum effudit Et sic de p[ro]p[ri]a pulcritudine qui fuerat  
pre|su[m]ptuosus de p[ro]p[ri]a pulcritudine fatuatus interiit.

(Here in particular the Confessor discourses with the Lover against those who, presuming on their own beauty, disdain the love of a woman. And he narrates an instructive example about how a son of a certain prince, Narcissus by name, during the springtime, when hunting alone with his hounds he pursued a certain stag, and running with severe thirst, compelled by necessity to drink from a certain stream, he lowered himself flat to the ground. There, perceiving in the water his own most beautiful face, he thought instead that he was regarding that nymph whom poets call Echo, in the river before his eyes. Instantly snared by love of her, in order that he might draw her out from the stream he wooed her with many seductions. But when he could not at all achieve that, growing weak from too great an illness, he struck his head against stones lying around in that same place, pouring out his brains. And thus he who had been presumptuous about his own beauty died infatuated by his own beauty. I.2275ff, e.g. F f.21r).

The Confessor has already explained (in the lines preceding the Latin prose on the manuscript page) that the contents in the main text warn against the 'vice of pride/Which torneth wisdom into wenyng' (I.2266-70). The text goes on to state in verse the story in the same order and detail as it is found in the Latin prose. The prose adds very little in terms interpreting the text and only reiterates what the Confessor states in the main text itself.

The eccentric scribe of Ash translates this Latin prose into English: seeing that the Latin prose serves no interpretative function of its own, the scribe 'demotes' it from the authority of Latin to

the vernacular. Usually beginning 'here þe confesso[r] put an example' (f.43r, for instance), 'here þe confesso[r] sheweþ an example' (f.44r, for instance), or 'here þe confesso[r] declareþ' (f.44v, for instance), the English prose also similarly uses 'here' clauses as the Latin uses 'hic' so that it rephrases the text. The scribe renders the lengthy Latin prose into something more succinct. The Latin note above is vastly abbreviated to the brief English note:

Here in special þe confesso[r] tretes w[ith] þe louer ayenst þo þat  
p[re]sume he[m] self so þat þei þynke þ[at] no woman might be her pere  
And telleþ howe narcizus was mychieued be þat vice (f.16v).

Though the Latin prose is more longwinded, giving greater detail of the text to follow, the two glosses essentially function in the same way: the Latin prose is not more of a guide as to the interpretation of the tale than is the short English note.<sup>65</sup>

Joyce Coleman has questioned whether any of Gower's intended readers would have been able to comprehend the Latin that accompanies the text: she concludes that it is highly unlikely that either Richard II or Henry of Lancaster (or their magnates) would have been able to read the Latin of *CA*.<sup>66</sup> However, at the same time, she suggests that the readers of Gower's text would have been an educated audience. The Latin prose is written in relatively basic Latin: the Latin prose in the Prologue adjacent to the description of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, for example, states very simply:

Hic in p[ro]lo|go tractat | de statua | illa quam | Rex Nabugo|donosor vide|rat  
in so[m]p[n]is cuius ca|put arueu[m] | pectus arge[n]|teu[m] venter | eneus  
tibi|e ferree pe|du[m] v[er]o que|dam p[ar]s fer|rea queda[m]| fictilis  
vide|bat[ur] sub qua |membro[rum] di|uersitate secu[n]|du[m] Danielis  
exposic[i]o[n]em| hui[us] mu[n]di variacio fi|gurabatur  
(Here in the prologue he discourses about that statue that King  
Nebuchadnezzar had seen in dreams, whose head was gold, chest silver,  
stomach brass, legs iron, but whose feet were some part iron, some part clay,  
through which diversity of members, according to Daniel's exposition, the  
variation of this world is figured, Pro.585ff, e.g. F f.5v)

<sup>65</sup> It should be noted that occasionally the scribe does slip up in his translations, sometimes translating the Latin prose into English with a Latinate syntax which distorts the meaning slightly or renders the gloss incorrect. This is demonstrated most fully by Siân Echard in 'Glossing Gower: In Latin, in English, and *in absentia*: the Case of Bodleian Ashmole 35', in *Re-Visioning Gower*, ed. R. F. Yeager (Ashville: Pegasus Press, 1998), pp.237-256.

<sup>66</sup> Joyce Coleman, 'Lay Readers and Hard Latin: How Gower May Have Intended the *Confessio Amantis* to be Read', *SAC* xxiv (2002), 209-235.

Many manuscripts also provide here an illustration. In the way that the Latin prose does, the illustration also describes the main text, offering an image of a multicoloured statue, the feet and legs in silver-blue or brown representing iron and clay, the stomach in a dark gold representing bronze, the chest in silver, and the head in gold. In order to depict the contexts of this image, some manuscripts (such as f.5r of London, British Library, Harley 3869) offer a sleeping Nebuchadnezzar in the background. Akin to the Latin prose, this also adds no further analysis or instruction for the ‘correct’ interpretation; rather, it provides only a summary of the text to come. The Latin prose which follows this is also certainly not, as Coleman terms, ‘hard Latin’:

Hic narrat | vlt[er]ius de q[uo]d[am] lapide | g[ra]ndi qui vt | in d[i]c[t]o  
so[m]pni[o] videbat[ur] | ab excelso | monte sup[er] | statua[m] cor|rue[n]s  
ip[s]am | q[ua]si i[n] nichilu[m] | penit[us] [con]t[r]uit

(Here he narrates further concerning the certain great stone, which, as appeared in the said dream, rushed from a high mountain onto the statue and utterly crushed it almost to nothing, Pro.617ff, e.g. F f.5v).

The Latin here is fairly uncomplicated for the educated audience Coleman envisions. The scribe of Ash translates the Latin not just because it might have presented too much of a challenge for his educated readers. Rather, vernacular glossing was often employed: the Eadwine Psalter, for example, translates parts of its Latin texts into Old English and Anglo-Norman. Here the English gloss is written in a minuscule script and is not in the margins but has an interlinear position. In this way, the English is firmly subordinate to the Latin Romanum Psalter. The Herbraicum Psalter is similarly accompanied by an Old French gloss which is similarly subordinate to the main text in its position and its size.<sup>67</sup> The purpose of this vernacular glossing, O’Neill suggests, was to translate the Psalters into the ‘current vernacular of status’, that is, iterate them according to their contextual situations rather than to evoke a claim to a former authority: the Anglo-Norman gloss and the Old English gloss respectively provide a translation in their ‘official vernaculars’, the Old English suitably evoking ‘Canterbury’s Anglo-Saxon past’.<sup>68</sup> Hanna et al. give numerous examples of Latin scholastic commentary that has been pointedly translated into

<sup>67</sup> Patrick P. O’Neill, ‘The English Version’, in Gibson et al. (1992), pp.123-138.

<sup>68</sup> O’Neill (1992), pp.136-7.

the vernacular and believe these translations to be for the benefit of the ‘romañita’ reader, who may now profit from more a complete comprehension of the work.<sup>69</sup> This leads to a discussion of the second supposed function of the gloss: to evoke an authority for the text via Latin.

The Latin prose here does not explain, expurgate, or ‘correct’ the reading of the main verse text but provides a straightforward outline. Thus, there is an argumentative doubling. On the page, the close proximity of the Latin prose and the vernacular verse causes this to appear a visual doubling of the narrative. The verse itself provides the tale and the moral; the Latin restates the same. We thus need to seek further to understand the function of this doubling.

In terms of their layout, unlike the glosses in Rolle (e.g. Bodley 953 and Hatton 12) or Peter of Lombard (e.g. MS. Auct.D.2.8) which use a traditional hierarchy of script to distinguish gloss from text, Gower’s Latin prose is not much smaller nor in a less formal hand than the main text. The prose in this way appears on the page to be of equal importance to the main text itself. The main aspect of layout is the position of the prose on the page. On a survey of all the earliest manuscripts of *CA*, the scribes had two main ways of presenting the Latin prose: either by placing it in the margins of the manuscript adjacent to the main text, or by placing it within the text-column itself (sometimes, though rarely, experimenting with both). Of the manuscripts examined here, seventy-three percent place the Latin prose in the text-column: E, R, O, E2, B2, Ash, L, C, CC148, B, Pem307, J, Nott, G, Plimpton, M125, M690, and P2. The others place the Latin prose in the margins of the page: Ad, F, A, N, M, and T.

Pearsall comments on these two placements of the Latin, suggesting that the positioning of the Latin prose is caused mainly by ‘practical difficulties to the scribes: the organisation of the page was complex, and the prose commentaries often had to be squeezed in at the bottom of the page to save them running over’.<sup>70</sup> As such, the positioning of the Latin prose in the exemplar had little effect on the positioning of the Latin prose in the copied book. With regards to Ad,

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<sup>69</sup> Hanna et al. in Minnis and Johnson (2005), p.386.

<sup>70</sup> Pearsall (1989), p.14. See also, Derek Pearsall, ‘The Organization of the Latin Apparatus in Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*: The Scribes and their Problems’, in *The Medieval Book and a Modern Collector: Essays in Honor of Toshiyuki Takamiya*, ed. Takami Madsuda, Richard A. Linenthal, and John Scahill (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004), pp.99-112, especially pp.104-105.

Pearsall suggests that the exasperated scribe could no longer accommodate the Latin in the margins of the text so relocated them to the main text-columns.<sup>71</sup> In concluding this, Pearsall implies that the positioning of the Latin prose is due to practicalities of copying rather than choice. Pearsall and Edwards suggest that the placement of the Latin prose is a result of economy of space and practical problems of accommodation.<sup>72</sup> It is true that scribes did alter the layout of their text mid-copying in order to facilitate the process. It is also true that the lengthy Latin prose caused numerous problems of accommodation, often spilling out into the gutters of the page (e.g. P2 f.49v). At the same time, as we have seen from the copies of the Psalter described above, scribes – especially those professional scribes thought to have copied Gower's text – were capable of producing layouts that were far more complex than that which *CA* demands.<sup>73</sup> The manuscripts of *CA* themselves show indications that their layout was carefully planned with a coherent method in mind. Pearsall notes that highly experienced scribes would have been employed for the task of executing the de-luxe copies of *CA*.<sup>74</sup> The implication is, of course, that the manuscripts were not copied inexpertly by inexperienced, apprentice, or easily frustrated scribes, but rather that they were diligently executed. We see in London, British Library MS Harley 3490 (f.14r, for example) numerous primary markings left by the scribe for the decorators to insert paraphs (of attentively observed alternating colours) and large initials. Furthermore, it seems no more difficult to write in the text-columns than to write in the margins: though it is true that scribes struggled to accommodate the Latin prose into the margins of the page, the Latin of f.8r of *F* spilling into the gutter for instance, it seems they struggled just as much to accommodate the Latin into the text-column. As prose does not necessarily fill a specific number of lines the way that verse does, spaces would have needed to be carefully calculated, based on the potential size of the decorator's hand, and accordingly spaces would have needed to be left blank by the scribe to be filled in with a different ink. In

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<sup>71</sup> Pearsall (2004), p.105.

<sup>72</sup> Edwards and Pearsall in Griffiths and Pearsall (1989), pp.264-265.

<sup>73</sup> E.g. Lincoln Cathedral, MS 18 (A.1.1) which had between four and eight columns of gloss: see Gibson in Gibson, Heslot and Pfaff (1992), p.108 and p.114.

<sup>74</sup> Pearsall (2004), p.103.

leaving both such guide marks and such blanks, scribes must have not only carefully executed the manuscript, but fully envisioned it prior to its production, suggesting that they were more than apprentices to the trade. Glosses in poetic manuscripts are often marginal and are not always especially carefully planned: some of those found in manuscripts of Hoccleve's and Chaucer's texts are scrappy and are not placed immediately adjacent to the text with which they belong. Unlike the glossing in Peter Lombard's Psalter, for example, in which the glosses begin by repeating the first word of the text they comment on, thus tying gloss to text, the glosses in poetic texts are typically less well planned. Gower's glosses are an exception and demonstrate cautious awareness of the layout of the page.

The two different positions of the Latin prose produce two different layouts for the text as a whole. These two layouts have the potential to demonstrate different functions of the Latin prose. The most pertinent example is the Latin at the beginning of Book I: following or adjacent to I.60 appears the Latin prose:

Hic quasi| in p[er]sona| alio[rum] q[uo]s a|mor alli|gat finge[n]s| se auctor es[se]||  
Amantem| varias eo[r]um passio[n]es variis| hui[us] libri| distincconi|b[us] p[er]||  
sing[u]la| scribere p[ro]pon[i]t.

(Here the author, fashioning himself to be the Lover as if in the role of those others whom love binds, proposes to write about their various passions one by one in the in the various sections of this book) (e.g. F f.8v)

As discussed above, the Latin prose, though it may look very similar to the traditional glosses used for Biblical exegesis and scholastic glossing, here has a different function: it demonstrates an interest in the text rather than a deference to an external authority. However, its positioning on the page complicates our understanding of its function.

The drive of *CA* is twofold: the majority of the text is occupied with the Ovidian tales, which begin in the second half of Book I and continue to the first half of Book VIII; and the framework of the text is occupied with the tale of Amans's love and woe. The framework opens with a traditional romance setting, the lover sighing in a garden 'in the monthe of Maii' (I.100) whilst surrounded by the avian love of hedonistic birds. When Venus pierces his heart, causing him to start 'Riht as a man doth out of slep' (I.155), and demands that he explain himself, he can only

claim to be a poor 'caitif' (I.161), a generic and conventional lover. The tone of the text changes on the introduction of Genius and the telling of the exemplary Ovidian tales (as outlined above) from that of romance to one of active dialogue and debate (interspersed with tales which are not securely either romance or dialogue). The framework resumes in Book VIII, where the narratorial tone shifts back from dialogue to the lover reciting his encounter. When Venus reappears, the narrative drive of the framework culminates on the revelation that the lover is 'John Gower' (VIII.2321). He is told that he is too old for love and, swooning, he is relieved of the dart that pierced his heart and his wounds of love are soothed with Cupid's ointment. The framework thus ends unsatisfactorily and the reader is left with numerous unresolved questions regarding the persona of the narrator and his age. This led Macaulay to apologetically dismiss the framework and focus on the Ovidian tales as the only praiseworthy aspect of Gower's text: 'The rest is all machinery, sometimes poetical and interesting, sometimes tiresome and clumsy, but the stories are the main thing'.<sup>75</sup>

However, the framework is complicated by the Latin prose. If the vernacular is read alone, the framework has a neat and balanced structure: the numerous instances of swooning and awakening take an important role in the structure of the text and the development of the narratorial persona. The voice that opens Book I is already that of a lover, a voice removed from the didactic narrator of the Prologue, and one that employs the numerous clichés of *amour courtois*. Cupid's 'firy dart' (I.144) causes the lover-narrator to start: 'I out of my peine awak' (I.121). He moves from one plane of existence into another in which he sees an apparition of Venus. Venus asks 'what' he is, and the narrator, for a second time, awakes into yet another plane of being: 'I abreide/Riht as a man doth out of slep' (I.154-155). It is here that the anonymous voice of the lover-narrator is identified as Amans. To mirror this, Amans in Book

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<sup>75</sup> Macaulay (1900), I, p.x, and see p.xi-xix; See also: C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936); J. A. Burrow, 'The Portrayal of Amans in *Confessio Amantis*', in *Gower's Confessio Amantis: Responses and Reassessments*, ed. A. J. Minnis (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 1983), p.11. C. S. Lewis is more forgiving, believing the framework to be the culmination of the plot: that discovering the narrator is old is a coming to reason of the lover. Peck too suggests that the identification of Amans with Gower is the culmination of the plot as confession is a 'mode of self-discovery' (p.xix).

VIII swoons to indicate a transition back from Amans to the generic lover-narrator. Again he falls onto the clichés of love poetry by writing a poem in the formal convention of rhyme royal. He is accused of feigning youth (VIII.2410), and upon discovery of his age, swoons once again. Here, once his 'fyri lancegay' (VIII.2798) is removed and his wound of loved soothed with Cupid's ointment, he awakes from his 'trance' and is identified as the elderly 'John Gower'. Though the poem is the reverse of a generic dream vision, the dreamer unconventionally awaking into a fictional plane and swooning back to reality, the framework is in careful balance, with Books I and VIII mirroring one another in their actions and contents.

In its manuscript contexts, the presence of the Latin prose complicates the interpretation of the main text. As quoted above, the Latin prose at I.60 takes up the problem of the confused relationship of Gower, the lover-narrator, and Amans. In explaining that 'hic quasi in p[er]sona alio[rum] q[uo]s amor alligat finge[n]s se auctor es[se] Amantem', the Latin prose, rather than pointing away from the text, attempts to offer a guide through it: not only does it outline the text to follow, but it explains and discloses the ending of the text as a whole. The Latin prose, in this way, somewhat fulfils the third of three functions listed above: it directs the approach to the book (though not quite to the same extent as the examples Smalley gives).<sup>76</sup> Rather than allowing the main text itself to reveal the identity of the poet persona and so shock with the revelation of the narrator's age, the Latin prose reveals the ending at the beginning. It summarises the whole text in one short paragraph. The figure of Amans is an appropriation of the French *amour courtois* tradition. The shock at the end in which Amans is identified with Gower is part of this tradition: Jean de Meun's portion of the *Roman de la Rose* contains a similar amalgamation of author and narratorial persona in which Amant is identified with Guillaume de Lorris. The Latin prose, by explaining away this tale, disconnects Gower's text from such conventions. His Latin prose, again, does not evoke inherited traditions but disassociates itself from them.

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<sup>76</sup> Smalley (1983), e.g. pp.176-177, see Introduction, p.17.

The difference in layout hints at broadly two levels of interaction with the text. Positioning the Latin in the margin, the prose sits aside from the main text. Akin to the short notes in *Mel*, for instance, or the initials and paraph marks, the marginal Latin prose functions by hooking the wandering eye and focusing its attention back onto the main text. Though their marginal position suggests they might have been pushed aside (quite literally ‘marginal’, as de Hamel argues they can be),<sup>77</sup> the prose is still available to elucidate the structure of the text. The main text dominates the manuscript page. The Latin here is in a liminal space, on the borders of the main text; however, unlike Chaucer’s long glosses, they are not beyond the main text, and they do not take one’s attention beyond the margins of the page to other books.

When in the text-column, the Latin is part of the text. It acts as a guide from within. The Latin prose here dominates the page and appears central to the main text. Yet its position does not cause it to be part of the text: it is differentiated by its red ink text and so the Latin remains part of the apparatus that enables the main text to be interpreted. The text is understood in the way that the Latin prose passages dictate: we are aware that Gower is feigning to be a lover from the outset of Book I before we have a chance to digest the vernacular itself. The Latin prose ensures that it is clear that Amans is Gower and that he is indeed ‘fingens...esse Amantem’. The positioning, in this way, literalises Camille’s figurative centralisation of the margins: the Latin is taken as central to the text, both in its content and in its position on the page.<sup>78</sup>

Venus accuses Gower of being a ‘faitour’ (I.175) a generic lover. This word, however, also has the double meaning: from Old French, it can be translated as ‘contrivers’<sup>79</sup> (‘fakers’) or ‘makers’, suggesting the poet himself. The guise of the lover is a traditional mode through which poets expressed the art of writing, love generating poetic inspiration, and the lover is often represented as a poet. The double meaning attempts to disguise (though of course, it reveals) the layering of narratorial personas. Venus does see through Gower’s mask of the lover, but the relationship between the lover and the poet is not made explicit until the end. The Latin prose,

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<sup>77</sup> See Introduction, pp.13-16, de Hamel (2001), p.109.

<sup>78</sup> See Chapter 1, Glosses, especially p.62ff. and Camille (1992), pp.9-10.

<sup>79</sup> Peck’s translation.

however, exposes a fuller meaning of the text: having outlined 'fingens se auctor esse Amantem', the page emphasises that the word 'faitour' has more than one meaning. The Latin, in this way, clarifies the nature of the narrator to render his persona transparent.

In feigning to be a lover, the lover-narrator exploits the conventions of love poetry. The Latin prose that follows the explanation that 'fingens se auctor esse Amantem' attempts to clarify further the use of the *topos* of love:

Confessus Genio si sit medicina salutis| Experiar morbis quos tulit ip[s]a Venus| Lesa  
quidem ferro medicantur membra saluti| Raro tamen medicu[m] vulnus amoris  
habet

(Having confessed to Genius, I will try to discover whether that is the healing medicine for the diseases that Venus herself has transmitted. Even limbs wounded by the knife may be brought to health by treatment; yet rarely does the wound of love have a physician). (I.202, e.g. F f.9v)

The phrasing used here has a similarity to the *topoi* used by other love poetry: Chaucer, for example, uses an almost identical phrase to describe the effects of love's wounds that 'there is phisicien but oon/That may me hele' (*BD*, ll.39-40). This, of course, is a convention found in much poetry, most famously the *Roman de la Rose*, the *Consolation of Philosophy*, or stretching as far back as, for example, the *Aeneid* (IV.1-2). The Latin prose, by explicitly using these *topoi*, akin to stating plainly that Gower feigns to be the lover, indicates the artifice of love poetry. In Gower's guise as the conventional lover, he must use the conventions of its poetry. Whilst acknowledging the artificiality of love poetry, the narrator, upon 'feigning', exists as Amans within this artificial, conventional realm, and so fully makes use of its stereotypes. Using the artifice of love poetry in what ought to be moralistic or scholastic glosses, the Latin prose exposes the convention of the text and the falsity of the lover's persona, and reveals the true intentions of Gower, that is, to feign to be Amans. Equally, in the other meanings of the term, he feigns, that is composes, the Ovidian narratives in his texts.

As suggested above, Gower's narrative takes a different shape to that of Chaucer's *CT*. There are numerous voices in Gower's text: that of the main text, that of the Latin verse, and that of the

Latin prose.<sup>80</sup> This multiplication of voices amounts to a layering of the narratorial personae in the text. The manuscript page attempts to clarify this narratorial complexity. Whereas Chaucer blurs the line between Chaucer-the-poet, the voice narrating the pilgrimage, and Chaucer-the-pilgrim, the voice that interacts with his fellow travellers, the distinction between Gower and the Amans is conversely clarified. The Latin prose serves to openly display the mechanics of the text – how it is written and how it progresses, and as such, how it ought to be interpreted. In this way, the narratorial layers are flattened: the author is presented throughout the text through the transparent persona of Amans. Amans does not fool the reader who has access to the Latin prose on the manuscript page, and we are aware that it is Gower's voice we hear above all others. Only in one manuscript, Ash, do we find an initial at the very end of the text (a space for an initial, f.181r) to indicate the revelation that the author is 'John Gower'. In all other manuscripts this is unnecessary, the Latin prose having already offered this information seven books earlier in Book I.

When placed in the margins, the Latin prose tends to be written in text ink. It is marked with paraps, either flourished or plain depending on the quality of the manuscript. Its position, colour, and marking make the marginal Latin prose visually prominent on the page. On the other hand, the Latin prose in the text-columns tends to be in red ink (except for the occasional few Latin prose passages in O which are in text ink, likely to be due to a mistake on the part of the scribe). These are marked with flourished initials throughout the manuscripts. Equally, however, their position, colouring, and marking cause the text-column prose to be as visually prominent on the page as is the marginal prose. Often, the prose when in the text-column overhangs into the margins to ensure it is visually separate from the main text.

This hints at some of the difficulties and limits in planning the look of the manuscript page. Moreover, it suggests a sense of judgement on the part of the scribe. The Latin prose doubles the argument of the verse narrative, rendering one or the other, either the Latin or the English,

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<sup>80</sup> See Yeager (1981), pp.41-45, Echard (1998), pp.1-40, and Ardis Butterfield, 'Articulating the Author: Gower and the French Vernacular Codex', *YES*, Special Number: Medieval and Early Modern Miscellanies and Anthologies xxxiii (2003), 80-96.

surplus to requirement. The scribe understands that this prose does not belong in the centre of the page: this is marginalia and therefore ought to be outside of the text-space. As such, it traditionally takes the reader outside the text, to the source of *auctoritas* or to an interpretative reading. Gower's Latin prose, as described above, points back inwards to the central text. When placed in the text columns, the Latin prose is more obviously a double of the verse: disrupting the main verse, the Latin prose demands to be read alongside the verse which results in the meaning of the text being told twice. The scribes that place the Latin prose in the text column seem to be aware of this, and the non-traditional use of the gloss here. As such, the Latin prose is set not entirely in the text column but protrudes into the margins. In this way, the Latin prose takes up a liminal space, neither completely part of the text nor completely part of the *mise-en-page*. In its protruding state, it performs the function of the notes in the margins whilst in the text column: standing visually separate from the verse in the text column (and often especially so because it is written in red ink or underlined), the Latin prose brings the eye from the margins of the page to the centre and to the main text. Equally, the Latin prose offers a description of what is to come. As the speaker markers do, the Latin prose also defines what is to come in the main text. These protruding Latin prose passages are useful finding apparatus, allowing access to particular parts of the text. In this way, the prose is more akin to the initials, paraphs, speaker markers, and rubrics discussed above: rather than part of the text or performing the traditional function of the gloss, it is part of the apparatus that outlines the text. Pearsall's frustrated scribe of *Ad*, who gives up on the Latin prose, instead uses large initials to mark the place where the Latin prose appears in other manuscripts.<sup>81</sup> Akin to speaker markers that can be replaced with initials, here too the scribe deemed the functions of the glosses and of the initials to be interchangeable.

The Latin prose, then, is not solely a scholastic or moralistic exegesis of the text: it does not only attempt to 'fix' the text or claim a degree of prestige for the poetry. Gower's self-exegesis provides the text with an outline for its interpretation and navigation. The prose performs the

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<sup>81</sup> See Pearsall in Echard (2004), p.91.

same function as the shorter notes in Chaucer manuscripts: that is, to outline not what is beyond the text in its inherited cultural history, but what is in the text on the page: to facilitate the navigation of its structure. The Latin prose supports the function of the book as a whole when used alongside the borders, rubrics, running titles, initials and paraphs. Unlike the other features, the Latin prose provides greater detail of the text to follow. As such, the Latin prose is another usable tool, and merits the description of ‘apparatus’ rather than ‘prose’, ‘marginalia’, ‘commentary’ or ‘gloss’. The content of the glosses demonstrates directly Gower’s own intentions for the interpretation of his text; the layout demonstrates the scribes’ intentions for the interpretation of it.

However, as the next section outlines, the Latin prose also plays a large role in identifying Gower’s text specifically as a work of poetry: that where scribes had the most freedom in layout, they created a *mise-en-page* that emphasises one element of the poetic over the other: verse-form over meaning.

## Rhyme Scheme

A curious incident in Book VIII of *CA* seems, at first glance, to support Echard’s rather disparaging comment, ‘was anyone in fact reading Gower?’<sup>82</sup> In the last book of *CA*, Venus tells Gower he is too old for love. The text is laid out thus:

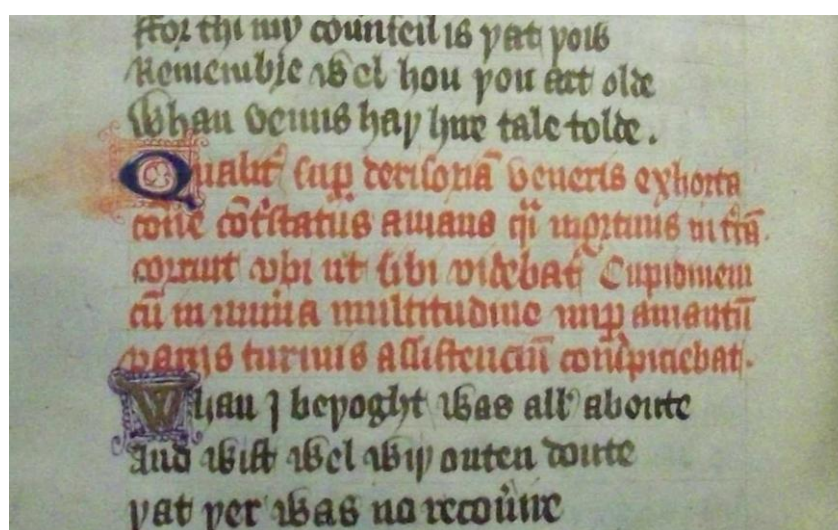


Figure 8: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc 609 (L), f.166v (with permission of the Bodleian).

<sup>82</sup> Echard (1999), p.61.

For thi my counseil is þat þow  
 Remembre wel hou þou art olde  
 Whan Venus hap hire tale tolde  
 Qualit[er] sup[er] derisoria Veneris exhorta | c[i]one co[n]t[ri]status amans  
 q[uas]i mortuus in t[er]ra[m] | corrui ubi ut sibi videbat[ur] Cupidinem | cu[m]  
 innum[er]a multitudine nup[er] amantu[m] | variis turmis assistenciu[m]  
 conspiciebat.  
 (How, saddened over the derisory exhortation of Venus, the Lover fell down to  
 the earth as if dead, where, as it seemed to him, he perceived Cupid with an  
 innumerable multitude of recent lovers with assorted crowds of attendants)  
 Whan I beþoght was all aboute  
 And wist wel wiþ outen doute  
 Þat þer was no recou[er]ire (VIII.2438-2443)

However, this is an odd location for a Latin prose passage. The Latin is placed squarely in the middle of a sentence, strikingly causing the ‘When’-clause that precedes it to be left suspended as a fragment. More problematically the Latin disrupts the overall meaning of the text – after eight books of lengthy confession, we are here told that Amans, having recently been identified as John Gower himself, is elderly and unfit for love. The disruption of this text by the Latin causes this line – one of the most climactic lines of the last book – to be abruptly robbed of its glory. Clumsily paired with the following line, both the revelation that Amans is old and the beginning of Amans’s reaction to this revelation are equally lost. Both are dwarfed by the lengthy Latin prose that cuts across the text.

The mid-sentence placement of this Latin passage seems a hapless mistake on the part of the scribe. In its manuscript context, the lines are laid out in a way that causes the text to be devoid of clear meaning, potentially confusing and misdirecting the reader. It certainly seems here, as Echard posits, that no one, indeed not even the scribes who produced the manuscripts themselves, were reading Gower. This layout certainly seems curious: despite first appearances however, such errors in laying out the text on the manuscript page reveal attitudes and responses to the text.

Modern editions of *CA* would certainly wish to believe this layout was indeed an error. Two recent editors of the text choose a different *mise-en-page*: they prefer to place a full stop after the

climactic line in which Gower is told he is too old for love and to indent the next. Macaulay and Peck lay out their printed texts thus:

Forthi mi counseil is that thou  
 Remembre wel hou thou art old.”  
                   Whan Venus hath hir tale told  
 And I bethought was al aboute  
 Tho wiste I wel without doute  
 That ther was no recoverir       (Macaulay, 1900; Peck, 2000)

The editors have here divided the two lines clearly at the logical place in order to create two separate paragraphs. These correspond to the meaning of the text: the punctuation in the second line presents the reader with a clear visual sign that this line is the culmination of Amans’s love story. The quotation marks indicate the end of Venus’s speech. The indented line following this marks the beginning of a new tone: the narrator’s reaction to the revelation. Indeed the editions alter ‘Whan’ to ‘And’ to make the second line flow more smoothly after the first. Peck’s edition divides this even further. He inserts a heading, ‘[Parliament of Exemplary Lovers]’ before the indented line, making a clear feature of the beginning of a new paragraph. In fact, the editor removes the Latin prose passages altogether in order to place them in an appendix at the end of the volume, thereby preserving on his page a tidy and uninterrupted version of the main text. The editors emphasise only the main text, suggesting that the prose inhibits a clear, smooth, and linear reading. The only indication we have of the Latin at this point in the Peck edition is pseudo-medieval manicule, a pointing hand in the left margin which invites the more industrious reader to turn to the appendix. Such a layout over-simplifies what, in the manuscripts, is far more complex.

Were this accidental placement a unique mistake, found in only a single manuscript, we could excuse the scribe his error. However this is not so: in fact, the majority of manuscripts which have the Latin prose in the text column place the Latin prose here mid-sentence and mid-sense. As these are not related manuscripts, we cannot explain this away by positing the mistake in an exemplar. Moreover, this incident is not an isolated one. Such illogical placements of the Latin passages occur fairly frequently throughout the entire *CA*. In all manuscripts with text-column

Latin, the scribes seem to have placed the Latin prose in this way: there are numerous instances in which the text is divided incorrectly on the page. At the beginning of Book I in each of these manuscripts the Latin prose is placed thus:

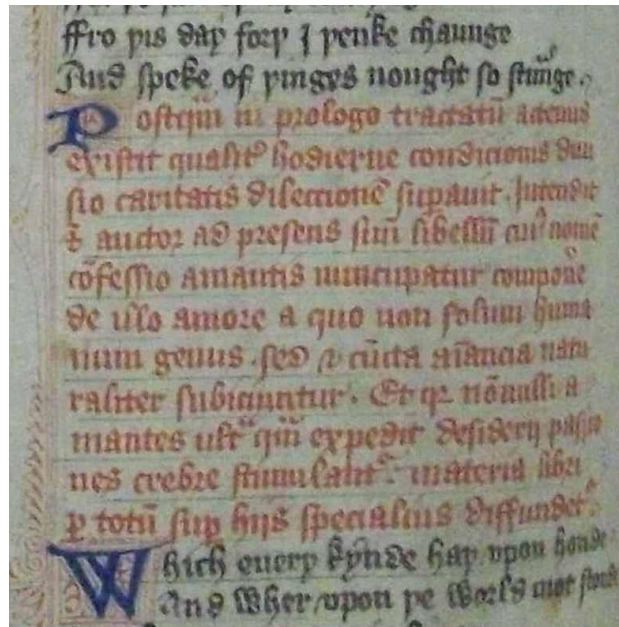


Figure 9: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 294 (B), f.7v (with permission of the Bodleian).

For þe stile of my writynges  
 Fro þis day forþ I þenke chaunge  
 And speke of þinges nought so st[ra]unge  
 Postq[ua]m in Prologo tractatu[m] actenus | existit qualit[er] hodie  
 condicionis diui | sio caritatis dileccione[m] sup[er]auit Intendit | auctor ad  
 presens suu[m] libellu[m] cui[us] nome[n] | co[n]fessio amantis nuncupatur  
 compon[er]e | de illo amore a quo non solum huma | num genus sed [eciam]  
 cu[n]cta a[n]i[m]ancia natu | raliter subiciunter. Et q[ua] no[n]nulli a | mantes  
 ult[ra] q[ua]m expedit desiderii passio | nes crebre stimulant[ur] materia libri  
 | p[er] totu[m] sup[er] hiis specialius diffundet[ur].

(After he has set forth to this point the treatment in the Prologue of how the division of today's condition has overcome the love of charity, the author presently intends to compose his little book, whose name is 'The Confession of a Lover', concerning that love by which not only the human species but indeed every living thing is naturally subjected. And since some lovers are often goaded by the passions of desire beyond what is appropriate, the matter of the book throughout is set forth for these especially).

Which euery kynde haþ vpon honde (1.8-11)

Again, the Latin prose interrupts the meaning of the passage: the line which begins 'which' sits awkwardly after the long Latin diversion. The placement of the Latin here also splits the sentence in two, the remaining half having to linger behind after the Latin prose. The placement

of the Latin separates the two halves of the sentence so that the eye has to dart back above the Latin prose in order to grasp the meaning of the text. This back and forth process seems fairly counterproductive to interpreting the complex text, undoing the work of the initials and speaker markers in smoothing the progression between the framework and the tales. The flow of the main text passage is disrupted and the meaning of the sentence, that the narrator will now turn to things more familiar, 'Which every kinde hath upon honde', is lost.

The Latin is an explanation of the main text. At the point in which the Latin intercepts the English, the narrator does indeed take up the issue of love 'which every kinde hath upon honde', or, which '[eciam] cu[n]cta a[n]i[m]ancia naturaliter subiciunter', 'every living thing is naturally subjected', as the Latin indeed states. In other words, the Latin seems intelligently placed. However, the Latin prose is not a continuation of the verse. It does not fit tidily at this point in the main text; rather it disrupts the meaning of the verse. Additionally, while the issue which the Latin attempts to clarify, the connection between 'the human species', 'humanum genus' and 'every living thing', '[eciam] cu[n]cta a[n]i[m]ancia', appears seamless in the Latin rendering of the main text, on the manuscript page the Latin physically disconnects the English verse, causing these things to appear 'so st[ra]unge'.

More frustratingly, as the Latin is a summary of the prologue and what is to follow in Book I as a whole, it logically ought to have been placed at the start of Book I as a whole. Book I opens, in fact, only ten lines above the passage quoted. This is certainly a more rational placement, one which would also allow the text to maintain its meaning. However, the placement of the Latin prose is not so logical. Indeed, only ninety lines later, yet another Latin prose passage interrupts the flow of the text's meaning: a Latin prose passage is placed amidst the narrator's plea to Cupid and to Venus:

Now herkne who þat wol it heere  
 Of my fortune how þat it ferde  
 This ender day as I forþ ferde  
 Hic declarat materiam dice[n]s qual[ite]r| Cupido quoda[m] ignito iaculo sui  
 cordis| memoriam g[ra]ui vlcere p[er]forauit quod| Venus p[er]forauit quod  
 Venus p[er]cipiens| ip[su]m vt dicit q[uas]i i[n] mortis articulo spasma|tum ad

co[n]fitendu[m] se Genio sacerdoti sup[er] amoris ca[usa] sic semiuiu[m]  
sp[eci]alit[er] co[m]mendau[it]

(Here he declares the substance of his story, saying how Cupid pierced through the memory of his heart by means of a certain burning missile, leaving a serious wound; whereby Venus, perceiving him, as he states, twitching as if in his death throes, particularly recommended that, half-alive, he confess to Genius the priest about the topic of love)

To walke as I 3ow telle may (I.96-99, e.g. B f.8r)

The placement of the Latin splits the sentence before the verb, the remaining half having to linger behind after the Latin prose. Again, the placement renders both halves of the sentence incomplete so that the eye has to dart back above the Latin prose in order to grasp the meaning of the text. These illogical placements of the Latin prose passages occur fairly frequently throughout the text: in Book VIII another awkward placement of the Latin prose fragments the vernacular sentence and renders the text meaningless. After Venus has told the narrator he is too old for love, the narrator swoons and in a vision sees a singing, dancing, conversing troop of exemplary lovers. The Latin prose is placed thus:

And over þis I understood

So as myn ere it myhte areche

The moste matiere of her speche

De no[mi]nibus illo[rum] nup[er] Amantum| q[ui] tunc Amanti spasmatō  
aliq[ui] iuuenes aliq[ui] senes apparuerunt| senes aute[m] precipue tam| erga  
deum qua[m] deam amoris| pro sanitate Amantis recuperanda multiplicatis|  
precib[us] misericorditer instaba[nt]

(Concerning the names of those lovers from not long ago, who then appeared, some young, some old, to the convulsed Lover. But the old ones, specifically, pityingly urged with many prayers both the God and the Goddess of love to restore the Lover's health)

Was al of knythod and of armes (VIII.2494-2497, e.g. B f.193r)

Only two lines later does the text go on proclaim, 'Ther was Tristram' (VIII.2500), following which begins a long descriptive list of the numerous lovers which appear before the narrator. Had the Latin prose been placed at this point in the text, the main text would progress more smoothly and the meaning of the piece would be preserved: the Latin would have stated that the following text 'concern[s] the names of those lovers from not long ago, who then appeared, some young some old, to the convulsed lover', then to be followed immediately by the promised description. With only a basic knowledge of Latin, if laid out thus, the manuscript would have

offered a smooth, linear progression from one line to the next, from the narrator's exclamation at the apparition of the ideal lovers, to a Latin outline of their detailed description to follow, and then to the description itself. Such a smooth progression is not permitted by the manuscript layout. The repeated curious placement of the Latin prose tantalisingly hints that the response to the text in its manuscript context is not the response we expect: one that privileges a smooth progression from one line to the next. The Latin prose passages bring this smooth, linear reading to an abrupt halt. The numerous repetitions of this – the placement of the Latin prose mid-sentence and mid-sense not only in a single manuscript but in every manuscript in which there is text-columnar Latin prose, and not only at one point in the text but in almost every part of *CA* – indicates that this mid-text placement of the Latin occurs too frequently in the manuscripts to dismiss it as a clumsy error. This suggests an alternative rationale behind such a curious placement.

There is first here a matter of practicality. The placement of the Latin prose in the text column is sometimes due to constraints of space. As outlined above, scribes faced a choice in whether to place the Latin prose in the margins or in the text columns.<sup>83</sup> This demonstrates a reaction to managing the complex layout of the glosses within the limited space on the page. Often these resulted in practical solutions and not clumsy errors. The manuscripts of *CA* suggest that this layout was carefully planned with a coherent method in mind. Though scribes struggled to accommodate the Latin prose into the margins of the page, the Latin of f.8r of *F* spilling into the gutter for instance, it seems they struggled just as much to accommodate the Latin into the text-column. As outlined above, the spaces for the prose passages would have needed to be carefully calculated, according to the potential size of the red, in-text hand, and accordingly spaces would have needed to be left blank by the scribe to be filled in with a different ink. In leaving both such guide marks and such blanks, the scribes must have carefully calculated the look of the page prior to its production. As we may observe from the complex

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<sup>83</sup> See also Pearsall (1989), who argues that the relocation of the prose passages from the margins to the text column was the result of 'practical difficulties to the scribes', p.14. See also, Edwards and Pearsall in Griffiths and Pearsall (1989), pp.264-265.

layout of Lincoln Cathedral, MS 18 (A.1.1), which has three versions of the Psalter (*Romanum*, *Hebraicum*, and *Gallicanum*) in six columns and two columns of commentary, scribes – especially those trained scribes thought to have copied Gower’s text – were capable of producing layouts that were far more complex than that which *CA* demands.<sup>84</sup> Here we see the effects of these practical solutions. The Latin prose, when in the text column, poses the problem of where the scribe can intelligently insert it within the text column. Often, the scribes seem to insert this prose into the text column in line with its place in the margin. At the points discussed above in F, a manuscript with marginal Latin, the prose appears adjacent to the same lines that precede the text-column prose. The scribe, thus, inserts the Latin prose at approximately the same point in the text as it appears in the margin.

A second feature appears alongside this Latin prose placement which suggests that the positioning of the Latin mid-sentence is also part of this intelligent response to a practical problem. Each of the manuscripts also contains initials to support the division of the text at the points at which the Latin is inserted: in all the manuscripts where the Latin prose is placed in the text-column, an initial marks the start of the English verse line which follows the Latin prose. To turn back to the first example, we see that a flourished initial ‘W’ starts the sentence after the Latin prose: ‘Whan I beþoght was all aboute’ (see Figure 8, p.172). This signals that the new sentence, in which Amans reacts to the revelation of his age, begins at this line rather than the previous and more logical starting point where modern editors have it, at ‘Whan Venus haþ hire tale tolde’. Indeed, the scribes here begin a new sentence at this point. Rather than ‘And’ with which the editors start the next line, the scribes write ‘Whan’. This demonstrates a carefully considered response to the problem here. In inserting the Latin prose within the text column at this point, they split the sentence in half. Instead of then beginning the English verse mid-sentence with ‘And’, they emend this with ‘Whan’ to create a new sentence at this point.

In each point in each manuscript where the Latin is inserted mid-sentence, an initial follows the placement of each of these Latin prose passages: an initial ‘W’ at the start of ‘Which eury

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<sup>84</sup> Gibson in Gibson, Heslot and Pfaff (1992), p.108 and p.114.

kynde haþ upon honde' (I.11); an initial 'T' at 'To walke as I yow telle may' (I.99); and an initial 'W' at 'Was al of knythod and of armes' (VIII.2497), for example. This is again a response to the placement of the Latin prose in the text column. When the prose is in the margins, there is no initial at these points. Again the scribes have sought a solution to a tricky situation. In inserting the initials here, the vernacular verse text seems to start at this point, regardless of whether these lines are mid-sentence and mid-sense or not. In this way, though the placement of the initial here seems illogical and the layout disrupts the linear progression of the text, the use of an initial suggests that the placement of the prose was not accidental but the result of a purposeful arrangement and practical solution. In addition to this, the scribe of M690 has placed a chapter number adjacent to each of these initials, suggesting that a new unit of text begins at this inter-sentence position.

However, though finding these practical solutions, scribes still faced a choice. When moving the text to the centre in line with its position in the margin, they could choose whether to insert it above or below the line to which it appears adjacent. As the margins are not usually ruled for the prose, the Latin prose does not always start neatly in line with a single line of the main text but sometimes appears, akin to the short notes in the *GP*, between two lines. The practical solution here also tells us something of this scribal choice. As discussed above, the choice between initials and speaker markers reveals which the scribe thought most valuable in the layout of the text. Here too, the scribes' choice suggests the importance of one feature over another. As such, we ought to look again at the examples given in order to reassess the placement of these prose passages. In each of these examples, one feature is maintained by the placement of the prose. Though the Latin disrupts the meaning of the main text, spoiling the climactic line of the first example, the placement of the prose passage showcases another feature: the couplet. Preserved together is the rhyme:

Remembre wel hou þou art olde  
Whan Venus haþ hire tale tolde (VIII.2439-2440, see e.g. Figure 8, p.172)

It is true, as the editors of modern editions of the text suggest, that the lines do work better in terms of their meaning if they are coupled with the lines preceding and following those quoted: ‘Remembre wel hou þou art olde’ follows neatly on from ‘For thi my counseil is þat þow’, and ‘Whan Venus haþ hire tale tolde’ leads on to the narrator musing on its meaning, ‘Whan I beþoght was all aboute’. However, the scribes, to the detriment of meaning, place the prose passage one line below where it ought logically to occur. This, rather than maintaining meaning, preserves the couplet: the rhyme between ‘olde’ and ‘tolde’ is emphasised on the manuscript page. Equally, the couplet following the Latin prose passage is also maintained by this placement: to the detriment of a simple linear reading, the rhyme between ‘Whan I beþoght was all aboute/And wist wel wiþ outen doute’ is maintained on the page. The same is true of the other examples given: though the last line before the Latin in the second example given follows more neatly with the line following the Latin, the placement of the Latin ensures that the couplet ‘change/st[ra]unge’, for example, is maintained (see Figure 9, p.175). Unlike the modern editions of *CA*, the scribes, in placing the Latin prose in the text-column, demonstrate a greater interest in the verse-form, the rhyme scheme of the text, over its meaning. These scribes therefore show a clear awareness of the poetic components of the text. Indeed, throughout the manuscripts not a single couplet is disrupted by the Latin prose – the poetic form is always meticulously maintained. As such, the couplet is privileged over, and as demonstrated above, sometimes to the detriment of, meaning.

If we were to look more broadly across each of the manuscripts, we can see that, while numerous Latin prose passages are placed in this way, dividing the text ‘incorrectly’, there are some Latin prose passages which could be deemed to be ‘correctly’ placed: those that do not interrupt the meaning of the main text. One of the earliest Latin prose passages in Book I is appropriately placed:

And þus fulofte men begunne  
That if þay wisten what it mente  
þay wolden change al here entente

Hic quasi i[n] p[er]sona alio[rum] quos amor al|ligat fingens se auctor esse  
Amante[m] vari|as eo[rum] passiones variis hui[us] libri distinc|cionib[us]  
p[er] singula scribere p[ro]ponit.

(Here the author, fashioning himself to be the Lover as if in the role of those others whom love binds, proposes to write about their various passions one by one in the in the various sections of this book)

And for to prouen it is so

I am my seluen oon of þo (I.58-62, e.g. B f.8r)

Just as the Latin prose states, the narrator quite literally ‘here’ (‘hic’), at this point in the text and at this point on the page, fashions himself to be the lover: immediately after the Latin, he claims to be ‘oon of þo’. Though it seems that the scribe has placed the Latin here logically in order to maintain the meaning of the text, we can observe the same rationale behind this placement as we observed above. Here, the meaning of the text happens to coincide with the end of one couplet and the beginning of the next: the couplets ‘mente/entente’ before the Latin, and ‘so/þo’ after the Latin are preserved on the page. Similarly, towards the end of Book VIII we find another two well-placed Latin prose passages:

And wiþ þe teeres of myn yhe

In stede of enke I gan to write

Þe wordes which I wol endite

Unto Cupide and to Venus

And in my lettre I seide þus

Hic tractat formam cuiusda[m] Sup|plicacionis quam ex p[ar]te Amantis p[er]|  
manus Genii Sacerdotis sui Venus| sibi porrectam acceptabat

(Here he describes the form of a certain supplication, which, offered on the part of the Lover by the hand of Genius her priest, Venus accepted)...

Hic loquat[ur] qualiter Venus accep|ta Amantis Supplicacione indilate| ad  
singula respondit

(Here he says how Venus, accepting the Lover's supplication, unhesitantly answers point by point).

Whan I þis supplicaciou[n]

Wiþ good deliberaciou[n] (VIII.2210-2216 and 2301-2, e.g. M125 f.175r-v)

The Latin prose here is placed on either side of the narrator's long supplication to Venus. Again, the narrator does quite literally ‘here’ (‘hic’) describe the prayer, and following this, Venus does ‘here’ (‘hic’) respond point by point. The Latin prose points directly to the main text to follow. Similarly, following the supplication, the Latin prose passage again neatly sits in the break between couplets. Though the Latin prose passages here seem appropriately placed, they

happen to seem so because the meaning of the text coincides with a complete couplet. It would appear, therefore, that it is the preservation of the couplet that is considered of most value to the scribe. On a brief survey of each of the manuscripts' *mise-en-page*, approximately ninety-seven percent of the Latin prose passages are positioned in such a way as to maintain the couplets, largely to the detriment of meaning.

Although a large number of the features of the manuscript page are concerned with explaining the poetic meaning of Gower's text and the mechanics of the composition, the placement of the Latin prose undoes this concern. The poetic form, the rhyme scheme of the text, is preserved on the page in precedence to the poetic meaning. Akin to the layout of Chaucer's *Thop*, *TC*, and *MkT*, as demonstrated in the last chapter, the manuscripts here demonstrate an interest in the poetical makeup of the text to the detriment of meaning. Despite the lack of tie-lines in manuscripts of *CA*, the placement of the glosses ensures that the rhyme scheme is made equally clear on the manuscript page.

Couplets are exaggerated on the page in manuscripts that predate Gower's and Chaucer's here: the Vernon manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. Poet. a.1, also emphasises the couplets on the page using paraphs and initials. Between ff.105r and 105v, *La Estorie del Evengalie en Engleis*, each of the three columns has regularly placed initials every two lines to indicate couplets or every four lines to indicate an aaaa rhyme. Equally, manuscripts of the hugely influential vernacular literary text, especially influential on the production of Gower's text, the *Roman de la Rose*, preserve the couplet on the page.<sup>85</sup> However, this tends to be where a complete rhyme coincides with complete textual meaning. The illustrations in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 332, for example, a copy of the *Rose* dating to the early fifteenth century, are always placed after a complete couplet. Often these illustrations follow a description which ends with a complete couplet; occasionally, where the meaning of the text finishes mid-couplet, the manuscript splits the couplet in two, such as the rubrics on ff.22v and 23r. Here the layout does not interrupt the meaning but does disrupt the rhyme. Gower's and Chaucer's manuscripts

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<sup>85</sup> For numerous examples, see the images on *Roman de la Rose: Digital Library*. Web. <http://romandelarose.org>.

preserve couplets more carefully and continuously throughout the book, offering a depiction of the verse-form on the page that goes beyond anything done before. In Gg (*CT*), for example, the scribe has placed each paraph not on just the line that indicates the beginning of each pilgrim's description, but over two lines of the main text: adjacent to both the first and second lines of the Knight's description, 'A knyght þere was [and] that a worthy man' and 'That from the tyme that he ferst began' (f.132r), for example. The placement of the paraphs on two lines is a continuous feature throughout *GP* in this manuscript: the couplet is indicated here. Equally, in Gower's text, the placement of the glosses suggests that the rhyme scheme was the basic unit of poetry for the production team: though meaning could be disrupted by the placement of the Latin prose, the couplet could not.

Furthermore, it is not only the couplet that is indicated by layout: Amans's supplication to Venus is also made distinct by the *mise-en-page*. The prayer is written in rhyme royal stanzas. In order to signal this change in verse-form, the layout changes significantly: successive flourished initials, usually of alternating blue and red or gold, are used to indicate the beginning of each stanza. This is often combined with a gap of one line between each stanza. This creates a dramatic visual effect of heavily decorated pages that are noticeably different from any of the preceding or following folios. All manuscripts maintain these initials for each stanza in the supplication, and all manuscripts carefully break the text here into its stanzas. It seems therefore, that the scribes held an interest in the verse-form, and changes in the verse-form, of the text as a whole. In holding such an interest, they felt the need to indicate this change visually on the page.

Such indication of a change in rhyme is also widespread in fifteenth-century manuscripts: as well as the stanza or tail rhyme form in Chaucer's manuscripts, the manuscripts also display similar attention to variations in verse-form within a text. The *balade* incorporated into the Prologue to the *Legend of Good Women* displays this scribal interest. There is a change in verse-form at this point from the couplets which preceded and which follow it to rhyme royal stanzas: this change is displayed clearly on the page. Gg sets out the *balade* in stanzas separated with a

line gap; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 16 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 346 also separate each stanza with a line gap and additionally indicate the start of each stanza with a paraph mark; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch Selden B.24 indicates the beginning of each stanza with a large initial. Dorigen's complaint in *FranT* also displays a modification in layout to demonstrate a change in mode of speaking. Each couplet has a large initial or a paraph at its head, signalling the rhyme scheme of the complaint.<sup>86</sup>

In the light of these examples, it seems that there was a common interest flourishing among scribes copying during the early-fifteenth centuries in indicating the verse-form or rhyme scheme of a text on the manuscript page. This causes us to rethink the approach of the production team in the making of the manuscript. It would certainly seem that modern editors have different demands of the medieval text than did medieval scribes, and perhaps a different (more logical, we like to think) notion of how the meaning and grammar of a text ought to function. Though a smoothness of meaning was desired, a smooth reading of the text was clearly not the only aim of the producers. As discussed in the Introduction, in recent decades, scribes have been considered 'professional readers' of the texts they produce: Kerby-Fulton, among others, has reassessed the role of the scribe as one who actively alters the text, processing the material in order to prepare it for its readers.<sup>87</sup> The layout of the manuscripts of *CA* suggests that these scribes may have had a different attitude to our modern expectations – that they were not 'professional readers' in the way our modern editors are: those who produce a text which favours a smooth, linear reading. Rather, the astute use of layout here suggests rich nuances of interpretation – including those which undermine meaning altogether.

By placing the Latin inside the English text, the scribes encourage a comparison of the two poetic forms: between prose and verse. Glossing in poetic texts is conventionally marginal: manuscripts of *CT* and Hoccleve's *RP*, produced around the same time as the *CA* manuscripts discussed above, tend to have a margin designed for these glosses to sit in, extracted from the

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<sup>86</sup> See for example, El f.131r and Hg ff.162v-163r (see Chapter 1, p.93 ff.).

<sup>87</sup> See for example, Kerby-Fulton and Hilmo (2001), p.8.

main text.<sup>88</sup> In *CA*, however, the placement of the prose in the verse column emphasises its position in relation to the main text, demonstrating the interpenetration of the English and the Latin in a relationship that otherwise would be difficult to intuit. The Latin rephrases the English text and so causes a narrative doubling; however, this doubling does not result in either the Latin or the English text appearing redundant. The layout does not cause the Latin gloss to be excluded: rather, in a joke akin to the mid-sentence ending of *Thop*, the splitting of the meaning of the verse further causes the Latin prose to be integrated into the English. Cutting off the English verse before it has made its meaning, the Latin deliberately splits the text. Where the Latin prose bears the weight of Gower's message, the vernacular is left free to demonstrate his poetic verse-form.

The layout of these manuscripts proposes that the response to the text in its manuscript context is not the response we expect: one that privileges a smooth progression from one line to the next. The manuscripts certainly offer a different setup, with the Latin interrupting and disrupting the meaning of the main text. The manuscripts privilege a different aspect: the layout suggests a production practice in which scribes held an interest in – or at least on the page demonstrate a greater awareness of – the poetical mechanics of the text.

## Drawing Conclusions

I began this chapter by quoting Echard's question, 'was anyone in fact reading Gower?', which would seem to suggest that the 'standard' *mise-en-page* of the de-luxe manuscripts was purely decorative.<sup>89</sup> The fixed decoration in these manuscripts, rather, as this chapter has shown, had a greater function than would warrant the label of 'coffee-table books'.<sup>90</sup> The earliest manuscripts of *CA* suggest the opposite: each feature of the manuscript layout works together in order to produce what is, in effect, an annotated text. The decoration does not obfuscate but rather

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<sup>88</sup> To date. I have found only two *RP* manuscripts with glosses in the text-column rather than in the margin: Sl2 and Kk, see Chapter 3: Hoccleve (especially p.231 ff.).

<sup>89</sup> Echard (1999), p.61.

<sup>90</sup> Echard (1991), p.61.

exposes the main text, revealing its mechanics. Furthermore, the layout binds together the text into a single whole, papering over those cracks in meaning that Gower was keen to hide.

The rigorous control over the manuscript production of Gower's *CA*, manifest in its layout, suggests strict control over the poetic meaning displayed on the manuscript page. The possible interpretations of the text are limited by the lack of freedom in production, and are depicted by the largely standardised placement of not only those features we expect to be standard (borders, rubrics, running titles), but also of those that usually indicate scribal interpretation (paraphs and small initials). There seems to have been little scope for producers to change the text during the book making process, and the fixed meaning of the text extends from copying word for word to copying paraph for paraph. Likewise, where producers are unable to alter either the textual or the supratextual material, the patron also must have had little control over the look of his requested manuscript. The 'standard' manuscript page allows little room for a bespoke product and so the cost of a *CA* manuscript must have fallen within a limited, high-end price range. The layout suggests that a patron-requested a 'standard' manuscript, with little scope for cost reduction or upgrade. Though there are, as Pearsall has described, both 'de-luxe' and 'economy de-luxe' manuscripts, which suggests some change in decoration to match expense, the positioning of the features of layout between the two 'grades' of manuscript differs very little.<sup>91</sup> This suggests that the bespoke trade for *CA* manuscripts was rather restricted, and producers relied heavily on their exemplars for the look of the manuscript page. The sheer number of such identical manuscripts of *CA* suggests a 'standard' exemplar circulating amongst the producers. As such, the production of manuscripts of *CA* is more akin to those mass produced scholastic texts made for an anonymous mass audience.<sup>92</sup> Though the audience of *CA* is not quite mass or anonymous, being produced in the bespoke commercial fifteenth-century book trade, equally the manuscripts of *CA* are not as tailored or flexible in layout as were Chaucer's manuscripts.

Gower's own concern that the poetic meaning of the text was not misinterpreted is clear in the glosses. The Latin prose offers navigation through the mechanics of the work as a whole,

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<sup>91</sup> Pearsall (2004), p.82.

<sup>92</sup> See Parkes (1976), pp.115-116.

especially in pointing forward to the end of the text – the revelation that the lover is John Gower. The reader is not taken by surprise: like Gower, he is in on the joke from the start. The tales then take on another meaning: metamorphosis is no longer reserved for the participants in Ovid's stories but also permeates the entire text. Gower 'feigns' metamorphosis into the narrator and into Amans in order to convince the reader that he reads of the excesses of lovers; in the end, Gower is demetamorphosed and what was the confession of a lover becomes a sobering deathbed confession. In contrast to the way that Chaucer feigns to be the pilgrim throughout the text, Gower deliberately undoes his own disguise. This extends from the text to the supratextual: that the layout also attempts to fix the meaning demonstrates a concern for representing its nuances, and so for displaying Gower's intentions. The fixed layout hints tantalisingly at a degree of influence or direct instruction from the author himself in the creation of his manuscripts, though we cannot know if this was the case.

During the early fifteenth century boom in book production, when the majority of major literary works were copied and circulated, the difference between the copying of Chaucer's texts – which are fundamentally and famously variable – and Gower's texts – which are rigorously identically produced – is plain. Parkes and Doyle have demonstrated that there was a significant overlap between those producers, or circles of producers, who copied Gower's and Chaucer's manuscripts.<sup>93</sup> From the interpretative layouts of Chaucer's manuscripts as demonstrated in the last chapter, these producers had a concern with showcasing the meaning of the text. There seems to be a different attitude towards the page in the production of Chaucer's manuscripts. Whereas in Chaucer's manuscripts, scribes struggled to interpret or to agree on the poetic meanings of the fragmented text, and the text was repackaged upon each production, in Gower's manuscripts, the meaning is made clear through not the text alone, but through the layout: the manuscript page is not the interpretation of the text, but part of its meaning. It is tempting to argue that the fixed layout of Gower's text indicates apathetic copyists. It is far easier and far more practical to reproduce an exemplar identically than it is to create a new layout for a text.

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<sup>93</sup> Doyle and Parkes (1978).

However, the layout of Gower's manuscripts also demonstrates a deep concern that the text was understood in a particular way. This supports the idea that scribes were both professional readers, interpreting text and copying according to their response to the poetry (both meaning and verse-form), and commercial scribes, copying according to exemplar and demand (as defined in the introduction).

The manuscripts display a response to the vernacular written literary text during this period of book historical importance: as manuscripts were copied, scribes responded to each one individually; however, often this individual response manifests itself in what is not individual. Even where it is not necessary, the layout attempts to further fix the fixed text. The uniformity of Gower's texts demonstrates a scribal engagement with and an acute sensitivity towards the literary and poetic meaning and the intentions of the author. At the centre of this is a fundamental concern with representing nuanced poetical meanings of the authorial text.

However, where there is a degree of freedom in layout – that is, in the placement of the glosses either in the margins or within the main text columns – the producers demonstrate most clearly their attitudes towards the poetic literary page. The layout of the manuscript page is the most visually evident aspect of the text in its written contexts, and a large part of the presentation of the text was focused on displaying the text's verse-form. In comparison with the stanza-format of *TC*, *MkT*, and Amans's supplication in Book VIII of *CA*, which is easily depicted with paraphs and line gaps, the couplets of the bulk of Gower's text are more difficult to portray on the page. However, in incorporating the Latin prose into the text column, producers expose their interest in the poetical makeup of the text.

For the scribes, this interest in form is almost akin to present day new formalist approaches. They see the text as fundamentally composed of structures – whether narrative- or verse-form. The layout of the text exposes these two simultaneous concerns – the *forma tractatus* often attempts to support the *forma tractandi* as far as is possible, and the two frequently go hand in hand. Scribal concern with verse-form, however, seems distinct from any concern with meaning in the way that confuses Gower's strict intentions for his text. Whilst certainly concerned with

maintaining some meaning in the manuscripts, verse-form seems to undo any concerted effort to depict that meaning on the page. Rather than incorporating the Latin prose at logical points in the text to maintain a smooth reading of its meaning, scribes focus on the poetical form, exposing the rhyme-scheme of the text. Here, scribes, and therefore the readers of the majority of Gower's manuscripts, think in terms of verse-form rather than meaning.

By exposing the mechanics of the text, the layout of both Gower and Chaucer's manuscripts exposes the attitudes of its producers towards the page. Akin to the layout of Chaucer's manuscripts, which agree in the depiction of rhyme scheme in their layout though they disagree on the depiction of meaning, a similar concern can be seen in the layout of the manuscripts of Gower's text. The scribal process of planning and producing the manuscript page and offering a response to the text via the manuscript, is concerned here with the depiction of poetry as poetry – that is, as a series of verses and couplets. Gower's fixed manuscript page suggests a lack of individual scribal interpretation, and the uniform layout shows a shared concern. Though often this is to depict the meaning of the text on the page, moreover it is to depict patterns of rhyme.

## CHAPTER 3: HOCCLEVE

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Hoccleve, it has often been observed, was a political poet, a princely advisor, a drunk, a melancholic, and a poverty-stricken clerk.<sup>1</sup> However, here Hoccleve is significant because he is unique among the three authors in that some of his texts exist in manuscripts that he himself produced: Durham, MS Cosin V. III. 9, San Marino, Huntington Library MSS HM 111 and HM 744.<sup>2</sup> This third chapter will examine the thirty-seven earliest manuscripts of Hoccleve's texts.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For Hoccleve as a political poet see: Paul Strohm, 'Hoccleve, Lydgate and the Lancastrian court', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) *Cambridge Histories Online*. Web. 27 March 2012.

[http://histories.cambridge.org/extract?id=chol9780521444200\\_CHOL9780521444200A030](http://histories.cambridge.org/extract?id=chol9780521444200_CHOL9780521444200A030); Derek Pearsall, 'Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes*: The Poetics of Royal Self-Representation', *Speculum* 69:2 (1994), 386-410; Nicholas Perkins, *Hoccleve's Regiment of Princes: Counsel and Constraint* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001). For Hoccleve as a bureaucrat see Ethan Knapp, *The Bureaucratic Muse: Thomas Hoccleve and the Literature of Late Medieval England* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001). On Hoccleve's psychological condition, see Lillian Feder, *Madness in Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); Gordon Claridge, Ruth Pryor, and Gwen Watkins, *Sounds from the Bell Jar: Ten Psychotic Authors* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990).

<sup>2</sup> His minor poems are in HM111, HM744, and Cosin which have been reproduced in *Thomas Hoccleve: A Facsimile of the Autograph Verse Manuscripts: Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino (California), MS HM 111 and HM 744, Durham (England), MS Cosin V. III. 9*, with an introduction by J. A. Burrow and A. I. Doyle (Oxford: Oxford University Press for The Early English Text Society, 2002). Linne Mooney has suggested that Royal 17 D.xviii (Ry3), a copy of *RP*, is in Hoccleve's hand: 'A Holograph Copy of Thomas Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*', *SAC* xxxiii (2011), 263-296 (first presented at the Early English Texts Society Conference, Oxford, May 2010). She explains away the lack of Hoccleve's distinctive 'w' in Ry3 by arguing that this form was only used in the first half of his career (p.272). There are also numerous documents relating to the Privy Seal in his hand: see Linne Mooney, 'Some New Light on Thomas Hoccleve', *SAC* xxix (2007), 293-340, Appendix B for a full list of these, and London, British Library, MS Additional 24062, the *Formulary* (a working book for younger Privy Seal scribes).

<sup>3</sup> The manuscripts examined here are:

*Autograph*: Durham, University Library, MS Cosin V. III. 9 (Cosin); San Marino, Huntington Library MS HM 111 (HM111); San Marino, Huntington Library MS HM 744 (HM744).

*RP*: London, British Library, MS Arundel 38 (A); London, British Library, MS Harley 4866 (Ha4); London, British Library, MS Royal 17 D.vi (Ry2); London, British Library, MS Royal 17 D.xviii (Ry3); London, British Library, MS Royal 17 D.xix (Ry4); London, British Library, MS Sloane 1212 (Sl1); London, British Library, MS Sloane 1825 (Sl2); London, British Library, MS Additional 18632 (Ad); Cambridge, University Library, MS Kk.i.3 pt.11 (Kk); Cambridge, St John's College, MS I.22 (formerly James 223) (Sj); Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys 2101 (Ma); Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.22 (formerly 602) (Tc); Cambridge, Queens' College, MS 24 (formerly 12) (Qu); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 496 (Cc); Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland Adv., MS 19.I.II, pt.3 (Na); Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh, MS 202 (Ed); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 40 (As); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 158 (Do); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson Poet. 10 (Ra1); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson Poet. 168 (Ra2); San Marino, Huntington Library, MS El.26.A. 13 (Hn1); San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 135 (formerly Phillipps 8980) (Hn2); New Jersey, Princeton University, MS Garrett 137 (Ga).

*Minor Poems*: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Selden Supra 53 (S); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 221 (B); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc 735 (L); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 185 (D2); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng Poet d.4. (E); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Dugdale 45 (Dug); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch Selden B.24 (S2); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 16 (F); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 638 (B2); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 181 (D1); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Tanner

Whereas the general consensus is that Chaucer left no clear plan for the layout of his manuscripts, and Gower did not oversee the production of his manuscripts (despite the old Macaulay and Fisher view), Hoccleve demonstrates complete authorial control over those manuscripts in his hand. As such, his manuscripts reflect authorial intentions for the look of the manuscript page, those features that he felt necessary to accompany his texts. In doing so, they provide a rare insight into Hoccleve's own interpretation of his work. This is useful in two ways: we may assess Hoccleve's provisions in creating his manuscript page in order to read the author's own intentions for the meanings of his texts; equally, we may use the autograph manuscripts to analyse the readings and interpretations offered in the non-autograph manuscripts and so ask how Hoccleve's first readers, the scribes that copied his texts, responded to his poetry. The autograph manuscripts allow us to examine the layout of the non-autograph manuscripts against some authorial 'control', and so understand how scribes mediated between the author and his text, providing what they felt was vital to the page layout. This may go some way towards building a wider picture of how scribes in the early fifteenth century responded to literature and the emerging literary author. This chapter argues that while Hoccleve demonstrates a concern with his poetic meaning and simultaneously his ability to write in poetic form, his scribes respond in a different way. Whilst they too interact with poetic meaning, often this is limited, and their desire to represent verse-form on the page overrides clear meaning.

To date, no Hoccleve criticism has really responded to Hoccleve's dual role as author and scribe. There is limited work on the manuscripts altogether, except to posit various affiliations and methods of production based on collations of sections of text.<sup>4</sup> Most other scholarship seeks

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346 (T). Further references to these manuscripts will be by their sigla. Translations are taken from: Charles R. Blyth ed., *The Regiment of Princes*. *TEAMS Middle English Texts*. Web. <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/hoccfm.htm>, and editions used are: Charles R. Blyth ed., *The Regiment of Princes* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1999), Roger Ellis, ed., *'My Compleinte' and Other Poems* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2001), F. J. Furnivall, ed., *Hoccleve's Works: The Minor Poems I*, *EETS lxi* (1892) (reissued with *The Minor Poems II* ed. I. Gollancz, *EETS ES lxxiii* (1897), in one volume, revised by Mitchell, Jerome and Doyle (1970)).

<sup>4</sup> See Seymour (1974), pp.253-299, and Marcia Smith Marzec, 'The Latin Marginalia of the *Regiment of Princes* as an Aid to Stemmatic Analysis', *Text* iii (1987), 269-284. Based on an analysis of a 829-line section of the text, and supported by a comparison of the glosses therein, Smith Marzec has created a stemma for the manuscripts outlining their relationships which leads her to posit (in the style of Macaulay and Fisher) a scriptorium for the production of *RP* with an author-supervisor who oversaw the production

to formulate a detailed biography of the poet, positioning him in the Privy Seal or the taverns and hostels of Westminster. Hoccleve is forever placed in the context of politics and bureaucracy.<sup>5</sup> The historical figure of Hoccleve is constantly evoked, if only to explain his literary concerns and the representation of his literary persona. While the self-conscious nature of Hoccleve's image invites speculation on the psychology of the poet,<sup>6</sup> this also seems to be a convenient method for explaining his references to Chaucer and Gower. His famous reference to 'fadir Chaucer' has sparked numerous excited theories of a Freudian Hoccleve and has led to many broad-ranging studies of Hoccleve's deliberate 'canonization' of Chaucer.<sup>7</sup> Hoccleve has thus attracted a dual focus: through both the author's bureaucratic and psychological contexts,

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of the presentation copies (A and Ha4), both of which were produced concurrently, possibly by clerks of the Privy Seal. She suggests that the identical circumstances of production could have caused numerous exemplars to be circulating at the same time, and thus the manuscripts produced are a conflation of many exemplars.

<sup>5</sup> See for example, Jerome Mitchell, *Thomas Hoccleve: a study in early fifteenth-century English poetic* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1968): Mitchell embarks in search of the historical Hoccleve through his autobiographical texts. Knapp (2001) attempts a different approach to Mitchell but largely follows along the same route, that is to put Hoccleve's texts into his autobiographical context: 'It is the argument of this book that substantial portions of the literary culture of the early fifteenth century, including many of those most important to our own cultural preoccupations, cannot be adequately understood except as products of an emerging lay bureaucracy at Westminster' (pp.2-3). Pearsall, along a similar vein, relates Hoccleve's poetry not to bureaucracy but to 'the immediate political concerns of Prince Henry in the years before his accession' (1994, p.386). Equally, Nick Perkins considers Hoccleve to be deeply concerned as a bureaucrat with his historical and political image (2001). The most recent work on Hoccleve's manuscripts has been Linne Mooney's discovery of numerous documents in his hand (Linne Mooney, 2007). These documents are used as evidence as to the projection of Hoccleve's career and periods of inactivity, ultimately leading to a clearer dating of Hoccleve's life patterns in relation to the Privy Seal.

<sup>6</sup> See Claridge, Pryor, and Watkins (1990, p.69) who believe that Hoccleve's writing on his breakdown was 'genuinely autobiographical', and claim a link creativity and insanity; Feder (1980, pp.101-109) takes this link further to argue that Hoccleve's madness is part of a tradition of the literary representation of mental disturbance; such arguments follow in the line of Mitchell's query as to whether the 'autobiographical element' of Hoccleve's writing 'should be taken at face value' (p.18). D. C. Greetham, for example, has argued for the 'literary validity of Hoccleve's self-characterization', considering Hoccleve's autobiography to be made up of a series of *topoi*, 'Self-Referential Artifacts: Hoccleve's Persona as a Literary Device', *Modern Philology* lxxxvi (1989), 242-251, p.243.

<sup>7</sup> As discussed by Nicholas Perkins, 'Haunted Hoccleve? *The Regiment of Princes*, The Troilean Intertext, and Conversations with the Dead', *ChauR* xliii (2008), 103-139; A. C. Spearing, *Medieval to Renaissance in English Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp.92-110; Larry Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, and Power: The Medieval Exemplum and the Chaucerian Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp.298-322; John M. Bowers, 'The House of Chaucer & Son: The Business of Lancastrian Canon-Formation', *Medieval Perspectives* vi (1991), 135-143; Ethan Knapp, 'Eulogies and Usurpations: Hoccleve and Chaucer Revisited', *SAC* xxi (1999), 247-273 (also in *The Bureaucratic Muse*, pp.107-127). See also Seth Lerer (1993), p.4 ff. Perkins has recently collated the numerous textual borrowings and parallels between *RP* and *TC*, arguing that 'Hoccleve's debt to Chaucer is more active, more integral to his style and poetic persona' than scholars first believed, see Perkins (2008), p.104. See also, Sarah Tolmie, 'The Professional: Thomas Hoccleve', *SAC* xxix (2007), 341-373, who posits that Hoccleve attempts to define himself as a poet alongside Chaucer by making 'an effort to locate his poetry-writing in the spectrum of work' (p.342) as both 'inhabited a professional vacuum' (p.344).

the autobiographical element of his work is understood to be the key to comprehending the meaning of Hoccleve's poetry.<sup>8</sup> Thus, scholarship places Hoccleve stubbornly in the contexts of political and authorial self-fashioning, considering his poetry to be firmly a product of the Privy Seal. Hoccleve is repeatedly perceived to be doing something politically and bureaucratically important whilst suffering both financially and psychologically.

It is curious, however, that this has become fundamental in thinking about Hoccleve's works when the same emphasis is not placed on such a scale on any other medieval author and their manuscripts: Chaucer's writings escape their custom-house roots and Gower's writings are free of critical focus on the law. There seems to be a concern with relating any text produced by Hoccleve to any autobiographical record that we have for him. This is an inevitable consequence of the biographical persona that Hoccleve's poetry creates. Scholars are invited to respond to his vulnerability, anxiety, and alienation, as much through his poetry as through his traceability. Unlike Langland, the historical Hoccleve is well known. However, Hoccleve also invites another response, one which has not been adopted by many scholars so far. In producing his own manuscripts, Hoccleve puts himself in a useful position: he plays the role of both author and scribe, and these manuscripts in his hand are readily available.<sup>9</sup>

HM111 and HM 744 are fairly plain and somewhat scrappy with only a few flourished initials. The manuscripts appear to be unfinished and paraphs have not been filled in; rather, guide marks (in the shape 'cc') which have been left to indicate the later placement of the paraphs can be seen in the margins of the pages. Cosin appears more complete, with paraphs painted over the top of guide marks. All three manuscripts have characteristic '2'-shaped lines with exaggerated bottom strokes which extend horizontally across the width of the page: these are positioned in between each stanza. These autograph manuscripts are not, therefore, in the same

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<sup>8</sup> See for example, Ethan Knapp, 'Thomas Hoccleve', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English literature, 1100-1500*, ed. Larry Scanlon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp.191-203, p.192.

<sup>9</sup> Schultz (1937), especially pp.75-76 (see above, pp.8-9) seems concerned with Hoccleve as both author and scribe. However, Schultz's discussion is based upon the identification of Hoccleve's hand and then to his position in the Privy Seal, his illness, the date of his death, and his relationship to his patrons rather than his own presentation and interpretation of his texts.

de-luxe category as most of the Gower manuscripts and some of the Chaucer manuscripts examined in previous chapters; equally, the other manuscripts of Hoccleve's own texts are far more de-luxe than the scrappy autographs. As such, their status as evidence is different; however, their importance is central because they are in the hand of the author. Linne Mooney has recently suggested that Ry3 is a manuscript of *RP* in Hoccleve's own hand.<sup>10</sup> This is laid out in a single column of text with four stanzas (twenty-eight lines) per page, and is far more de-luxe than HM111, HM744, and Cosin, and so stands more fittingly alongside the other manuscripts examined here.

In copying his own texts, Hoccleve takes on the role of neither traditional author nor scribe: he is not a scribe struggling to understand the instructions, exemplars, or lack of either left by an author; nor is he an author who writes of his worries, as does Chaucer, about his sciveyn damaging his text though 'negligence and rape'.<sup>11</sup> Rather, in being both author and scribe, his manuscripts demonstrate the authorial intention for the look of the manuscript page: those features that he felt necessary to accompany the main text. Admittedly, Hoccleve produced far fewer literary manuscripts than he did bureaucratic documents for the Privy Seal; however, the few literary manuscripts he produced provide several important points of comparison between authorial and scribal copies and offer clues as what was deemed necessary as accompaniment to the text.

The autograph manuscripts allow us to examine the layout of the non-autograph manuscripts against some authorial 'control'. This invites hypotheses on the relationship between authorial intentions and manuscript producers' interpretations. Hoccleve's autograph manuscripts cast some light on the author-scribe relationship in that they demonstrate how the author felt he ought to present his texts so as to ensure that he exhibited clearly his own meanings. In doing so, we are offered a version of his text not through the secondary, practical and interpretative scheme of the producer (as is especially true in the case of Chaucer's manuscripts), but with the

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<sup>10</sup> Mooney (2011 and Early English Texts Society Conference, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> 'Chaucer's Words Unto Adam, his own Sciveyn', l.7.

apparatus provided by the author himself. Hoccleve's layout provides important clues as to what an author himself felt he ought to provide alongside his text.

This chapter will view Hoccleve as part of another tradition, not that of the historical clerk or the poet navigating his way through a non-literary scene, but as one who fits into the more humble circle of manuscript producers – literary scribes and copyists.

Doyle and Parkes first examined Hoccleve as part of a group of book-producers. They describe Hoccleve as a scribe thus:

Hoccleve's contribution to the production of the Trinity copy was small, and he can hardly have been the entrepreneur who engaged the other scribes, because his own failure to complete the book or to supervise its production is more marked than that of others.... Hoccleve was also a Clerk of the Privy Seal, an expert professional scribe. The Trinity manuscript is the only instance yet found of Hoccleve's copying an English work other than his own, and in this instance he was collaborating in a team of scribes of whom at least one, D, seems to have been a full-time producer of books.<sup>12</sup>

Hoccleve is here seen to be just one of many scribes, hired for piecemeal work along with those that are more celebrated (Scribe B, Scribe D). Doyle and Parkes take rather an opposite view to that of most Hoccleve scholarship: far from being a creative unique, Hoccleve was one of many, and as such, followed the procedures and trends of literary manuscript production. Hoccleve's contribution to the Trinity manuscript of Gower's *CA* (T) was small, only two and half folios in length (ff.82r-84r, Book V.7083-7498: the second column on f.84r is blank). A comparison of Hoccleve's layout of this section with other scribes' layout reveals that Hoccleve was not distinct, eccentric, or unique. Indeed, his version of this section of the text is almost identical to other scribes' copies of it. Hoccleve indents V.7096, 'My fadir as of this mateere' in order to leave space for a flourished initial which has since been filled in by the decorator. All other early manuscripts of *CA* do the same. Hoccleve continues to do this for all other opening sections in this part of the manuscript; each initial is identically placed in every single copy. There is a further initial on f.82v adjacent to 'Thi wil my sone is for to blame', which appears in all manuscripts at this point. There is a larger initial following this (the size of two lines rather than

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<sup>12</sup> Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.198.

one so that two lines have been indented to accommodate it) at 'To all men as who seith knowe'. Equally, each of the other manuscripts of *CA* also has a two-line initial at this point in the text. The remainder of the two-a-half-folio stint in Hoccleve's hand continues to be identically laid out in all the early copies of *CA*. The only slight difference are two guide marks in the margin of the page (in the shape of 'cc') alongside two sketched pointing hands in the margins of f.83r at V.7331 and V.7347, and one in the margins of f.83v at V.7386. However, these are in a much lighter ink than that used for the main text on the page and in a shaky hand and so are unlikely to have been drawn simultaneously to the copying of the main text by Hoccleve, but rather added later. Hoccleve's copy of the text misses the single gloss that occurs in most other copies of this section; however, again this does not seem to be a choice made by Hoccleve: the manuscript as a whole has minimal glossing and most of its margins are blank. Hoccleve therefore was following in the same vein as all the other scribes that produced this manuscript, and his section of the manuscript is laid out identically to all other scribes' versions of this point in the text.

This chapter will view Hoccleve as a scribe amongst many others, who worked to create manuscripts that could stand alongside others produced around the same time. Though this appears to be undermining the uniqueness of manuscripts in his own hand, in fact by putting them alongside others, we find something more revealing than if we consider these manuscripts in a vacuum. By viewing Hoccleve through his manuscripts, and by viewing these manuscripts alongside others produced of the same texts, we may understand something of the literary scribe Hoccleve that we cannot understand from his other documents; and from this we may understand something of the ways in which Hoccleve envisaged his simultaneous roles as poet and scribe. Instead of asking what the contexts of texts tell us about how we should interpret them (autobiographically, historically, politically), this chapter will look at manuscript layout to find clues as to how Hoccleve produced his own manuscripts, and how he himself wanted to be interpreted.

By comparison, the autograph manuscripts also reveal more general scribal practices and attitudes to the page in the non-autograph manuscripts, indicating those features that scribes felt they ought to add to or remove from Hoccleve's text. We do not know fully the relationship between the autograph manuscripts and the other copies of Hoccleve's texts: it is unclear whether Hoccleve oversaw the production of the de-luxe copies of *RP* in the way that Macaulay and Fisher suggest of Gower, or whether Hoccleve's autograph manuscripts were used as copy-texts or exemplars. It is thought (but not satisfactorily demonstrated) that A and Ha4 may have been copied from an autograph copy of *RP*.<sup>13</sup> However, we may analyse the non-autograph manuscripts against the pages that Hoccleve himself produced in order to examine more fully the responses of scribes towards Hoccleve's texts and towards Hoccleve as a literary author.

### **Borders, Large Initials, Rubrics, and Running Titles**

Division is fundamental in examining the interpretative layouts of the Chaucer manuscripts and the regularity of Gower manuscripts, but is rarely considered of importance in Hoccleve's manuscripts. Hoccleve and the other scribes that produce copies of his texts also divide the text using the borders, rubrics, running titles, and large initials. The earliest copies of *RP* have largely similar layouts. The text is most commonly found alone in manuscripts of about a hundred folios. It is divided into fifteen sections by borders: the first section is a prologue and the dialogue with the old man (ll.1-2016); the second a preface to the text (ll.2017-2156); the third the beginning of *RP* proper (ll.2157-end, 5463). The text is then divided into twelve thematic sections: 'De justitia' (ll.2465-2996), 'De pietate' (ll.2997-3311), 'De misericordia' (ll.3312-3448), 'De paciencia' (ll.3349-3626), 'De castitate' (ll.3627-3899), 'De regis magnanimitate' (ll.3900-4123), 'De virtute largitatis et de vitio prodigalitis' (ll.4124-4473), 'De vitio avaritie' (ll.4474-4746), 'De regis prudentia' (ll.4747-4858), 'De consilio habendo in omnibus factis' (ll.4869-5019), 'De pace' (ll.5020-5439), and the last on the words of the compiler which

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<sup>13</sup> See, for example, the entry in the 'Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts'. British Library. 14 December 2010. Web. <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts>.

indicate the end of the text (ll.5440-5463). These thematic divisions are indicated using rubrics and large initials as well as borders.

Doyle and Parkes's statement, that 'the *ordinatio* of the Ellesmere manuscript interprets *CT* as a *compilatio* in that it emphasizes the roles of the tales as repositories of *auctoritas - sententiae*' holds true beyond this copy of Chaucer's text. Though the manuscripts of Hoccleve's works do not indicate quite as many *sententiae* as found in, for example, Chaucer's *Mel*, the contents of the text are made clear on the page in numerous other ways. In the manuscripts of *RP*, the text is divided firstly and most noticeably into separate sections. On a first scan through the manuscript pages of the text, the *mise-en-page* interprets the text as a composite of smaller parts, tied together as a whole by an explanatory introduction or preface.

These sections of text are indicated by decorated borders, often full-page or three-quarter page borders. Where the manuscripts are not expensively enough produced to have decorated borders, a large initial indicates the start of each section of text: the modestly produced Ry4, for example, is a fairly plain manuscript with unflourished small initials and without borders. However, it has flourished large initials that are the height of five lines of text at the opening of each new section: this causes these lines of text to be indented and so indicates clearly the start of a new section of text. The size of this initial exaggerates the divisions internal to the text. Though it does not spread the division quite as far into the margins as do the borders, it equally amplifies the change in section.

If we were to follow Mooney in arguing that Ry3 is Hoccleve's autograph of *RP*, he too provides borders and large initials so as to exaggerate the textual divisions to the margins of the page. This manuscript has full page borders – those that fill the entire margins – indicating that Hoccleve himself felt that this exaggerated division was key to interpreting the text.

As they do in Chaucer's and Gower's texts, these borders and initials exaggerate those divisions internal to the text to the margins of the page. Here they stand as both part of the text and part of the decoration. In doing so, the division of the text extends itself across the entire page to render a clear division of textual and decorative indicators: they take over the page and

distinguish one part from the next. As they are in Gower's manuscripts, the initials and paraphs here are standard throughout the text: they do not change in appearance from one thematic section to the next. Therefore the large decorative border is necessary to ensure that the text is split into parts, indicating this division across the entire page. The decoration works as part of the hierarchy: the main divisions in the text are those that separate it into thematic sections and so are indicated by the largest type of decoration.

In addition to borders and initials, as is the case with Chaucer and Gower's manuscripts, the manuscripts here too offer the reader an explanation of the contents of these sections. Rubrics – 'De Justitia', 'De Pietate', as outlined above – indicate to the reader that the secondary divisions created by smaller borders and initials are thematic. Often these rubrics sit in the line gap between the last stanza of the previous section and the first stanza of the new section. Where these are written in red ink and in a large, more formal hand, the rubrics are visually noticeable dividers of the text.<sup>14</sup> The beginning of *RP* proper in A, for example, is clearly indicated by the rubric: 'De principu[m] regi[mi]ne Incipiendo de fide obseruanda' (A f.39v). This is accompanied by the rubric 'Explicit prologus' to signal the end of the previous section of text. Ad similarly has the rubric 'Explicit prologus Incipit de Regi[mi]ne | principium de fide obs[er]uanda' at this point in the manuscript (f.39v), as does Do: 'hic incipit prologue de Principu[m] regi[mi]ne' (f.36r) along with 'Explicit dialogus inter patrem [et] filium' on the previous folio (f.35v). These rubrics are most often written in a large, more formal hand so are visually distinct from the surrounding text. These establish a hierarchy of scripts, the larger and more formal hands commanding first attention of the reader over the hand of the main text.

In providing these rubrics, the text is interpreted by the *mise-en-page* as a series of thematic sections. In being written in Latin and in a more formal hand than the main text, these rubrics divide the text into subject matter analogous to the scholastic texts of the thirteenth and fourteenth century that Parkes describes (though of narrower topics than general subject

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<sup>14</sup> Ry4, Sl2, Ad, Kk, Ma, Qu, Na, Ed, As, Ra2, Ga, Hn1 have red ink rubrics.

matter).<sup>15</sup> The rubrics define the contents of the sections to follow and so place Hoccleve's text within the tradition of serious books. The matter within the text is indeed serious in its nature. In writing a *Mirror for Princes*, the poet broaches weighty subject matter during a risky period of writing. Gower's *CA* is, of course, deeply cautious about its allegiances and offers careful (if somewhat lumbering) negotiation between the two monarchs. The layout of Hoccleve's text, therefore, attempts to match the contents. Whereas *CT* as a whole is divided into tales by the borders and initials, and is labelled by the rubrics according to teller, and *CA* is divided by the borders and is numbered by the rubrics, only weighty material is offered the Latinate, thematic rubrics found in *RP*. *ParsT* is the only tale in *CT* to merit such a layout. In providing such layout in Hoccleve's manuscripts, the scribes represent Hoccleve's text as equally serious and authoritative in itself. This inherited layout suggests scholastic authority for a serious text to the prince.

This interpretation of the text as morally weighty is further supported by the division between the prologue and *RP* proper. Whether or not based on Hoccleve's own papers, the majority of the examined early manuscripts indicate the end of the opening prefatory material and the beginning of the address to the Prince with a border.<sup>16</sup> A has a presentation illustration at this point in the text (f.37r) as does Ry2 (f.40r). The image in A is of a man in red (thought to be Hoccleve) kneeling before a prince dressed in blue; both hold a book between them.<sup>17</sup> Ry2 has a nearly identical image: a small man (Hoccleve) dressed in red kneels before a much larger scale prince wearing pink under a blue, fur-lined gown; the prince holds his hands out towards the man in red who holds a book. This is an unusual placement for such a large illustration. The illustration acts more as a frontispiece than a miniature: it is more akin to the large image at the head of Cp1, the *Troilus* frontispiece, than, for example, the standard image of Nebuchadnezzar in numerous *CA* manuscripts. However, whereas the *Troilus* frontispiece is just that – it occurs

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<sup>15</sup> Parkes (1976), pp.115-116.

<sup>16</sup> Except those with missing folios at this point: Cc (between ff.22 and 23), Ha4 (which is missing f.37, most probably due to an illustration having been on that folio) and Sj (where only one stanza is missing before f.36: it may be possible that the torn folio contained a full page illustration and a single stanza).

<sup>17</sup> For a detailed description, see Kathleen L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts 1390-1490: A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles* vi (London: Harvey Miller, 1996), pp.159ff.

at the start of the text – Hoccleve’s image is curiously positioned. Placed here, at the end of the prologue, the frontispiece suggests that the text begins not at l.1 but at l.2017, at the opening of the address to the prince. Likewise, it also differs from standard miniatures in that it illustrates not a scene from the text, but the relationship between the author and his readers. While the *Troilus* frontispiece depicts a large audience gathered to hear a text, the two Hoccleve frontispieces show only one, very particular, royal reader. As such, these manuscripts indicate that the text is composed of serious moral material that begins at this point and not before. The illustration interprets its contents as a conversation between two speakers: the author and the prince. The prologue, despite being over forty percent of the entire text, as a result of the illustration is interpreted as extra-textual material and the illustration, positioned here, acts as a visual bookmark for the opening of the serious text proper. This is part of the fiction of the text. The prologue is not considered part of the book that Hoccleve decides to write as a part of his plan to extract finances (which he outlines in the prologue), which should begin where the illustration is placed. Here it would more appropriately be a frontispiece. The layout imitates the shift in tone from the prologue to the text proper. The prefatory material is, then, handled slightly differently.

As demand for these manuscripts grew, cheap copies were quickly produced which were not nearly as ornate as A and Ha4. Importantly, they still maintain many of the features of *mise-en-page* found in A and Ha4, as well as those found in Ry3, which Mooney attributes to Hoccleve. The scribe of Ma uses the borders in an additional way: he offers a hierarchy of borders. This manuscript has added to the decoration found in the other manuscripts in order to codify these divisions. The prologue to *RP* proper and the beginning of the text itself are both given full page borders to signal the start of the main text (ff.28r and 30v); the thematic sections are indicated using three-quarter page borders or initials. F.44v, ‘De Pietate’, for example, has a three-quarter border, and ‘De Pace’ has the foliage of the flourished initial that extends the entire length of the text on the page of equivalent size to the three-quarter border (f.80v). In doing this, the manuscript here indicates that the text is split into primary and secondary divisions: the major,

primary sections being the two openings; the secondary and minor divisions being the thematic sections.

If Ry3 is Hoccleve's own manuscript, as Mooney believes, he does not provide such hierarchies himself. All divisions in Ry3 are considered to be equal and so are equally parts of the text as a whole. The scribe of Ma, however, felt the need to add to either Hoccleve's text, if he had it, or to the exemplar. By placing large borders at the opening of the text and at the end of the prologue, the manuscript creates hierarchies. As such, it indicates the development of the text: that it progresses from a general dialogue to a more focused entreaty to the prince. These borders explain that the text has two clear beginnings: the prologue to the main text, and the main text itself. Within this main text, there are smaller sections, indicated as secondary divisions by smaller borders. These smaller divisions indicate that the text in a particular section is not a standalone part but is somehow linked to that which has preceded it and that which follows – all of which fall within the major division indicated by the large border. The hierarchy of borders interprets each of these sections as part of a larger text and suggests that they rely on one another to create full meaning. In doing so, the scribe of Ma largely ignores the prologue in his use of borders, rubrics, and initials whereas Ry3, which Mooney attributes to Hoccleve, suggests that this is an integral part of the whole

Some manuscripts add an extra division in the text between 'De Justitia' and 'De Pietate': 'De legum observatione'. A and Ha4 have this division as a gloss: it is indicated by a paraph mark but placed in the margins of the page away from the text (f.51r in both manuscripts). The scribes of Ry2 and Ad place this note in the text column: Ry2 has the words 'De legum obs[er]uacione' centrally aligned in the text column (f.53v); and Ad has the longer note 'Explicit tractat[us] de Justicia Regis | Et incipit tractat[us] de legu[m] obs[er]uac[i]on[e]' in red ink, again centrally aligned in the text column (f.59v). The scribes of these manuscripts alter the status of this note from gloss to rubric, placing it alongside the other twelve rubrics outlined above. In doing so, the scribes here give the note a prominence equivalent to the other rubrics in the manuscript, and so see the text as divided into thirteen themes rather than twelve. As an

alternative to this treatment, the scribes of Sl2, Kk, and Ga do not use a rubric or gloss here but rather place another indicator of textual division at this point – a large initial. Sl2 has a two-line-high initial (f.45r); Kk a gap and a guide mark for a two-line initial to be added (two lines of text are indented here, f.40v); and Ga equally has a two-line large initial but additionally has a line of text underlined (f.32v).<sup>18</sup> The line ‘Obs[er]ue hem and offende hem by no weye’ is underlined in red ink: the scribe offered this in replacement of the gloss or rubric at this point in the text.

Some scribes see the section as thematically divided in two in order to provide what they thought was most logical in terms of the meaning of the text. This clearly separates the section on Justice from that on the observation of the Law. Using the *mise-en-page* here, the scribes make decisions about the structure of the text on behalf of both the author and the reader: in providing the extra rubric, these scribes indicate that the section of text ought to be two thematic units rather than one. Such a change in layout suggests that the scribes, on reading the text, deemed this section to be thematically fractured or overly complex when read as a single unit. By altering the status of the text from gloss to rubric, or by indicating the beginning of this section of text with a large initial, the scribes no longer only offer a hint as to what is contained in the main text verses; rather, they here desired this part to be immediately distinct from the last. Instead of a side note, the rubric or large initial provides a divisional head. This adds to the sense of seriousness with which the producers respond to Hoccleve’s text. Here the division into thematic sections is taken as an important endeavour in producing the text, as if central to the understanding of the text’s meaning itself. As such, subtle changes in theme – from Justice to the observation of the Law, which, though linked are thematically separate enough to be visually separated on the page.

If, as Mooney believes, Ry3 is Hoccleve’s own manuscript, he, on the other hand, does not mark this division in any way. Though this manuscript has numerous rubrics throughout the text, sometimes squeezed into the space above the text, he offers no rubric, large initial, or gloss at this point. Hoccleve therefore envisaged this part of the text as a single section, not a section

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<sup>18</sup> Smith Marzec places these three manuscripts on same branch of her stemma based on a comparison of the Latin marginalia (1987), p.279.

to be divided into two. That some scribes took a different view suggests that they were thinking about the text in a different way to the author: for the author, this part is a complete, thematically unified section requiring no explanation; to the scribes, the contents of the text required clarification.

Furthermore, the scribes of S11 and Ad offer further clarifications by adding running titles throughout; again Hoccleve did not feel he ought to add these to his own manuscript version in order to indicate clearly the overall development of the text. Though S11 is small and scrappy, and its decoration remains unfinished (there are no borders and there are large spaces left for initials to be added at a later stage), the scribe felt the need to add running titles to the whole manuscript at an early stage as part of the original production. The top right hand corner of each recto folio has the words 'de fide seruanda', 'de justicia', 'de pietate', and so on, the same wording as the rubrics. Ad also has running titles, though these are more decorated than those found in S11. The running titles are accompanied by flourished paraphs of alternating blue with red flourishes and gold with purple flourishes. These extend the function of the rubrics beyond an explanation of the forthcoming text: here they do not only indicate the contents of the text at the beginning of a thematic section, but they also indicate the contents of each folio of the text. They create, therefore, a summary of the contents of each section of text, relating each line of the text back to its theme on each folio. It is possible that the scribes felt that the text was not clearly enough linked to the section theme overall to be overt and so attempted to ensure faultless interpretation of the text by the addition of running heads. In doing so these manuscripts offer a *mise-en-page* that goes beyond that provided by, for example, *ParsT*, in which they ensure that each and every folio is related back to the serious scholarly overall meaning of the text.

In Ad, the running titles are split across a two page spread so that the word 'prologus' is in two: half the word, 'pro', is on the verso; the other half, 'logus', is on the recto. However, in some parts of the manuscript, the word order is reversed, so that 'piet[ate]' is on the verso and 'de' is on the recto. In these cases, the phrase 'de pietate' has been split overleaf because the opening of that section began on a recto side. This results in running titles which are not easily legible

across a two page spread. Though these may seem impractical, they suggest another way of interpreting the text. As well as ensuring that each line is interpreted via the appropriate thematic heading, the oddly placed running titles also enable the comprehension of the thematic makeup of the text from outside the central margins. In skimming the book's contents, this manuscript presents an at-a-glance guide to the text: the oddly placed running titles ensure that the contents are clear in overview, indexing the text on each page by the opening rather than by the two-page spread. Ry3, which Mooney attributes to Hoccleve, did not cater for such skim-reading as it has no running titles. Perhaps the quixotic author-scribe felt his audience would invest time in a deeper reading of his text; his scribes, however, seem less certain of the text and add guides to ensure that its meaning is fully understood. As is the case for the manuscripts of Chaucer, the scribes here too had to mediate between what was provided by the author and their own response to the text.

### **Paraphs and Smaller Initials**

Whereas borders, large initials, rubrics, and running titles pay more attention to *RP* proper, paraphs and smaller initials play a greater role in the layout of the Prologue. Each manuscript has a paraph at the beginning of each stanza of text. The reasoning behind this will be discussed in full in the second half of this chapter. A few manuscripts do, however, have additional paraphs inside the stanzas, especially in the prologue. These paraphs are placed in such a way so as to indicate the alternation of speech between the narrator and the old man. The first of these paraphs at the beginning of the text appears mid-stanza and indicates the narrator's cry to the old man: 'O man quop I fore cristis loue der[e]' (A f.3r); the second also appears mid-stanza and indicates the old man's response: 'My sone hast þ[ou] good lust thy sorwe drye' (A f.3v). Another paraph is then placed not only mid-stanza, in the margin, but within the text itself, mid-line, marking the narrator's reply: '3e q[uo]d I sum del' (A f.3v):

¶O man quop I fore cristis loue dere...

Voide fro me me list no conpaignie  
Encesse nat my greef I have ynow

¶ My sone hast þou good lust thy sorwe drye  
 And mayst releved be what man art thou  
 Wirke aftir me it shal be for thy prow  
 Thou nart but yong and hast but litil seen  
 And ful seelde is that yong folk wyse been

If that thee lyke to been esid wel  
 As suffre me with thee to talke a whyle  
 Art thou aght lettred ¶ 3e quod I sum del (ll.137, 141-150)

As they are in Chaucer's and Gower's manuscripts, these paraphs are often at the beginning of a line of text. However, unique to Hoccleve's manuscripts of the three authors examined here are the paraphs also found in the middle of lines of verse. In indicating these lines, the paraphs here act as the speaker markers or initials in Gower's *CA* do. In Gower's text, however, initials are never placed within a line of text, only at its opening. This is in part because new speeches rarely start in the middle of a line. In Book III of *CA*, a single line has both Genius and Amans's opening words: 'Now tell my sone' 'Fader what' (III.1119). The opening of the second speech is not indicated with an initial in any of the early manuscripts. Mid-line speech openings are equally uncommon in Hoccleve's texts; however, the scribe of A is careful to mark each of these where they do occur. The word 'quod' here occurs only six times in the 2016 lines of the prologue; yet the text is almost entirely composed of dialogue. The *mise-en-page* avoids the confusion of speakers, and the paraphs act as the modern day quotation marks by indicating the opening of a new speech and so provide here a punctuational function.

Furthermore, the paraphs in A alternate in colour between blue and gold in order to emphasise the alternation of speakers: each new speech is given a different coloured paraph. In later parts of the manuscript, it seems to be that only the opening of the narrator's speeches are marked by paraphs; however, on closer inspection, these are all in blue ink. It may be possible that the old man's speeches were to be marked with a paraph as his words alternate with the narrator's speeches. This would have meant that his speeches were to be marked with gold paraphs, which the decorator had mistakenly forgotten to add mid-stanza. Though no gold paraphs are used mid-stanza or mid-line, numerous gold paraphs (in alteration with blue

paraphs) do mark the start of each stanza. It is likely that the lack of paraphs for the old man's speeches later in the manuscript is the result of oversight rather than deliberate plan.

The scribe, in providing these paraphs, offers his response to the text: that he took pains to mark the dialogue between the old man and the narrator where other manuscripts did not suggests that he understood the dialogue aspect of the prologue to be central to the interpretation of the text as a whole. Other manuscripts pay this half of the text little attention, as seen above, using borders, large initials, running titles, and rubrics to indicate only the thematic sections in *RP* proper. In setting up the text as a dialogue between the narrator and the prince, as the illustration suggests, the scribe of A marks up the prologue to ensure that it too is represented as a dialogue on the page. The scribe links the two halves of the text – the prologue and *RP* proper – interpreting them both as conversations imparting wisdom from one speaker to the other. The layout exposes the Aristotelian relation between rhetoric and dialectic in order to present rational argument that underlies this dialogue.<sup>19</sup> This establishes the poetic structure of the text. In doing so, the scribe brings out nuances of the text's meaning: in setting up the prologue as a dialogue, in which the narrator follows the advice of the old man, the main text implies that the conversation continues and that the prince too listens to the sage advice. The main text does, in fact, only have one speaker, and so is a monologue rather than a dialogue; however, the prologue disguises this later monologue as part of the initial dialogue between the two figures in the Prologue.

Ha4 is thought to be identical to A: the British Library catalogue states that it is 'almost an exact replica of *RP* in Arundel 38'.<sup>20</sup> However, though both are expensively produced, in terms of their layout the two manuscripts are far from identical.<sup>21</sup> Unlike A, Ha4 has very few paraphs throughout the text: only at the beginning of stanzas do paraphs rigorously appear; there are very few mid-stanza paraphs and no guide marks left by the scribes at the corresponding points

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<sup>19</sup> Copeland (1991), p.15

<sup>20</sup> 'Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts'. British Library. 14 December 2010. Web. <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts>.

<sup>21</sup> Both Seymour and Smith Marzec argue that these manuscripts are textually different, Ha4 one generation later than A. However, for both manuscripts, Seymour simply states: 'Alternate tinted and gilded initials introduce each stanza' (1974), description of A, p.264, description of Ha4 p.269.

where A has paraphs. Whereas A has a paraph mid-stanza and mid-line, Ha4 has the paraph at the beginning of the line (f.8r in both manuscripts):

A:        Seye on the sooth ¶ 3e sumdel q[uo]d I  
 Ha4:     ¶Seye on the soþe 3e sumdel q[uo]d I

The scribe of A indicates the start of a speech, which begins mid-line, at the margins rather than in the text. This may, of course, be due to different exemplars used in the copying of each. A might have imitated the placement of the paraphs in its copy text, which might have been differently placed to those in Ha4's copy text. Each manuscript does, however, despite its varying placement, demonstrate a similar response to the text: to mark up the dialogue. Such care is demonstrated in the manuscripts of Chaucer and Gower examined in the first two chapters; however, here the manuscripts offer greater mark-up than either the manuscripts of Chaucer or Gower do. We do not know whether Hoccleve's own papers affected the layout of A and Ha4, though it has been argued that the author, or an authorial copy, may have influenced the production of these important and expensive copies of his text.<sup>22</sup> It would logically follow that Hoccleve would demonstrate a concern for the clear comprehension of the meanings in his text, especially the interplay of monologue and dialogue in the important and politically precarious sphere of advice for princes. Scribes do, of course, lay out the text based on their comprehension of its meaning and so offer an interpretation of its meaning. The in-line paraphs are reminiscent of the layout of *Mel*, where such markings indicate either *sententiae* or a point of argument spoken by Prudence or Melibee. Usually such layout is reserved for prose, where a block of text on the manuscript page appears overwhelmingly impenetrable and where the scribe worries that all meaning of the text may be lost without the *mise-en-page*. This marking is rare for stanzaic verse text. Though there is a possibility that the scribes of A and Ha4 only included these extra paraphs in order to produce a more presentable de-luxe manuscript (the flourished paraphs certainly add to the look of grandeur) the positioning of these paraphs suggests more than just decorative paraph addition. Akin to the use of paraphs and initials in

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<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Blyth's introduction to his edition, <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/hocclint.htm>. See also J. A. Burrow, *Thomas Hoccleve* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), p.31.

the body of the text of *Mel*, here too these paraphs appear at those points in the text where there is a change or development in the speakers' argument so as to break down the long verse into concise units of meaning. In the manuscripts of *RP*, not only is the text presented in stanzaic sections, but also larger sections of content are indicated. Just as the main body of *RP* is divided into thematic sections, these sections are broken down into smaller units of meaning. Equally, the opening section is divided by speaker, akin to the scribe of Gg who carefully indicates the alternation of the speeches of Melibee and Prudence (see Chapter 1).

Do is one of the first manuscripts to label the opening section of *RP* a dialogue in its rubric: 'Explicit dialogus inter patrem [et] filium' (f.35v). In placing this rubric here, at the end of the prologue and at the threshold of *RP* proper, the scribe places on the text his interpretation of its meaning and indicates his response to both the prologue and to the text as a whole: as two dialogues working in tandem to relate authoritative advice to an attentive audience. Oddly, however, this is not followed up in the manuscript layout with paraphs, initials, or guide marks to indicate the alternation of speeches. This manuscript is governed by another rule of layout, which will be explained below.

A single manuscript, Ga, takes a unique approach to the opening section of *RP*. Instead of focusing on the idea of the dialogue, this scribe labels the opening section a lamentation in its rubric: 'ffynitur lamentacio Compilatoris | .T. Hokcleffe et Incipit | prologus vt sequitur' (f.30v). Whereas the scribes of As, A, Ha4, Hn2, Do (to an extent in its rubric but not in its layout) and the others see the manuscript as an interaction between two speakers, the scribe of Ga understands this prologue to be focused on a single speaker – the authorial first person to which so much recent criticism responds. As such, this manuscript does not mark the dialogue between the two speakers with paraphs, initials, or guide marks throughout the prologue, as the others do. Rather, it presents the opening of *RP*, neither as a prologue to the material that is to come later in the text, nor as a dialogue between two speakers, but rather as a lyric complaint, a text in the single voice of the authorial narrator. This scribe demonstrates in a manner akin to the scribes of Chaucer's manuscripts the extent of interpretative control over the contents of the text. In

using this rubric, his copy of the text interprets it in a different way; not a dialogue followed by a thematic treatise, but as a lament.

This establishes for the second half of the text, *RP* proper, a mournful tone. The focus is not on the dialogue aspect of the text but rather on the narrator and his complaint. The single voice in the second half of the text becomes more prominent, undoing the clever disguise of mutual conversation which the other manuscripts build. As such, the lines are interpreted differently:

I, humble servant and obedient  
 Unto your estat hy and glorious,  
 Of which I am ful tendre and ful gelous,  
 Me recommande unto your worthynesse (ll.2019-2022)

The opening has a new flavour when viewed in light of the lamentation that has come before it and appears less a humble entreaty and more a mournful complaint. The scribe is, however, careful to name Hoccleve a 'compiler' here. As such, Hoccleve seems removed from the text that is to follow, offering himself only as a humble collector of authoritative advice (as the paraphs in *Mel* suggest of that text). He thus relinquishes liability for the contents of the text, in the way that Chaucer, also named Compiler by the explicit in *El* (f.232v), sidesteps responsibility: 'demeth nat that I seye/Of yvel entente, but for I moot reherce/Hir tales alle' (*MilP* ll.3172-3174).

### **Proper Nouns and Speaker Markers**

In using these extra paraphs and small initials to indicate contents of the Prologue, the manuscripts (other than *Ga*) indicate not only sense-units, but produce a text that is clearly marked as a dialogue between two speakers. Each time the text progresses, that is, each time one character completes a speech and the next begins, a small initial or paraph is placed to indicate the change in speaker. Only later in the text does it become an address of a single speaker to a specific and silent recipient: the poet to the prince. The dialogue in the early part of the text is dramatised and active, indicated by the scribes in the margins to be an intellectual exchange of views. The scribe of *Hn2* uses another technique to indicate the alternation of speakers in the prologue: rather than using paraphs or initials, this manuscript, akin to the

manuscripts of *CA*, has speaker markers. The scribe places the words 'filius' and 'p[ate]r' in the margins of the text in order to indicate the dialogue between the narrator and the old man. F.4r, for example, has a speaker marker 'ffili[us]' placed adjacent to the line 'Petyr good man though we talke her to eve' which is underlined; a speaker marker 'p[ate]r' follows adjacent to 'What that I may or can ne worste de nought', and is also underlined. This continues on this folio with 'ffili[us]' placed adjacent to 'Man at a worde but is encombrus thought' and the word 'p[ate]r' adjacent to 'Now sone 3if þer no þing be but þis'. These markers appear adjacent to the beginning of each long speech in the text, where, akin to the paraphs and small initials that are found in *A* and *Ha4*, they break down the block of verse on the page. The speaker markers indicate the contents of that verse in the margins. As they are in *CA*, here too speaker markers and paraphs or small initials are an interchangeable means of indicating the development of the text. The speaker markers here are written in text ink so are visually separated from those glosses in red ink that will be discussed further below. Whilst serving the same function as those paraphs and small initials described above, the speaker markers here are less decorative. They do, however, offer a clearer interpretation of the text, outlining exactly who speaks at which point. It is not immediately obvious from the lines quoted above as to who is the speaker: the speaker markers ensure that this is clear. Where the paraphs do indicate the start of the speech, they do not explain to which speaker each speech belongs, relying on the alternation of speakers to clarify this. The scribe of *Hn2* does not allow this lack of clarity and provides a summary of the relationship between the narrator and the old man: one of an advisor and an advisee. In labelling the speakers 'pater' and 'filius', the scribe follows the wording in the text to exaggerate the hierarchical yet familial or clerical relationship, in which one figure speaks paternal kind advice for the other to digest. As such, he interprets the speaker and the relationship between the two speakers as central to the understanding of the text – and as central to the interpretation of the advice Hoccleve offers the prince in the second half as equally sage yet familial. This privileges the speakers over the contents and meaning of the text itself,

and the *mise-en-page* points to the dialogue format before it considers the meanings of that dialogue

As we would expect, Hoccleve provides speaker markers in his autograph manuscripts to indicate the exchange between the two speakers in the text. Across ff.53r and 53v of 'Learn to Die', for example, Cosin has the speaker markers 'Sap[ienc]ia' and 'discip[u]l[u]s'. The second, the speaker marker 'discip[u]l[u]s', is indicated with a paraph mark to heighten its presence visually. HM744 similarly has speaker markers at these points, the words 'discip[us]' 'Sap[ienc]ia' and in the margin adjacent to the lines 'Tho thynges .iiii. good lord haue I euere' and 'Sone the art to lerne for to die' (f.53v). Similarly, in his copy of *Dialogue with a Friend* in Cosin, Hoccleve indicates the change in speakers on f.13r, beginning with the line 'The fool thurgh loue of this lyf present', with a paraph. Likewise he indicates with a paraph the line 'Now my freend so good yeue yow good chaunce', which is marked mid-stanza (f.13v). Lines beginning 'Thomas' and 'Freend' are marked with paraphs as these are key to the progression of the text – it is a dialogue between the narrator and a friend. The scribe of a non-autograph copy of this text, S, indicates this dialogue using red underlined nouns: 'Thomas' and 'Freende' are repeatedly indicated by red ink in the text (f.97 onwards). Using two different techniques, Hoccleve and the scribe of S make explicit that the text contains dialogue. In a manner akin to the glosses in *CA* which exaggerate the speakers, indicating in the margins what lies within the body of the prose, the speaker markers here serve to attribute the words spoken in the verse to their speakers.

This is akin to the prologues to each of the tales in *CT*, in which the tale is informed by the teller. By adding speaker markers to the text here, the dialogue is informed by the speaker – the voice in which the speech is heard adds meaning to the words spoken. The provision of speaker markers in the autograph manuscripts suggests that Hoccleve himself felt this vital to explaining the meaning of his poetry: this too is a record of spoken wisdom. Hoccleve's manuscripts also resemble those of *Mel* in indicating figures of authority in the margins of the page. Though it is only 'Sap[ienc]ia', 'Freende', or 'pater' that ought to be attributed this reverence, speaker markers and marginal indications of *auctoritas* are noted in Hoccleve's manuscripts in the same

way. These manuscripts imitate those of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* or Gregory's *Dialogus*, where the scribes have also deemed it fit to indicate the interaction between Boethius and Lady Philosophy, and Gregory and Peter, in the margins: by doing so, the scribes here indicate again the two functions, both exaggerating Lady Philosophy's authority, and ensuring that the manuscripts depict clearly the meaning of the text.<sup>23</sup> Indeed in Hoccleve's autograph copy of *Dialogue with a Friend*, Cosin, one paraph indicates the line, 'Tullius seith þ[at] frendshipe verray' (f.15r) instead of only the dialogue between the main protagonists: in this instance, a figure of *auctoritas* takes part in the dialogue. Unlike in *Mel* however, Hoccleve here does not discriminate in his layout between the dialogue in the text and a note of *auctoritas*, suggesting that his dialogue has the value of the *sententiae* spoken by established authorities. He combines his own text with those of his sources, and the lack of a hierarchy of decoration here suggests that he elevates his speakers' words to that of the authorities they quote.

Additionally, some scribes offer another feature of *mise-en-page*. The scribe of As marks up the manuscript using red inked proper nouns. F.37r, for example, has the sentence 'Aristotle moost worthi philosophre/hise epistles to Alisau[n]dre sente' with the words 'Aristotle' and 'Alisau[n]dre' in red ink. F.38r has the nouns 'Chaucer', 'Tullius', 'Aristotle', and 'Virgile' also written in red.<sup>24</sup> The scribe of SI2 also indicates proper nouns, not with red ink but by underlining. However, he does so more selectively. On f.5r and f.32v, the nouns 'Chaucer' and 'Gower' are underlined. However, 'Hoccleve', a few folios earlier, is not underlined (f.31r). The scribe seems to be making a case for indicating the literary authorities for Hoccleve's works, modestly not allowing for Hoccleve's own name to be underlined. This is akin to the lack of marking at the point in *CA* at which Gower reveals his own name. Hoccleve's revelation is also left unmarked in the majority of manuscripts, despite that the disclosure of the author's name is a notable point in the text. Such rubrication of certain proper nouns serves to exaggerate authority in the manuscript. Akin to the use of speaker markers, here too the names of figures of

<sup>23</sup> See Chapter 2: Gower, Glosses (p.155 ff.).

<sup>24</sup> These do, however, stop after a few folios suggesting that perhaps a lack of patience did not permit the scribe to complete this scheme. The indication of nouns seems to have been inferior to paraphs and initials in the hierarchy of decoration for this manuscript.

authority are emphasised on the page. The scribes here interpret Hoccleve's text as a series of *sententiae*, a compilation of quotations not by Hoccleve but rather attributed to greater authorities. Equally, modestly, these manuscripts suggest that Hoccleve holds an authority of his own in order to use the *sententiae* of established authorities in the creation of his text: Hoccleve again is here compiler, not auctor.

In contrast to the speaker markers and underlined proper nouns used by the scribes of these manuscripts discussed here, the more de-luxe manuscripts tend not to use speaker markers to indicate dialogue. This may have been because the scribes were under instruction to produce a de-luxe page: as speaker markers are interchangeable with small initials and paraphs, which have the potential to enhance the ornate look of the page, the scribes of A and Ha4 seem to have opted for these (despite the fact that speaker markers are used in other de-luxe manuscripts such as those of CA), reserving the margins for only the glosses, as will be discussed below. However, in marking up the speakers here within the text column, the manuscripts also simultaneously mark up figures of authority and the *sententiae* they speak in the text. The text, in this way, is annotated. The sententious parts of it are brought to the fore so it visually appears filled with wise words, authoritative statements, and important advice. The glosses add to this appearance.

## Glosses

As well as these speaker markers, the manuscripts of *RP* also contain longer Latin glosses. In ninety-two percent of the manuscripts examined here, these glosses are located in the margins. Unlike those manuscripts of *CA* that put the Latin within the text column, these Latin glosses do not demand the same attention – rather, they sit aside from the text, and in this way, they are visually separate from the main text.<sup>25</sup> The text is in a single column on the manuscript page. In higher quality manuscripts, such as A and Ha4, a wide margin is ruled around the outside of a two-page spread (the left margin of the verso page and the right margin of the recto). Ry3,

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<sup>25</sup> Atypically, Sl2 and Kk have the glosses in the text column between stanzas of text; as this is highly rare, this placement will not be discussed in detail here but in the second half of this chapter (p.227 ff.).

which Mooney attributes to Hoccleve, has glosses in the outer margins with plain red paraphs. These glosses function in a different way to Gower's prose and Chaucer's longer glosses. Unlike the glosses in Chaucer's *WBP*, they do not enter into dialogue with the main text in order to undermine it with alternative readings. Neither do they, akin to Gower's prose, provide a Latinate summary of the text to follow. Rather, they play a similar role to that of the *sententiae* markers in *Mel*, providing reference and pointing towards *auctoritas*. As such, the Latin here is not 'apparatus', but a 'gloss'.<sup>26</sup> These give authority to the text as well as to the named author: if we were to consider, as most scholars do, Hoccleve as a politically motivated advisor to the prince, the glosses here imply a scholarly, well-advised writer, and are doubly flattering in also implying a scholarly and well-informed reader. In the way that the scribe of As underlines the words 'Aristotle' and 'Alisau[n]dre' to indicate the centrality of these figures to the text, most manuscripts include numerous glosses to exaggerate the relationship of *RP* with its influential source, *Secreta secretorum*. The gloss at l.3102 states, 'Aristotelis in principum regimine capitulo de regis providentia' (Aristotle on the rule of princes the chapter on the foresight of a king, e.g. A f.56r), a reference to Part I, chapter 10 of the *Secreta secretorum*; here the gloss is placed at the point in the text where Hoccleve also addresses this topic, referring specifically to Aristotle as he does so. Equally, just after a divisional rubric in *RP*, 'De Virtute Largitatis', scribes place another gloss: 'Aristotelis de regimine principum capitulo de largitate si vis virtutem largitatis acquirere considera posse tuum tempora necessitates et merita hominis etc' (e.g. A f.75r) (Aristotle, on the Role of Princes, the chapter on generosity: 'if you want to acquire the virtue of generosity, consider your powers the extremity of the misfortune and the merit of the man etc'), a reference to Part I, Chapter 5 of the *Secreta secretorum*. Though the main text refers clearly to Aristotle's letters to Alexander, as is indicated by the scribe of As with a red-ink underline, the text as a whole is presented as an address to the present prince; it is only on reading the glosses that the reader is aware of its wider contexts that evoke a greater *auctoritas* and a better established and

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<sup>26</sup> See the distinction between apparatus and gloss made in Chapter 1, in which it is suggested that 'apparatus' clarifies the text at hand and a 'gloss' directs the reader beyond it to dispute or supplement the text (p.58 ff.).

idealised poet-prince relationship than Hoccleve offers here. In placing such glosses in the margin, the manuscripts suggest two simultaneous interpretations of the text: one which views Hoccleve as the author and addresser of the poem, the other that suggests that Aristotle is the main source of the wisdom contained therein. That the glosses were deemed inappropriate in the text column by the majority of scribes suggests the text's integrity: that it was thought to be complete without the need for reference to texts that lie outside it. Were the glosses absent altogether, we could surmise the scribes' desire to produce a single-authored text. As it is, the presence of the glosses suggests another view of the authorship of the text. Ry3, which Mooney attributes to Hoccleve, places the glosses in the outer margins, thus hinting at the simultaneous double-authorship: that though the text is authored by Hoccleve and refers to Aristotle, the glosses point to the *Secreta secretorum* as more than a reference but the foundation of the text.

The glosses also serve another function. In their marginal position, they play a similar role to the speaker markers in the prologue: in the main body of the text, they serve to outline its contents, providing an index list in the margins to the long and complex text and a guide to the *sententiae* therein.

The glosses stand in the space between the text and its decoration: they contain more meaning than decoration alone, but mean little without the text. As such, they are part of the formation of meaning on the page and the scribe employs them to label the text. While borders break the text into its thematic sections, and paraphs and initials break the text into a dialogue or into pieces of *sententiae*, the glosses aid the comprehension of the text therein. Though the margins are extremely full (see f.48v of Ry2, for example), unlike the scribes of *CA*, in which the text is regularly interrupted by glosses which scribes struggle to accommodate in the margins, only a very small minority of the scribes of *RP* 'relocate' the glosses from the margins to the text column. The glosses in the text column of *CA* are more forcefully part of the whole text, and so are part of the interpretation of the text as a whole. They foster a dialogue between the text page, the margins, and those texts that lie beyond it.

## Hoccleve's Autograph Manuscripts

So in the light of these scribal decisions, how do the non-autograph manuscripts compare with Hoccleve's own choices in laying out his texts? In referring to the autograph manuscripts briefly in the discussion above, we see that Hoccleve's own copies of the minor poems, and Ry3, which Mooney attributes to him, often look very similar to those copies of his texts produced by other scribes. In contrast, we have also seen that A and Ha4 are not marked in the same way as Ry3: they both certainly use a greater number of paraphs and initials than Ry3 manuscript does. It is also clear that Hoccleve was not as rigorous in identically laying out two copies of the same text: HM744 and Cosin both contain the same poem, 'Learn to Die', or 'ars vtillissima sciendi mori Cu[m] om[n]es homines natural[iter] scire desiderant &c' as the poems are labelled in each copy (Cosin f.52v; similarly HM744 f.53r). These manuscripts also differ in their layouts despite the fact that they are in the same hand. The number of speaker markers, paraphs, initials, and guide marks they contain in the same text differs in each copy. Cosin contains the complete version of the text and is marked with a larger number of paraphs than HM744, especially those that appear mid-stanza. Whereas HM744 has a guide mark ('cc') mid-stanza adjacent to the line, 'The disciple of þ[a]t speche took good cure' (f.56r), for example, and a second guide mark adjacent to 'Than spak thymage answerynge in this wyse' (f.58r), Cosin has numerous paraphs in between these two lines. In changing the layout from one copy to the next, Hoccleve's two copies suggest a possible awareness of who might be reading the text. It is thought that Cosin was produced for a specific patron.<sup>27</sup> In the manuscript itself, an envoy on f.95r reads 'Go smal book to the noble excellence/Of my lady of Westmerland'. It might be possible that the manuscript offers more features of layout because it was created with a particular reader in mind. In producing the manuscript, Hoccleve may have been more acutely aware of the need of these features because of its intended readership. In order to suggest this might be the case, we need to look at other copies of the minor poems to examine what other scribes provide by means of their own reading.

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<sup>27</sup> See Burrow and Doyle (2002), p.xi.

The manuscripts of his minor poems demonstrate a regular layout, not unique to Hoccleve's own copies. The shortest of his minor poems, those that are only a few stanzas in length, have minimal features of layout. Only the beginning and end of the text are indicated on the manuscript page, with a large initial and descriptive rubric to start the text and a rubric, most often 'cest tout' to end it. HM111, for example, has a large initial for the first line of text, 'Modir of lyf o cause of al our welthe' and a rubric 'Ad b[eat]am virgi[n]em' in a large hand with a guide mark for a paraph ('cc') to mark the beginning of the text (f.28v); it also has the rubric 'Cest tout' with a guide mark for a paraph at the end of the text (f.31r). In order that this rubric stands apart from the main text, Hoccleve has underlined it. By marking the beginnings and endings of his texts, Hoccleve's *mise-en-page* exaggerates the compilatory aspect of the manuscript. It highlights that the book is a single-author compilation of numerous smaller works. Equally, as do the paraphs that mark *sententiae* in *Mel*, the marking of each of these texts as individual units suggests that they are extractable, and thus can be copied and circulated individually, though here they are collected.<sup>28</sup>

Longer texts also show similar marking to that found in the manuscripts of *RP*. Here paraphs are used in order to indicate the beginning of a new section of text, the same function as the paraphs in numerous copies of *RP*. The first text in HM111 has each of the *exclamationes* which indicate the beginning of a new section marked with a guide mark for a paraph (in the shape of 'cc'): 'O Womman þ[a]t among the peple speek', 'O Simeon thow seidest me ful sooth', and 'O Joachim o deer fadir myn' are indicated with a guide mark on f.3r; 'O blessid sone on thee wole I out throwe' is marked on f.3v; 'O moone o sterres and thow firmament', 'O sonne with thy cleere bemes brighte', and 'O eerthe what lust hast thow to susteene' are marked on f.5r and f.5v; and 'O John my deer freend', 'O Angels thogh yee mourne and waile [and] weepe', and 'O special loue þ[a]t ioyned haast' are indicated on f.6v and f.7r. There are numerous parallels for marking such *exclamationes* in, for instance, *FranT*, where Dorigen makes her complaint: El, for example has a disproportionately large number of large initials on ff.130r-131r (see Chapter 1). While these

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<sup>28</sup> Indeed most of the non-autograph minor poems are found in anthologies such as Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 346 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 16.

new sections happen to correspond to the beginning of stanzas, a guide mark is also placed elsewhere: a guide mark ('cc') appears adjacent to the line 'O sones of Adam al to long whyle', again marking the beginning of a new exclamation, though rather than placed at the beginning of the stanza, this paraph appears mid-stanza (f.7r). In this way, Hoccleve indicates the development of the text – showcasing the change from a focus on individuals – Simeon, Joachim – to broader and loftier concepts – the moon and stars, the sun, the earth, and the angels. As the change in subject occurs mid-stanza, Hoccleve marks the text at this point.

The *Male Regle* is marked in the same way: in HM111, a rubric on f.16v indicates the beginning of the text: 'Cy ensuyt la male regle de .T. Hoccleue'. Written in a large hand, this rubric heads the beginning of the main text, differentiating one text from the next. The size of the rubric again serves an indexing function, summarising and signposting the opening of the text. This is followed by a large flourished initial, two lines high, indicating the first line of the text: 'O precious tresor incomparable'. Again, guide marks for paraps to be added later are placed both at the beginning of stanzas and mid-stanza in order to outline the text. These paraps indicate the beginning of new sense-units: they do not necessarily correspond to complete sentences, but larger structural divisions in the text, as do the paraps in *RP* which indicate dialogue between the old man and the authorial narrator, Hoccleve. Here, however, they do not indicate dialogue but mark different structural divisions in the text. They function like those paraps that indicate *exclamationes*, signalling a development in the contents of the text. The text opens with a lamentation on the loss of health and youth; however, only the opening exclamation of this section is marked with a paraph; the second exclamation to youth ('O yowthe', l.69, f.18r) is not indicated with a paraph. The next guide mark is on f.18v, adjacent to: 'Right so syn reson youen is to me'. This is a new movement in the text, away from a lamentation to a comment on the exercise of reason. It seems that with the aim of clarity, the guide marks appear mid-stanza exactly adjacent to the beginning of the shift from mourning apostrophe to rational moderation. The same shift is marked by scribes of *RP* in the movement from the dialogue (labelled the 'lamentacioun' by the scribe of Ga, f.30v) to reasoned advice to

the prince. We may posit that these guide marks are Hoccleve's own: paraphs, the task of a decorator, which are not guaranteed to be in the same hand as the scribe's, are not yet inserted; rather guide marks are left in what appears to be the same ink as the text. In this way, the manuscript is annotated with notes from the author in order to guide the reader through it: these, akin to the notes provided by the scribes of numerous copies of *RP*, indicate the meaning of the text.

In the third autograph manuscript, *Cosin*, the *Complaint* and *Dialogue* have similar annotation to the texts in HM111. Hoccleve's original opening of the manuscript has been lost, and John Stow has produced a replacement.<sup>29</sup> Stow has created this replacement almost identically in terms of layout to the remainder of the autograph manuscript produced by Hoccleve. The text opens with a rubric, 'Thomas Hocclive's Complaint' and there is a space left for a large initial: three lines of text are indented and a guide mark letter 'a' appears in the gap (f.3r). Equally, the end of the prologue and the beginning of the text proper is indicated with a space for a large initial and a guide mark letter in the gap left (f.3r). The end of the *Complaint* and the beginning of the *Dialogue* is marked with a rubric: 'Thomas Hoccleve / Dialogus cum Amico' (the second line in a later hand), and a space for a large initial with a guide letter 'a' (f.9r). It is unclear what sort of manuscript Stow was using as an exemplar but he may here have been imitating the remaining pages of Hoccleve's text.<sup>30</sup> Whether this was the case, or whether Stow was following the layout of an exemplar, or employing his own copy-practices, he also clarifies through layout the contents of each text and marks up his manuscript to function as an index. Other copies of the *Complaint* and the *Dialogue* mark the text in a similar manner to both Hoccleve's autographs and to each other: B, L, and S also use rubrics to open the text and three large, flourished initials

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<sup>29</sup> See Burrow and Doyle (2002), pp.xxvii, xxx.

<sup>30</sup> There is as yet no definitive theory advanced on Stow's possible sources for his copy of Hoccleve's text. Burrow and Doyle (2002), pp.xxvii and xxx, state that the text was copied from another (unnamed) manuscript, as does the Durham University Library online catalogue entry: 'Two quires (ff. 1-12) were presumably missing at the beginning by c. 1600, when John Stow supplied the lost matter, from another manuscript, it seems'. Web. 13 February 2012.

<http://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/theme/medmss/apviii9/>. Burrow in his introduction to the EETS edition, *Thomas Hoccleve's Complaint and Dialogue* (Oxford: EETS for the Oxford University Press, 1999), argues that Stow's version does not correspond to any of the surviving manuscripts, pp.x, xxxvii-xxxviii.

to signal a development from the opening of the *Dialogue*, the end of the Prologue, and the beginning of the *Complaint*.

If we look more closely at the layout in main body of the *Complaint*, we see that scribes of the non-autograph manuscripts offer a few different markings. Unlike Cosin, S and L indicate the end of the prologue with a large initial and a rubric: 'Here endith my p[ro]log and folwith my compleynt' (L, f.1r; S, f.76r). Hoccleve does not offer these extra rubrics. In providing this extra division, the scribes here mediate between the author's interpretation and the one they felt they ought to provide to clarify the meaning of the text: where Hoccleve deems his text to be clear without the manuscript aiding the navigation of the text, the scribes here thought otherwise. In adding an initial and a rubric, the scribes provide extra information, dividing with clarity the prologue from the main text.

The autograph manuscripts also contain prose texts. These texts, akin to *Mel* in the Chaucer manuscripts, attract a different kind of scribal attention: here the page is utilised in full. Godzich and Kittay have suggested that prose was more strange to medieval readers than verse and so more difficult to comprehend.<sup>31</sup> The layout of the verse *RP* in A and Ha4 especially (though other manuscripts do demonstrate this tendency), as observed above, bears a resemblance to the marking of prose in indicating with paraphs changes in speakers. The same is true of the verse texts in Cosin. Hoccleve's prose text, the 'Moralisation' on the 'Empress of Rome' (a similarly morally complex treatise as is *Mel*) also breaks down the prose in a similar way to Chaucer's *Mel*. Indeed its layout is similar across all the manuscripts of this text that have been compared (B; L; S; D2). Each starts, as expected, with a paraphed rubric: Cosin with 'Hic incipit moralizacio'; B, L, and S with a longer rubric: 'here endith þ[e] p[ro]log and begynneth[e] moralisou[n]' (B, f.28v; L, f.28r, and S f.115v).<sup>32</sup> This is followed by a large flourished initial in each case to begin the prose itself. Both the autograph and the non-autograph manuscripts

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<sup>31</sup> See Godzich and Kittay (1987), p.xix.

<sup>32</sup> Akin to the manuscripts of Chaucer, the scribes here choose between English and Latin for the rubrics, as discussed in Chapter 1 (especially p.45).

share an aim (the same aim shared by the scribes of *Mel*): to break down the prose text into smaller units that correspond with meaning.

By marking dialogue and occasional statements of wisdom, Hoccleve's manuscripts again attempt to imitate those layouts of scholastic and liturgical texts: the overall effect of the combined use of borders, initials, paraphs, rubrics, and glosses is to mark up the text to indicate the designed or 'correct' reading of it – scholastic books were concerned with explaining to the reader the content of the text.<sup>33</sup> As outlined in the first chapter, these books divide their text using elaborately decorated paraphs and initials of alternating colour and glosses which log the wisdom therein. However Hoccleve's own manuscripts and the non-autograph manuscripts seem to have an interest not in the *sententiae* that are most often marked in scholastic and liturgical texts. Rather, they demonstrate an interest in the exchange between speakers and the development of the narrative. Akin to the scribe of Gg in laying out *Mel* in paragraphs of dialogue rather than a block of text, the scribes of Hoccleve's manuscripts, including Hoccleve himself, exaggerate the development of the conversation between speakers. In the *Complaint* and the *Dialogue*, this interest seems justified enough: the texts' basis is a conversation between speakers. The prologue to *RP* is also fashioned as a conversation between the narrator and the figure of the old man where it is part of a larger text. The contents of the majority of *RP*, however, are different in form from the dialogue structure that opens the text. Though a dialogue of sorts continues throughout the text, a conversation between poet and prince, the text is laid out very differently after the opening prologue. The majority of the text is fashioned as units of advice, each on different themes (as outlined above). As the text continues, the scribes indicate not the speaker but rather the contents of the thematic sections; within these larger thematic sections, smaller units of meaning are further indicated. The manuscripts make explicit this poetic structure: that the text begins with a dialogue between the authorial narrator and an old man which, textually, continues to be a dialogue between a poet and a prince, the contents of which are indicated as thematic sections.

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<sup>33</sup> See Parkes (1976), pp.115-116.

However, in Ry3, which Mooney attributes to Hoccleve, there are no mid-stanza paraps or initials to indicate an exchange of speakers.<sup>34</sup> This does not necessarily suggest that Hoccleve had little concern with ensuring he conveyed clearly the meaning of his text. Rather, we see that Hoccleve did exercise caution.<sup>35</sup> Hoccleve is more interested in marking the larger thematic sections of the text – ‘De Justitia’, ‘De pietate’ and so on – with rubrics and borders. It may be that the development of the thematic part of the text was of greater importance to Hoccleve than the narrative prologue. Equally, we may also posit a more nuanced approach by Hoccleve to his texts. On a textual level, *RP* is a dialogue between the narrator, a caricature of the historical Hoccleve, and an old man; on a broader and more conceptual level, it is a dialogue between an author and a prince, and, by extension, the author and the wider reading public. The presentation portraits build this part of the fiction, offering an image of the author humbly presenting his creation to the prince. But such a depiction is not found in Ry3: this manuscript views the text as not a dialogue, but a monologue: a conversation with only one speaker. He is speaking to, but not with, the prince, which in return implies a careful, patient listener or student of the text. As such, Hoccleve marks this text thematically, ensuring his text, speech, and meaning are clear on the manuscript page.

Though in the more expensively produced A and Ha4 we have a series of paraps to indicate the exchange of speakers in the prologue, this may be because the greater cost of producing the manuscripts provided greater scope for decoration: in cases such as these, with expense comes clarity of meaning in outlining the dialogue of the prologue. This does not seem to have been Hoccleve’s own intention in copying *RP*, though it was definitely the case in his copies of the minor poems. Whereas *RP* is organised by topic, we see that the *Series* and the other minor poems are organised by narrative:<sup>36</sup> the manuscript layout of Hoccleve’s autograph texts

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<sup>34</sup> Except a single flourished initial mid-stanza on f.15r: ‘Grant m[er]cy deere ffadir of youre speche’.

<sup>35</sup> J. A. Burrow has observed that Hoccleve distinguished between two forms of punctus for different types of questions, indicating his concern with how readers understand his text, see ‘Hoccleve’s Questions: Intonation and Punctuation’ *Notes and Queries* xlix (2002), 184-188.

<sup>36</sup> See Knapp (2009), p.200.

certainly support this distinction, organising *RP* according to theme, and the minor poems according to development of plot.

At the centre of the overlapping interpretations seem to be a concern with the presentation of the author. It would seem that, like modern editors and scholars of Hoccleve, the scribes also felt the need to make a case for Hoccleve being noteworthy. Hoccleve himself does not lay such emphasis on this in his own manuscripts: though he is prominent in his texts, the narrator purporting to have a resemblance to the historical figure, Ry3's layout, which Mooney attributes to Hoccleve, does not make a feature of this. The expensively produced A and Ha4 emphasise Hoccleve's own role in the text: both manuscripts indicate the use of Hoccleve's name in the Prologue, A with a flourished paraph (f.34r) and Ha4 by underlining the word (f.34r). Ry3, on the other hand makes nothing of this line. Sl2 similarly does not underline Hoccleve's name, but does indicate the references to Chaucer and Gower: on ff.32v and 34r, the word 'Chauser' in the line 'my maister Chauser flour of eloquence' and in the line beginning 'And Fader Chauser' are both underlined as is the word 'Gower' in 'Hast þou noȝt eke my maistir Gower slayn'; on f.81r, the word Chaucer is underlined in the line 'My worthi maistir Chaucers I him mene', two stanzas before the usual placement of the Chaucer portrait. In this way, the scribes of A and Ha4 place the author at the centre of the text, making a feature of his name (and ignore the references to Chaucer and Gower).

Equally some of the scribes of the minor poems indicate that the narrator and author overlap. The rubrics are written in the first person: the rubric that announces the beginning of the *Complaint*, for example, is phrased thus in L and S: 'Here endith my p[ro]log and folwith my compleynt' (L f.1r; S f.76r). B and L indicate the end of the *Complaint* similarly: 'here endith my co[m]playnte and begynnet a dialoug' (B f.6v; L f.5v).<sup>37</sup> Likewise, B indicates the end of the prose moralisation and the beginning of 'Learn to Die': 'here endith þ[e] moralisyng | of my tale and begynneth þ[e] moste p[ro]fitabill and | holsom crafte that is to him lern to dye' (f.30r). Using 'my', the autobiographical nature of Hoccleve's text was already beginning to be emphasised as

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<sup>37</sup> It is on the basis of these manuscripts that Roger Ellis names the text 'My Compleinte' rather than 'the Compleinte', see Ellis (2001), p.128.

early as the production of the first manuscripts. Where Hoccleve ignores such statements in Ry3, which Mooney attributes to him, the scribes of other manuscripts see Hoccleve's presence in the texts as an inherent part of their meaning.

Thus the autograph and the non-autograph manuscripts play with the idea of *auctoritas* in their layout. The non-autograph manuscripts emphasise Hoccleve's presence in their text, building on the presence suggested in the text itself. As they do for Chaucer's texts, the manuscripts here exaggerate the idea of the author in the text itself, playing up those parts in which the narrator and the author overlap to bring out the authority of the main voice. In using those features of layout inherited from texts which have an inherent *auctoritas* – biblical, scholastic, liturgical manuscripts – the non-autograph Hoccleve manuscripts assign this inherited *auctoritas* to Hoccleve himself. In playing with these features and reassigning them to the indication of a dialogue between (in *RP*) the narrator and the old man, and underlying this, a conversation between the author and the prince, the non-autograph manuscripts place the inherited *auctoritas* on the voice of Hoccleve. Hoccleve's aim seems to have been somewhat differently, and more modestly, inflected.

Hoccleve, as author-scribe, did take care to ensure that the meaning of his text was displayed on the page in order to be understood clearly. However, we cannot claim he was necessarily unique in the way in which he chose to lay out his text: his style seems to match those of the many scribes marking up their texts with a similar intent of presenting an interpretation of the text. However, in contrast to the interpretative freedom demonstrated by the scribes of Chaucer's manuscripts, the meticulously unchanging attitudes to the page of the scribes of Hoccleve's poems, both *RP* and the minor poems, suggests a general consensus as to how these texts ought to be marked. Hoccleve himself produced the 'annotated text', a guide to interpreting his text. Though each scribe does this in his own way, indicating the meaning of the piece, no scribe's marking is particularly eccentric in producing unique readings: not even, as we would hope, the eccentric Hoccleve himself.

## Rhyme Scheme

However, this is not the only function of Hoccleve's layout. Though Hoccleve's autograph copies demonstrate his concern with indicating clearly the meaning of the text on the page, another impulse is simultaneously displayed via the layout. In addition to paraphs and guide marks, Hoccleve provides further features of layout in his autograph manuscripts: blank lines are left on each page and characteristic '2'-shaped horizontal lines spread across the width of the page that fill these blanks. This seems an odd feature for the author to provide, one which does not fulfil the same functions as the paraphs and guide marks discussed above: they do not indicate dialogic changes, poetic nuance, or thematic structure. Rather, the most noticeable of features of manuscript *mise-en-page* on Hoccleve's autograph page are used to indicate another aspect of the poetry: Hoccleve's stanzaic form.<sup>38</sup>

This visual exaggeration of verse-form appears regularly throughout every single folio of verse in Hoccleve's autograph manuscripts, and dominates the look of the manuscript page, rendering mid-stanza and mid-line paraphs of secondary prominence. In each of the autograph manuscripts, Hoccleve has ruled his pages so that he takes care to never split a stanza in half across two folios: *Cosin* has between three and five complete stanzas per page, *HM111* has either three stanzas of seven-lines or three stanzas of eight-lines per page, and *HM744* has three complete stanzas per page. Throughout all three manuscripts, complete stanzas are maintained on each folio. The stanza form is stubbornly prioritised. Where rubrics are added to this carefully calculated page, they take up a space reserved for an entire stanza, with a surrounding seven line gap, so as to maintain the full stanza format. Had the rubric taken up a single line in the interests of economic production, the final line of the last stanza would have moved to the next folio. Again, the stanza form is maintained.

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<sup>38</sup> The little existing scholarship on Hoccleve concentrates on form in terms of metre and syllable count; the larger stanzaic unit is yet to be considered. See *Hoccleve's Works: The Minor Poems I*, ed. F. J. Furnivall, *EETS* lxi (1892) (reissued with *The Minor Poems II* ed. I. Gollancz, *EETS* ES lxxiii (1897), in one volume, revised by Jerome Mitchell and A. I. Doyle (1970), p.xli, and J. A. Jefferson, 'The Hoccleve holographs and Thomas Hoccleve's metrical practice: More than counting syllables? Medieval English measures: Studies in metre and versification' *Parergon* xviii (2000), 203-226, pp.217 and 219.

As a man about the book trade, Hoccleve would have been aware that his own manuscripts could have been used as exemplars. The transmission of *TC*, as Ralph Hanna outlines, was certainly complex, with inconsistent sources resulting in layers of exemplars which influenced each copy.<sup>39</sup> Hoccleve's concern with displaying the stanza form of his text could plausibly be due to a concern with practicality: in the booklet copying of *TC*, it was certainly more straightforward to copy stanza by stanzas and so keep the rhyme royale form complete. Hoccleve's careful representation of dialogue, meaning, and textual form through his manuscript *mise-en-page* strongly suggests a concern with ensuring his poetic meaning is transmitted from copy to copy. Likewise, cautious stanza layout may simultaneously have been an awareness of scribal copy-practices – to ensure that half his form is not lost on a scribal rendition of his text.

At the same time, the effect of laying out his texts thus demonstrates two different impulses: to mark up the text to indicate its meaning, and to mark up the text to indicate its verse-form. The *mise-en-page*, especially the placement of paraphs, guide marks, and horizontal lines demonstrates these conflicting impulses. This is bound up with Hoccleve's poetic vocation, and suggests his desire to demonstrate both his ability to write clearly and logically, to create poetic nuance, and simultaneously to demonstrate his ability to write in complex stanzaic forms. In the way that his texts are continuously concerned with the contents of his texts, 'how vndirstande am I' (*Dialogue*, l.774), the manuscripts demonstrate the author's concern not only with the contents of his texts being understandable but also the complex poetic units in which he writes. In indicating both meaning and verse-form on the manuscript page, Hoccleve boasts his abilities in both arenas.

Using these two aims as a 'control', we can examine the interpretation in the non-autograph manuscripts of Hoccleve's texts. Where Hoccleve balances his simultaneous desires to display both his ability to create poetic meaning and to manoeuvre poetic form, the non-autograph manuscripts do not quite imitate both these desires. Rather than indicate both meaning and verse-form, the scribes of non-autograph copies often choose verse-form over meaning.

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<sup>39</sup> Hanna (1996), pp.115-129; also see Introduction n.70.

The non-autograph manuscripts concentrate on exaggerating the stanza form on the manuscript page. Like Hoccleve's own copies, the non-autograph copies separate out each stanza with a line gap, thereby ensuring that each poetic unit is a distinct block of text on the page. Likewise, horizontal lines mark the beginning of each stanza so that it is clearly distinct from the last. These lines spread across the width of the page so as to further demarcate a complete rhyme unit. Not only have line gaps been left between stanzas, so as to ensure that there is a clear distinction between stanzas, these line gaps are often filled in with decorative horizontal lines which do not allow the eye to ignore the gap between the end of one unit of rhyme and the beginning of the next.

In addition to the line gaps and horizontal lines, these manuscripts also further exaggerate the rhyme scheme of each text. Not content with demarcating stanza units, the scribes segregate the stanza into its component rhymes. B, L, and D2, for example, have tie-lines to indicate each pair of rhyming lines. These tie together the first and third lines, the second and fourth, and the sixth and seventh: the rhyming pairs within the stanza (see Figure 10, p.230). These manuscripts break down the stanza into its composite parts, displaying the makeup of the larger poetic unit. The scribe of B takes this a step further by alternating red and green ink (see the first image of Figure 10, p.230).<sup>40</sup> The coloured tie-lines here indicate separate pairs within the stanza to exaggerate the alternation of the rhyme scheme.

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<sup>40</sup> However, this is only on f.2r and is not maintained throughout, possibly due to difficulty or to the effort required to do so.



Figure 10: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Bodley 221 (B), f.1v, Laud Misc 735 (L), f.12r, and Digby 185 (D2), f.145r (with permission of the Bodleian).

A copy of *RP*, Cc, also has tie-lines: these are only used on the last folio of the text, f.60, where they demonstrate the rhyme of the section entitled 'Verba compilatoris ad librum' (as labelled in the TEAMS edition of the text and in some manuscripts). This section is made up of three stanzas of eight lines, rather than stanzas of rhyme royal in seven lines as there are throughout the text. The scribe of Cc demonstrates sensitivity towards the poetic form, and reflects this change on the page by altering the *mise-en-page*.

Like Hoccleve's own copies of the minor poems, non-autograph copies of *RP* usually maintain four stanzas to a page, with the larger manuscripts managing five stanzas per page. Some manuscripts are planned for this: A, Ha4, Ry2, Na, As, Do, Hn1, and Hn2, are ruled with 31 lines per folio, each planned to accommodate four stanzas per page with line gap between each stanza; Qu and Ra1 are ruled with 39 lines, planned to hold five stanzas with line gap per page; and Ry4, Ma, and Tc are ruled with 28 lines, planned to hold four stanzas per page without a line gap. Where the manuscripts are too small for a line gap, paraphs or initials signal the beginning of each stanza so that they still appear clearly as stanzas on the page.

A few manuscripts have incomplete sets of stanzas per page, and sometimes have an extra few lines per folio. The scribes of these manuscripts are, however, quick to remedy this. In the case of A, Ha4, and Ad, the addition of a rubric causes one line of the stanza to be forced on to the next page. The scribes of each of these manuscripts work over the next few folios to readjust the layout and to ensure that eventually the stanzas are kept complete once more. The rubric on f.39v of A, for example, takes up the space of a line so that four stanzas no longer neatly fit onto one page. The remainder of the last stanza has to move onto the next folio so that each folio thereafter has three full and two half stanzas per folio. However, the scribe calculates the number of ruled lines over the next few folios and, on f.45r inserts a rubric in a larger, more formal hand which takes up the space of the residual half stanza on the page. This enables the layout to be readjusted to hold four complete stanzas per folio. Likewise, Ry3 demonstrates the same concern: from f.75v to 81r, the complete stanza layout is thrown off slightly and the rubric causes two lines to be carried over. The scribe therefore works over the next few folios to readjust the complete-stanza layout: from f.76r to 77r, two lines carry over from the previous stanza onto the next folio; f.77v has three carried over lines; by f.79v, four lines are carried over, then five on f.80r, then six until the complete stanza is readjusted and the layout is fixed by f.81r. The complexity of such a task underlines the non-autograph manuscripts' interest with the stanzaic form here – one which rivals Hoccleve's own concern to indicate his form on the page.

However, not only do the non-autograph manuscripts indicate verse form, they do so often to the detriment of clear meaning. Two manuscripts, Sl2 and Kk, preserve the stanzaic form in a different way: in addition to line gaps and paraps, the scribes place the Latin glosses in the text column. Akin to particular manuscripts of Gower's *CA*, the Latin interrupts the flow of the English verse. The first Latin gloss is placed thus:

For ferthermore in Holy Writ I rede  
 Augustinus Volve vitam salvatoris a tempore sue nativitatis usque ad crucis  
 patibulum et non invenies in ea nisi stigmata paupertatis Numquid ergo homo  
 melior est deo<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> As the editors of the TEAMS edition note, this is not in fact in Augustine, but in Petrus Comestor.

(Augustine: 'Reflect on the life of our Saviour from the time of his birth to his torture on the Cross, and you will not find in it anything except the stigma of poverty. Is man therefore better than God?')

Beholde the lyf of our Sauveour

Right fro the tyme of His nativitee (ll.1078-80; Sl2 f.18v; Kk f.16v)

Placed thus, the Latin note causes the English text below it to repeat what has already been stated. Inserting the marginal gloss into the main text at this point subverts and elevates the status of the marginal gloss to the central column, causing it to appear more central to the comprehension of this text than it is in the majority of manuscripts. Hoccleve's verse stanza which follows, therefore, becomes an unnecessary translation of the Latin rather than a clear explanation to the narrator. Additionally, the scribe of Kk inserts the next Latin gloss at this point, following immediately after the first gloss. Appending the gloss above, the scribe adds:

Bernardus in sermone de vigilia natalis domini Nonne magna abusio est et nimis magna ut ubi dives esse velit vilis vermiculus propter quem deus magestatis et dominus sabaoth dignatus est voluntarie pauper fieri

(Bernard, in the Sermon on the Vigil of the Nativity of our Lord: 'Is it not a great abuse, even excessively great, that where he wanted to be rich, a vile worm, on whose account the God of majesty and the Lord Sabaoth deigns to become a pauper voluntarily?')

This disrupts the flow of the English verse and does little for the meaning of the text: the gloss becomes now not a Latin rendition of what is to come in the verse stanza to follow, but a digression from the happenings in the central column. Even though these Latin glosses are in red ink in both Sl2 and Kk, and so stand out as visually different from the main verse text, they nevertheless interrupt the meaning of the piece. Despite this disruption and subversion of meaning however, the Latin gloss is never allowed to interrupt a stanza; rather it is carefully placed in the gap between the end of one stanza and the beginning of the next. The scribes of each of these manuscripts ensure that not a single stanza is interrupted by the Latin text; conversely, the stanzaic form is even more obvious from a glance at the page than in other manuscripts. The disruption of the logical meaning and fluid progression of the main text does not seem to have been the primary concern of these scribes: it seems to have been of greater

importance to ensure that the stanza format of the text is the first noticeable part of its manuscript rendering.

Thus, if we compare the layouts of the autograph and the non-autograph manuscripts, often the clear depiction of poetic meaning is undermined by the desire to represent poetic form on the page. Hoccleve takes pains to indicate the dialogue between the narrator and the friend so that the reader is in no doubt as to the speaker of each line of text, and the mid-stanza paraphs indicate the interchange between the two speakers. The majority of the non-autograph manuscripts, however (except those discussed above such as A and Ha4), ignore this altogether and only indicate the start of each stanza, indicating the verse-form of the text instead of the meaning. The scribes of these manuscripts have changed the use of the paraph and the initial: where Hoccleve uses the paraph to indicate clauses, or changes in topic or speaker within each stanza, this does not seem to be the function of the paraphs and initials in the non-autograph manuscripts. Here the paraph is used solely to exaggerate the stanza form on the page.

Indeed, some manuscripts go as far as preserving the stanzaic form of the text to the detriment of its meaning. Not only do they choose to indicate the stanza rather than the textual meaning, the indication of the stanza often confuses the meaning itself. The scribe of As ignores any speeches that begin mid-stanza and only marks the beginning of each stanza with a flourished initial. On f.36v, for example a large initial is placed adjacent to the line 'Now fare wel sone go home to thi mete'. The speech itself, however, begins two lines above this, in the middle of the previous stanza, at 'Sone þow seist wel y nowe as me semeth' (See Figure 11, p.234). The scribe of As delays the marking of the speech until the first line of the following stanza: he indicates the change in speaker with a larger initial, but only where this coincides with the stanza head. Here, however, only the beginning of the stanzas, the poetic unit, is indicated, and not its contents or its meaning.

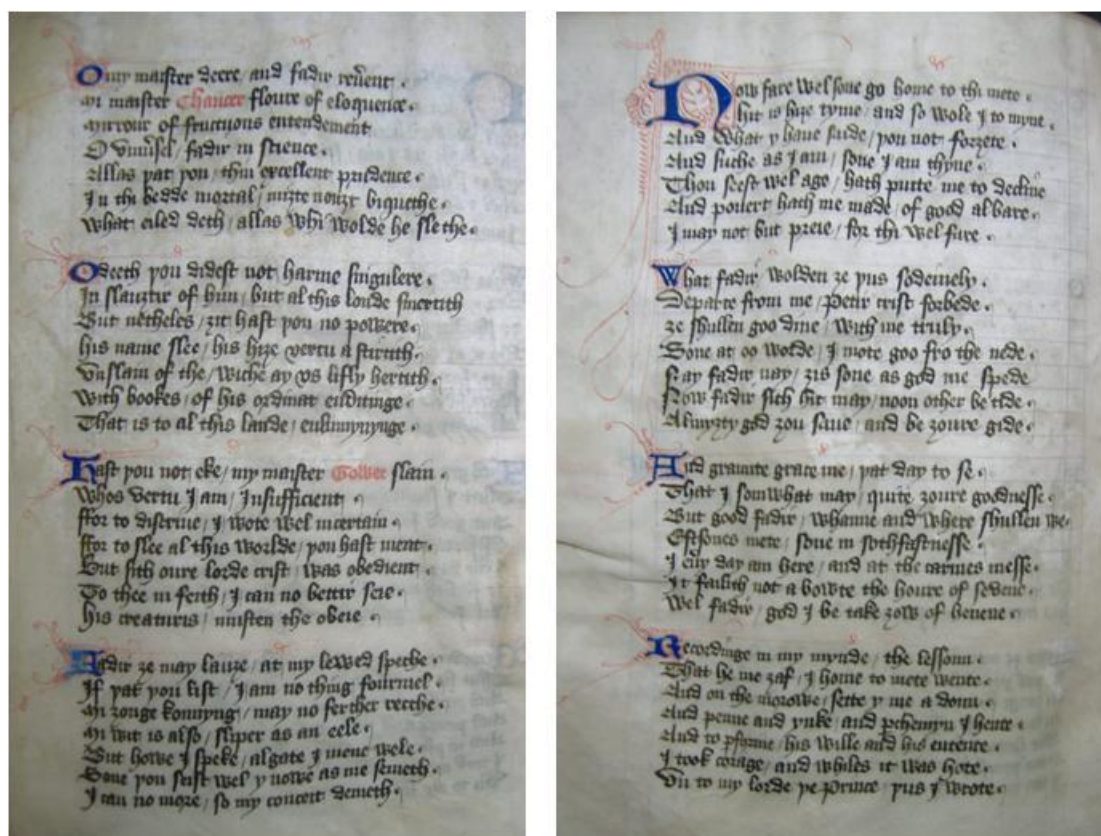


Figure 11: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 40 (As), ff.36r-36v (with permission of the Bodleian).

It is possible that the indication of the word 'Now' was largely a reflex reaction to the text. Often new episodes begin with 'Now' and so this appears to be a logical, pragmatic choice for the placement of a large initial. Hoccleve was certainly aware of such a traditional opening and chose to delay this word until the beginning of a new stanza rather than at the mid-stanza opening of the speech. Again, as a scribe himself and so aware of scribal practices, Hoccleve's verse may have been deliberately designed to fit with established scribal techniques. However, Gower's scribes are quite comfortable with marking speech-openings within a body of continuous text. The CA is, of course, in couplets and not stanzas, and so does not have line gaps. The scribes mark the opening of each speech with an initial despite even though there is no line gap to indicate where they are to place the initial. The delay in placing the initial in the example of As thus above appears to be deliberate rather than a result of inability or misunderstanding. Here it demonstrates scribal interest in the stanzaic form of the text colliding with a more pragmatic response copying poetry.

The scribe of Hn1 takes the preference for the stanzaic form a little further: he rearranges the text so that the section on 'Pietate' is placed before 'Justitia'. Despite the alteration of meaning of the text by this change, it seems that the scribe envisaged the text to be made up of distinct and moveable parts. He appears to see the stanzas as blocks of smaller components in the larger thematic unit. The page is arranged so that each has four complete stanzas with a line gap between each; these are then grouped into larger thematic section which, this scribe appears to have believed, can be placed in any order to make up the text. The stanza is considered the smallest unit of the text and so made clear on the page by the layout.

This layout has filtered down to modern editions of the texts. Most editions of *RP* keep a stanzaic layout, separating the text into seven line sections to ensure this rhyme scheme is maintained on the page. The online TEAMS edition of *RP*, however, sometimes merges two stanzas where the meaning of the text is clearer when the line gap is removed:

By that I walkid hadde a certeyn tyme,  
 Were it an hour I not, or more or lesse,  
 A poore old hoor man cam walkynge by me,  
 And seide, 'Good day, sire, and God yow blesse!'  
 But I no word, for my seekly distresse  
 Forbad myn eres usen hir office,  
 For which this old man heeld me lewde and nyce,  
 Til he took heede to my drery cheere,  
 And to my deedly colour pale and wan.  
 Than thoghte he thus: 'This man that I see heere  
 Al wrong is wrestid, by aght I see can.  
 He stirte unto me and seide, 'Sleepstow, man?  
 Awake!' and gan me shake wondir faste,  
 And with a sigh I answerde atte laste: (ll.120-133)<sup>42</sup>

Here the editors have purposefully omitted the line gap between the two stanzas so that the meaning of the text progresses more fluidly. The beginning of the second stanza, 'Til he took heede' is seen as part of the sentence in the first, the line 'For which this old man heeld me lewde and nyce' ending with a comma, not a full stop. The editors accompany the omission of this line and their punctuation choices with a note:

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<sup>42</sup> Charles R. Blyth, ed., *The Regiment of Princes. TEAMS Middle English Texts*. Web. 9 April 2012. <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/hoccfm.htm>.

While Hoccleve's rhyme-royal stanzas, like Chaucer's, usually end with a full stop, there are many cases, as here, where the thought runs on, to the benefit of narrative flow. If the stanzas are read aloud, it will become apparent that many of the stanzas concluding with a period also continue smoothly to the next stanza. This is not the Spenserian stanza, in which the lengthened last line turns each stanza into a distinct aesthetic unit.<sup>43</sup>

The editors privilege clear meaning over the stanzaic form.<sup>44</sup> The 'distinct aesthetic unit' is here bound up with poetic meaning, sharing Hoccleve's concern that readers understand his text. For the scribes of the non-autograph manuscripts, however, aesthetics is concerned with representing the verse-form, the rhyme and metre of the text over its meaning, where complete poetic units per folio are central to interpreting Hoccleve's poetry.

As such, these non-autograph copies impose new boundaries on Hoccleve's text, exaggerating those that he himself provides and underplaying others. In doing this, these manuscripts depict Hoccleve in a specific way. In prioritising the verse-form of the text, scribes here play with the idea of the poet: they create, through the layout of their texts, the poetic author, one who successfully negotiates the complex form of the rhyme schemes in the making of his text.

Thus, scribes demonstrate a specific set of responses to the emerging literary author. The discrepancy between Hoccleve's autograph and the non-autograph manuscripts offers the scribes' understanding of the literary text – that (rather simplistically, we may feel) manuscripts of poetry must exhibit primarily its verse-form. In doing this, the scribes of Hoccleve's manuscripts lay out their texts in a way comparable to the scribes of *TC*. The manuscripts of *TC* are ruled with stanzas in mind, and are deliberately designed in such a way so as not to break stanzas. The majority of the earliest copies of *TC* maintain five (occasionally six) complete stanzas per page, and such page layout seems to have been routine. The scribe of Cp1 of *TC*, for example leaves the large blank spaces for images to be inserted. These, like those in Hoccleve's texts, never once interrupt a stanza. Equally, the manuscripts are ruled to ensure complete stanzas per page: Cp1, for example, has thirty-nine lines ruled per folio (except for those folios

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<sup>43</sup> Blyth. Web. note to ll.126-127.

<sup>44</sup> It is, of course, possible that this may be that this is an error in laying out the text whilst publishing online; however, such an error demonstrates the modern editors' less rigorous approach to ensuring that stanza distinctions are preserved on the page.

which have blank spaces for illustrations, which are not ruled); Gg, Cl, and H2 are ruled to have thirty-five lines per folio; and H1 has forty-two lines. Each of these divides neatly by seven so that they each contain only full rhyme royal stanzas: Gg, Cl, and H2 contain five full stanzas per folio; H1 has six full stanzas per folio; and Cp1 has five full stanzas with blank line gaps between each. The manuscripts were thus planned from the earliest stages of production to ensure that the stanzaic form of the text was displayed on the page. The ruling here ensures that no stanza is split across two pages.

Nicholas Perkins has recently collated the numerous parallels and textual borrowings between *TC* and *RP*, stating that ‘Hoccleve’s debt to Chaucer is more active, more integral to his style and poetic persona’ than first believed.<sup>45</sup> Building on the ‘canonization of Chaucer’ argument, Hoccleve’s text interacts with those authors he claims to be his forefathers, and Hoccleve responds to, and engages with, his literary predecessors. Indeed, a later hand defines Hoccleve against Chaucer and, atypically, not the monarch, and writes above the tale of contents in the Formulary: ‘Tho. Harkliff, Clerke du pryve Seal en le temps S[eignur] Geffray Chaucer’ (Additional 24062, f.2r). The same may be said of his manuscript *mise-en-page*. Hoccleve’s manuscripts may have been imitating not only the text but also the look of the *TC* manuscript page. Using guide marks, paraps or initials, the opening of each stanza is indicated throughout the majority of the manuscripts of Hoccleve’s texts (both autograph and non-autograph) as they are carefully throughout the majority of the manuscripts of *TC*.

As the note in the TEAMS edition suggests, Hoccleve’s stanzas imitate Chaucer’s in being both end-stopped and run-on. *TC* has numerous instances where the sentence or the fluid progression of the text crosses over the stanza boundary as if Chaucer were deliberately attempting to break out of the rhyme royal stanza.<sup>46</sup> The line gap that separates stanzas is placed squarely in the middle of a sentence at ll.56-57 for instance, ‘As I shal synge, on Mayes day the thrydde,/That Pandarus, for al his wise speche’, where the sentence continues over two stanzaic units. Hoccleve’s sentences, on the other hand, tend not to cross over stanzaic

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<sup>45</sup> Perkins (2008), p.104.

<sup>46</sup> See Martin Stevens, ‘The Royal Stanza in Early English Literature’, *PMLA* xciv (1979), 62-76, p.67.

boundaries. Though changes in the narrative, such as switches in speaker, do occur mid-stanza, usually the openings of sentences do not. In the example above of *As*, where the scribe has delayed indicating the beginning of a new speech until the beginning of a new stanza, the sentence is not fractured in two by the stanza break; rather a new sentence begins at the stanza head which the scribe indicates with a large initial. In combining these discrete poetic units in which Hoccleve writes his text with the line gaps and horizontal lines which Hoccleve provides in his manuscripts, the author-scribe on the page seems to be concerned with engaging with his literary predecessor in a particular way. Indeed Hoccleve did not feel the line gap enough of a break between his complete stanzaic units and so inserted his characteristic '2'-shaped horizontal lines between each one. In doing so, Hoccleve, though imitating Chaucer in writing in rhyme royal stanzas and allowing the meanings of his text cross over two stanzas, simultaneously undoes this display of textual dexterity by segregating his verse visually into the stanza format. Hoccleve, it seems, wanted to show his workings on the page and to demonstrate that he can both create complex and nuanced poetic meaning and simultaneously execute, craftsman-like, the rhyme royal stanzas. He demonstrates complete control which reveals his response to poetry and poetic vocation: the *mise-en-page* of his autograph manuscripts displays his ability to write in the lofty poetic style of rhyme royal, not the jangling 'rum ram ruf' of alliterative poetry.<sup>47</sup>

However, non-autograph manuscripts demonstrate a limited view of this interaction. They do not display the stanzaic form as a vehicle by which Hoccleve examines those poetic and literary concepts which play off Chaucer (as TEAMS editors understand them), but see the stanzas as the only level of the interaction. Rather than indicate the overlap of and play between the various meanings of the two texts and the deliberate overlap of the two authors, the non-autograph manuscripts instead only show the interaction in terms of the verse-form. Moreover, while they resemble the layout of *TC*, these manuscripts also offer more greatly exaggerated exhibition of this stanzaic format (adding tie-lines, for example), and so employ further methods

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<sup>47</sup> *ParsP*, l.43.

of ensuring that the stanza – and therefore the rhyme scheme of the text – is most visually noticeable on the page. The scribe of Ma seems to have been so adamant to mark the beginning of each stanza that, on finding that on f.54v the marginal Latin gloss encroached on the space reserved for the paraph, he inserted as much as he could of the paraph mark in the space which was left. The result is an odd half-paraph marking the beginning of the stanza. As comically pedantic as this seems, it demonstrates the importance that each scribe placed on indicating the stanzas on the page.

We therefore begin to get a sense of how important it was for both Hoccleve and his scribes to indicate the rhyme scheme or the poetic components of the text when copying their manuscripts. Often, this seems to have been of higher importance than the meaning of the piece. By ensuring the rhyme scheme of the text is brought to the fore, these scribes, including Hoccleve himself, make obvious the fact that these manuscripts are specifically manuscripts of poetry and not any other genre of text. They indicate a desire to exaggerate the patterns of verse-forms in the text above their content, and suggest that, unlike the modern edition, a clear understanding of the meaning was not their only interest.

## **Drawing Conclusions**

Scholars seem to be preoccupied with relating Hoccleve's personal history to his texts; such conclusions are not so readily drawn for Chaucer or Gower. It is certainly tempting to draw a link between the seemingly autobiographical material in his texts and the historical poet, and the survival of the autograph manuscripts makes this comparison more tantalising still. However, despite a slight exaggeration of the *sententiae* and figures of authority in his own manuscripts, showing, as we would expect of an author, concern that his reader comprehend the meaning of the text, it would seem that Hoccleve does nothing eccentric. He is a scribe like any other and copies his own text – and Gower's – in a way befitting any trained scribe.

The standardisation of the layout of Hoccleve's manuscripts is much like that of Gower's. Far from the grandeur of the majority of Gower's manuscripts, Hoccleve's autograph manuscripts are small and untidy. Whether these were read or used as exemplars, we do not yet know. Cosin

has an Envoy to the countess of Westmorland, but we do not know whether this implies that the manuscript was intended to be read by her. Equally, we do not know whether any of the autograph manuscripts were used as exemplars for more presentable copies or whether they were Hoccleve's own copies intended to be read by him alone. The scribes of Hoccleve's manuscript do render his texts in almost an identical way in their own copies so that the autograph and non-autograph manuscripts look very similar on comparison. This broad relative similarity suggests a common scribal practice in laying out manuscripts in the early fifteenth century. Unlike modern editions of medieval texts which prioritise a smooth reading of the meaning over any other feature, in these manuscripts verse-form of the text was central to the page.

The scribes of Hoccleve's texts, including Hoccleve himself, divide the texts in two different ways using the features of the manuscript page: to indicate the meaning of the text, signalling changes in themes (rubrics), alternation of speakers (speaker markers, initials, and paraphs), the contents of longer passages (glosses) and the development of the text (paraphs and initials); and to reveal to the reader its stanzaic form (using paraphs, initials, line gaps, ruling, and sometimes using the glosses). Hoccleve's texts, especially in Ry3, which Mooney attributes to him, are filled with sententious comments and dialogue. However, where scribes often go to great pains to indicate these statements and speeches, as we see in Chaucer and Gower, here the non-autograph manuscripts rarely indicate more than the poetic mechanics of the text. In doing this, the manuscripts demonstrate fifteenth-century attitudes to poetic texts: a central concern with indicating not poetic meaning but poetic form.

Copies of Chaucer's *Thop* indicate rhyme scheme above meaning; so too do the manuscripts of Gower's *CA* in which the Latin text interrupts the flow of the vernacular verse in order to preserve on the page the couplet form. However, the stanzaic form of *MkT* and of *TC* is most akin to the layout of Hoccleve's texts in their exaggeration of the stanzaic form. Hoccleve's imitation of *TC* extends beyond the text itself to the manuscript layout: Hoccleve's manuscripts, like those of *TC*, focus on the stanzaic form of the text. However, the manuscripts of *TC* do not

indicate stanzas in the large variety of ways that Hoccleve's manuscripts do, using line gaps, horizontal lines, paraps, and often a combination of features. Hoccleve's scribes go beyond those of *TC* in marking what was more than necessary to indicate both verse-form and meaning. In doing so, Hoccleve and his scribes lay out his manuscript pages so that they appear to be an imitation of Chaucer's. Comparing the two authors, the page establishes a tradition of displaying the stanzaic form. Hoccleve seems here to be following the patterns of his literary predecessor, imitating not only the content of Chaucer's text, but the look of his manuscript page. His verse itself fits neatly into the stanza form and very few sentences run over the gap between two stanzas (though a change in speaker might occur mid-stanza, the end of complete sentences coincide with the end of complete stanzas). Hoccleve's manuscripts boast his abilities in writing both Chaucerian sense and Chaucerian verse-form. His page displays a variety of inherited features – those that, as outlined above, demonstrate an imitation of scholastic books – but also of his literary forefathers, Chaucer and Gower. His text itself establishes this genealogy; however, his manuscripts do so only in a limited way. The non-autograph manuscripts pick up on the lineage Hoccleve establishes only in setting up the page to display the stanza form. In exaggerating this verse-form, beyond anything that Chaucer's manuscripts do, Hoccleve's manuscripts seem to usurp the position of those that have come before it, attempting to appear more poetic – in terms of the emphasis of their verse structure – than Chaucer's.

Jerome J. McGann believes form to be the route to truth, especially authorial truth, or, as Levinson phrases it, the 'real'.<sup>48</sup> Levinson argues against the historicist view that texts can represent 'bundles of historical and cultural content' in the way that is often argued for Hoccleve's autobiographical references.<sup>49</sup> But the new formalist approach is not one entirely supported by the manuscripts either. It is tempting to argue here that Hoccleve's form only serves to indicate some inherent *auctoritas*, especially as we have copies of his texts in his own hands to support such supposition. We do see Hoccleve's own desires for the reading of his

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<sup>48</sup> McGann (1985), pp.21-22 as quoted in Wolfson in Wolfson and Brown (2006), pp.7-8. And Levinson (2007), p.561.

<sup>49</sup> Levinson (2007), p.561.

texts; however, other scribal copies do not make clear and undeniable any one reading. Rather, they seem to be concerned with how best to represent the verse-form, not as a way to 'truth' or 'historical and cultural content', but as one particular way to approach Hoccleve's as author. Hoccleve is simultaneously concerned with meaning and the verse-form in which that meaning is expressed, bringing together the *forma tractandi* and the *forma tractatus* in a way that the manuscripts of Chaucer and Gower do not quite manage. However, if Ry3 is Hoccleve's own copy of *RP* as Mooney suggests, he here marks up his version by prioritising stanza forms over the meaning of his text. His scribes, like those of Chaucer and Gower, focus on the *forma tractatus* in a way removed from the text's meaning and in a way that identifies 'truth' as something definable through form.

To bring these more abstract notions of the manuscript page back to practicality, it is possible that we may explain the layout by the need for clarity. Circulating exemplars may have been transmitted piecemeal and the author would be concerned with ensuring his meaning is not fractured and divided.<sup>50</sup> Hoccleve, as simultaneously author and scribe, would have been aware of the practicalities of producing manuscripts. His caution in indicating stanzas suggests an awareness of the errors and mistakes that could occur during copying, such as the missing stanza penned in the margin of Ha4 (f.62, ll. ll.3578-3584), which has been remedied by an illustration of a figure pulling the stanza into its correct place. By indicating each stanza, he reduces the risk of missing half-stanzas and half-meanings.

Likewise, there is the practicality of expense. The more expensively produced the manuscript, the more paraps and initials it contains (such as those found in A and Ha4). However, it seems to be that the poetic form of the text was deemed absolutely essential regardless of how much money was put into the production of a manuscript. Patrons rarely specified, as far as we know, the exact location of each paraps or initial. A manuscript that leaves a line gap between each stanza rather than that which leaves none is not cheap to produce. Equally, even the scrappiest of manuscripts manages to indicate in some way the

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<sup>50</sup> Hanna (1996), pp.115-129; also see Introduction n.70.

poetic form of the text: using unflourished paraps or initials where there is no space for a line gap, or by ensuring that stanzas are not split over two folios. The verse-form of the text seems to have been indicated regardless of the quality of the manuscript. Two conclusions can be drawn from this. Hoccleve does, of course, imitate Chaucer's text. At the same time, however, the layout that prioritises verse-form over meaning indicates that scribes understand vernacular poetry in a particular way: as a display of verse-form. Though it seems simplistic to say that poetry is a set of poetic verses, the scribes of Hoccleve's texts demonstrate that this is just how they understood texts of literature: as being made up of rhyme. In the simultaneous increase in commercial manuscript production and the increase in books of vernacular literature, scribes responded to the poetic text by emphasising the aspect of the text that they felt made it poetry – its verse form.

## CONCLUSIONS

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By comparing the manuscript layout of three major authors being copied at the beginning of the fifteenth century, this thesis has been able to examine the creation of a manuscript page specifically for texts of poetry. The three authors' texts show three different production circumstances: one in which producers had very little idea of the author's intentions for the look of his page; one in which strict control over layout suggests some authorial involvement; and one in which the author is present and producers negotiate between his desires and their own practices. From this, it has considered how networks of producers and readers were responding to a number of late-fourteenth- and early-fifteenth-century poetic texts in different textual situations. The conclusion will outline some of the implications of these responses to late medieval texts within their manuscript contexts and the impact of these responses for both our view of the medieval scribe and reader and our view of medieval texts.

In attempting to represent literary texts on the page, the manuscripts demonstrate an attempt at understanding what that text is – what it contains and how that differs from other genres of texts being copied. In doing so, producers first have to ask the more difficult question of what poetry is. In a comparison of the manuscripts of the *CA* and those of the *CT*, there is a particular awareness of the portrayal of the narrator. The layout in the *CT* supports the layering of narratorial portraits: that Chaucer is the author of the work is hidden under the pseudo-authorship of the pilgrims. When this narrator is Chaucer himself, further layers are built. Even though Chaucer tells the tale, the focus is relocated from the narrator to the fictional speakers. On the other hand, the layout of *CA* does not maintain the facade of 'Amans': on reading the Latin apparatus, either in the text-column or the margin, we are aware that 'Amans' is Gower from the start of the text. Unlike Chaucer, Gower is ever present, and the layering of voices is flattened by the Latin apparatus at the start of the text, which exposes the disguise. Furthermore, these manuscripts do not indicate those lines in which Gower feigns to be what he is not. Unlike the Franklin's claim to be a 'burel man', Gower's claim to be a 'burel clerk' (Pro.52) is not highlighted

with either a paraph or an initial: readers know he is not a simple man, and the manuscript, which has already explained that Gower pretends to be a lover here, makes no further pretence. Likewise, Hoccleve's manuscripts play with the narratorial layering: where the narrator speaks to the old man at the start of *RP*, the main part of *RP* is in a single voice; the manuscripts respond by indicating the topics and themes in the text rather than focusing on the persona of the speaker: the narrator and Hoccleve become a single voice that speaks directly to its intended audience.

Using the features of layout inherited from biblical or scholastic material, scribes attempt to represent literature as a series of complex meanings. However, this concern with the nuance of poetic meaning is constantly undercut by a desire to represent verse-form. Despite the deeply complex nature of the question that producers ask of their texts – what poetry is – manuscripts show a simple (or perhaps, we as modern readers would think, simplistic) understanding or solution – and a very practical one: that poetry is made up primarily of units of verse. This suggests a particular attitude towards the page shared across the producers of each of these manuscripts despite the range of production circumstances: literature is depicted on the page as a series of rhymes. The manuscripts depicted poetry as poetry, that is, a series of couplets and verses.

This has deeper implications for the meaning of poetry in the late middle ages. Poetry in the fifteenth century was understood to be a branch of grammar, bound up with the representation of meaning. The popularity of Priscian into the late Middle Ages demonstrates an ongoing preoccupation with logic, rhetoric, and dialectic as a way of structuring and ordering a literary text.<sup>1</sup> Theorists prescribe rules for authors to follow. Aristotle outlined four parts of a speech (introduction, statement, proof, and conclusion) and Cicero and the Roman rhetoricians recommended six.<sup>2</sup> The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* organises speeches into five parts (the Proposition, the Reason, the Proof of the Reason, the Embellishment, and the Resume,

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<sup>1</sup> See Copeland (1991), especially pp.207-221 and Copeland and Sluiter (2009), p.814ff.

<sup>2</sup> See James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp.315ff.

II.xvii.27).<sup>3</sup> These theories informed the organisation of a speech (here the written speeches which form the structure of Chaucer's, Gower's, and Hoccleve's texts) by division into parts. Thirteenth-century grammatical books prescribe how to compose verse.<sup>4</sup> These are concerned with stylistic features – ornaments of style, units of *sententia*, and careful order. Chaucer, Gower, and Hoccleve demonstrate these concerns within their texts (Gower's theoretical structuring of Book VII of *CA* into cosmological order, for example).<sup>5</sup>

However, where authors must show a concern with stylistic elements, the producers' response is to some extent antithetical. There seems to be a divide between the way authors and producers viewed poetic texts – a precursor to our 'new formalist' readings. D. Vance Smith has argued that the visual representation of form, both verse form and larger poetic structures such as narration, plot, chapters, 'was not how medieval readers addressed form, even if their practices were drawn to that possibility'.<sup>6</sup> Rather, the representation of form was more 'abstract', divided into the *forma tractandi* and the *forma tractatus*. Layout does both: it represents the *forma tractandi* on the manuscript page, indicating tropes, disjunctions, or developments in style and tone, visually on the page. But it also represents visually a text's verse-form to the detriment of the meaning itself. The form of the text, the *forma tractatus* as unrelated to, or more important than its *forma tractandi*, seems to be a central concern to the scribes copying Chaucer, Gower, and Hoccleve's texts. R. S. Crane has argued that the content or meaning of a text is inseparable from its form: nothing 'is matter or content merely, in relation to which something else is form...Everything is formed, and hence rendered poetic'.<sup>7</sup> Fifteenth-century scribes appear to respond in this way, copying texts in a way in which form seems 'everything'. But they do not combine meaning and form in quite the way that Crane's argument

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<sup>3</sup> See Murphy (1974), pp.316ff.

<sup>4</sup> Murphy (1974) suggests six major influences on the medieval author: Matthew of Vendrome, *Ars versificatoria*; Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria Nova* and *Documentum de modo et arte dicandi et versificandi*; Gervase of Melkley, *Ars versificaria*; John of Garland *De arte prosayca, metrica, et rithmica*; and Eberhard the German, *Laborintus*, pp.170ff.

<sup>5</sup> J. M. Manly, *Chaucer and the Rhetoricians* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1926), pp.98-99, 100-101. See also Murphy, 'A New Look at Chaucer and the Rhetoricians', *RES* xv (1964) 1-20 who does not agree that the influences of rhetoricians on Chaucer is as strong as Manly suggests.

<sup>6</sup> D. Vance Smith in Wolfson and Brown (2006), p.70.

<sup>7</sup> R. S. Crane, *The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), p.153. As quoted in Wolfson in Wolfson and Brown (2006), p.9.

suggests. The larger structures of the text – its division into chapters, its plot and tone variations – are indicated in a way that is harmonious with its meaning. However, more often in these manuscripts, meaning does not seem to be part of, specifically, the rendering of verse-form and the indication of verse-form is often distinct from clear meaning. Rather than integrate the verse-form of the text into meaning, the layout often anatomizes the text, dividing it into its various verse structures and meanings separately. Visual representations of poetic verse do not always inform or determine the text's meaning.

They do, however, inform and determine the reading of a verse form historically, combining book history with a new formalist approach. The production circumstances reveal scribal attitudes towards literary texts and towards reading, situated within the limits of both practicality, inherited practices, and of working within production networks. Texts may be understood as 'bundles of historical and cultural content',<sup>8</sup> but they are also records of reading in a way that transcends a historicist approach. Form, especially verse-form, illuminates this historical reading.

Perhaps, then, these texts ought to be close read via their book historical contexts – and literary meaning to be understood through the prevailing ideas of medieval producers rather than authors. In this way, reading medieval literature through its manuscript contexts becomes a very different endeavour, and these texts become a compilation of rhymes rather than a set of meanings. This seems at odds with the author's aims as well as with our own aims of attempting to answer the difficult question of what poetry is.

This invites further questions on whether authors were aware of such a gap between their own concerns and their producers'. Chaucer and Hoccleve's meanings cross their verse boundaries: they do not restrict meaning to the stanza form. Likewise, many of Gower's sentences start mid-couplet. A closer examination of sentence structure and starting points in relation to rhyme might illuminate authorial intention here. Might this be why Gower attempted to 'fix' his poetry with his glosses? Furthermore, Hoccleve responds to his forefather in using

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<sup>8</sup> Levinson (2007), p.561.

Chaucer's verse-form: might we also consider that Hoccleve reacts directly to producer and reader response to his poetic form by making his verse a central part of his own manuscript layout? Reading these texts via their manuscript layout highlights a different set of concerns. It may be useful, therefore, to think again about how these meanings are put across on the page: how sentences are constructed alongside rhyme, and how grammatical and poetic boundaries are created by the author, possibly in awareness of the producers' and readers' responses to the page. It may prove fruitful to read these texts, mediated through their manuscript context, primarily as series of verse-forms. By extension, we might understand medieval authors as producers do: not in the complex terms of vernacular *auctoritas* within which we read them but simply as verse-makers.

However, in order to attempt such readings, a longer history of rhyme representation, both before and after that which is the focus here – not only cross-author, but also cross-period and cross-genre – first needs to be more carefully examined. This study has examined page developments over a short period in which the production of the new rhyme schemes in Chaucer get taken up in Hoccleve. A further examination of the history of rhyme representation on the page can be used as a 'control' against which we may understand the centrality of verse-form here.

However, such a study must heed the warning issued by Wendy Scase and must not presume that the observations made here can be applied universally and uniformly to the production of numerous categories of books across numerous regions of England: this requires further study and conclusions are tentative.<sup>9</sup> It is important to question how indicative the layout produced for specifically canonical, literary authors (around which this thesis revolves) is of wider book production practices and responses to literary texts – and whether manuscripts suggest similar responses towards literature and the page when produced in non-commercial settings, such as those manuscripts produced and used personally (the Findern manuscript, Cambridge University Library, MS. Ff.1.6, for instance, which contains tie-lines in its copy of the romance *Sir*

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<sup>9</sup> Wendy Scase, 'Afterword: the Book in Culture', in Gillespie and Wakelin (2011), pp.292-298, p.298.

*Degrevant* on f.100r-v and in the short poems between ff.135r and 137v). Could this be related to the interest in verse-form to the growing taste for anthologies in the second half of the fifteenth century, which were largely compilations of short literary texts of a variety of rhyme schemes extracted from their original settings; did the indication of verse-form in the exemplars of anthologies such as Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 346, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 16, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 638, and Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.19 (which contains complete stanzas per page and tie-lines for some texts) make these texts easier to extract and so copy?<sup>10</sup>

This study also has practical implications. Facsimile introductions only describe in brief the decorative features of the manuscript page, and they are considered separate to the main text. Charting the features in each manuscript is a time consuming process and comes with problems of its own. Benson and Blanchfield's catalogue of *Piers Plowman* features is just that: a catalogue of paraphs and initials which has yet to be analysed in full.<sup>11</sup> Tables of features are unattractive, unpublishable, and useful only to those that know what they are looking for: electronic databases with searchable aids are more useful. A suitable method for relaying this information needs to be found.

Equally, reading texts through their manuscript contexts raises further questions of editorial practice. Digital editions of any of these texts could take into consideration the verse-form on the manuscript page, rather than perceiving the indication of rhyme an error on the part of the scribe.<sup>12</sup> As I have suggested in Chapter 2, modern editors of *CA* 'correct' the text so as to privilege meaning over verse-form, to fix the text so that it reads smoothly in terms of its grammatical construction: to wipe out any indication of the couplet on the page. Editors are keen to present for their modern readers of medieval texts a clean body of words on the page: any extraneous material – glosses and notes – are, at best, placed in an appendix (as is the case

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<sup>10</sup> See Julia Boffey and John J. Thompson, 'Anthologies and Miscellanies: Production and Choice of Texts' in *Book production and publishing in Britain 1375-1475* ed. Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp.279-315.

<sup>11</sup> Benson and Blanchfield (1997).

<sup>12</sup> The *Piers Plowman* Electronic Archive, for example, reproduces each manuscript individually and thus it preserves the features of the manuscript page.

with the TEAMS edition of *CA*), and at worst, ignored altogether (no modern edition preserves the paraph in print, though they become indentations to indicate a new paragraph). Such a layout over-simplifies what, in the manuscripts, is far more complex. The potential meanings of, and thus the variety of responses to, the complex layout of any one of these texts are limited by its modern presentation. Digital editions open up the potential of numerous meanings and new readings of old texts based on the scribal responses to the literary manuscript page.

Understanding meaning through rhyme holds interest beyond the creation of the manuscripts of Chaucer, Gower, and Hoccleve, and plays with our new understandings of what books are. The creation of new technologies to reproduce old books, digital facsimiles, is reopening questions about the process of creating and responding to books. These new reading technologies – online books and e-readers – cause us to question what a book is, how readers interact with it, and how it produces meanings. Reading texts as composites of rhyme is alien; creating digital pages for manuscripts is equally alien. However, in going forward with these new technologies, we are simultaneously paving the way back to understanding more carefully the old responses to old texts, and finding new ways of deciphering the old page.

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