MEDIEVAL RHETORIC

A CASEBOOK

EDITED BY

SCOTT D. TROYAN

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For Marilyn, *semper te amabo*
For Nigel and Brewster, *vaya con dios*

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Contents

Preface

This volume found its genesis during a conversation with Christopher Kleinhenz—general editor of the Routledge Medieval Casebooks series—on (appropriately enough) New Year's Eve, December 31, 1999–January 1, 2000. Later that year, many of the contributors to this volume were to convene at the New Chaucer Society meeting in London as part of an e-seminar on Rhetoric and History. The specific focus of that panel was the direction that scholarship might take regarding medieval rhetoric in the new millennium. That roundtable discussion—organized and chaired by Martin Camargo and Rita Copeland—included brief presentations based on the main ideas of the papers in this volume by Ann W. Astell, Georgiana Donavin, Robin Hass Birky, Peter W. Mack, Timothy L. Spence, and Scott D. Troyan. These essays reflect the content and input of the lively discussion of this panel—which also included presentations by Mary Carruthers, Richard Gleizer, Denise Stodola, and Marjorie Curry Woods. The development and evolution of these papers reflect the many ideas, concerns, and concepts that were addressed during the e-seminar regarding medieval rhetoric and its importance as a hermeneutic tool. These papers also reflect what the e-seminar participants regarded as important issues in the study of medieval rhetoric that need to be addressed more fully.

The papers by Martin Camargo, Marc Guidry, and Melissa Putman Sprenkle are revisions of papers presented at equally prestigious conferences. Douglas Kelly's contribution is a much revised and expanded version of an earlier published work. These papers address additional issues that were raised during the e-seminar, but haven't been directly discussed by any of the participants. They also reflect the breadth of scholarship currently being generated regarding medieval rhetoric and its relationship with textual invention. Taken as a whole, these articles attempt to capture the spirit of that NCS discussion by offering examples of and directions for future studies focusing on medieval rhetoric.

A debt of gratitude is owed to Professor Kleinhenz, whose interest in compiling a collection of essays devoted to medieval rhetoric's place in the new millennium and support throughout the project helped make it a reality. Thanks must be extended to Matthew Byrnie, Emily Vail, and the editorial staff at Routledge for their patience and assistance throughout the process. Most important, I'd like to thank my wife, Marilyn, for her continued support—*semper te amabo*.

1

The Medieval Art of Poetry and Prose
The Scope of Instruction and the Uses of Models[1]

Douglas Kelly

We play at Paste—
Till qualified, for pearl—
Then, drop the Paste—
And deem ourself a fool—
The Shapes—though—were similar—
And our new Hands
Learned Gem-Tactics—
Practicing Sands—[2]

Emily Dickinson's poem recalls the art of versification taught in medieval schools. Beginning with malleable material, one makes many foolish blunders. Yet a time comes when one passes from shapes practiced in paste to those formed in precious stones. The tasks of apprentices lead to the jeweler's mastery. The hard stone becomes malleable. *Mutatis mutandis*, we find the same trajectory evoked in the arts of poetry.

> Formula materiae, quasi quaedam formula cerae,
> Primitus est tactus duri: si sedula cura
> Igniat ingenium, subito mollescit ad ignem
> Ingenii sequiturque manum quocumque vocarit,
> Ductilis ad quicquid. (*Poetria nova*, v. 213–217)[3]

> (The material to be moulded, like the moulding of wax, is at first hard to the touch. If intense concentration enkindle native ability, the material is soon made pliant by the mind's fire, and submits to the hand in whatever way it requires, malleable to any form.)[4]

What were those tasks? How did apprenticeship lead to mastery among those endowed with native ability? We find answers to these questions in medieval arts of writing that teach their pupils the skills by which they advance from exercises in paste to literary gems.

Recently our understanding of the art of poetry and prose fostered in medieval schools, and more specifically in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century arts of poetry and prose, has broadened in ways that may also deepen our appreciation of medieval literature.[5] This is true for writing in both Latin and the vernaculars when their authors adapted Latin composition to vernacular poetry and prose. The broadening has revised the status of the treatises by Matthew of Vendôme and Geoffrey of Vinsauf. The *Ars versificatoria* and the *Poetria nova*, we now know, are graded to a certain level of accomplishment that leads, in the next stage, to imitation of canonical masterpieces and, ultimately, to mastery of the art by some exceptional writers. Important in this reevaluation of the medieval art is the reevaluation of the place of rewriting sources by imitation. The source can no longer be seen only as matter for rewriting. It can also be a model that influences how a distinctly different subject matter may be rewritten. In this way, for example, Vergil's *Aeneid* might become a source as model for early Christian biblical epic, or, later, Ovid for numerous amorous intrigues in Latin and the vernaculars.[6] Equally important are medieval commentaries on Horace's *Art of Poetry* that adapted this difficult theoretical and reflective poem, a *poetria vetus* for the Middle Ages, to the notions of composition that finally produced a *poetria nova*, or practical outline and illustration of composition in verse and prose.[7]

Our knowledge of medieval instruction in, and practice of, the art of poetry and prose can be gleaned from various sources in both Latin and the vernaculars.[8] Their close relation is perhaps suggested by the debate evoked here and there regarding the choice of the vernacular or Latin for composition. For example, the anonymous author of *Partonopeu de Blois* refers to clerics who claim that he should write in Latin in order to be heard.[9] He demurs, asserting that by writing in French he communicates useful examples of conduct to a larger audience. At about the same time, Hue de Rotelande confronted the same clerical criticism when he wrote *Ipomedon*. He, too, claims that by writing in French, he enables both the educated and the unlettered to profit from the lessons the tale exemplifies.[10] Both authors are assumed to be able to write well in both languages. Their choice is therefore practical. They simply translate the moralizing intention of their matter from one language to the other, but start with the same art of composition for each before adapting it to a new language and, then, to source demands and authorial or patron intention.[11]

As these examples suggest, the sources for our knowledge of the medieval art of composition are scattered and heterogeneous. This paper will bring together some of this material in order to essay a coherent picture of the art and

practice in light of recent work on the tradition of literary writing in the medieval school tradition. It focuses on good instruction according to the standards of the times, despite the fact that very few contemporary schools actually could or did offer the quality of instruction evoked here.[12] There must have been some good schools because there are accomplished writers in both the Latin and vernacular traditions who wrote along the lines suggested by what we know about the medieval art of poetry and prose composition.

Gervase of Melkley's *Ars versificaria* illustrates some stages in such instruction. Gervase tells how he learned to write from Jean de Hauville, the author of *Architrenius*.[13] He goes on to claim that diligent study of Jean's poem can teach all a pupil needs to write well.[14] He certainly assumed that such study would take place in a scholastic setting such as the one Jean taught in. Gervase also names a number of other ancient and medieval authors whose works are models of the poetic art.

These include Bernardus Silvestris's *Cosmographia*. In Gervase's opinion, this prosimetrum was not only a supreme illustration of the poetic and prose art, but also one for which audiences existed for public reading. For example, it is reported to have been read to Pope Eugene III while he was in France in 1147–1148.[15] Documented statements such as these about study, writing, performance, and audiences give us insight into literary interests and practices as the schools fostered them and formed the writing habits of their pupils and the tastes of their audiences. They are pieces that come together in a mosaic depicting the art and practice of composition.

When medieval authors make statements about the work they write or the art they practice, it is rash if not presumptuous on the part of us moderns to surmise that they are erroneous or mendacious, or that they did not know what they were talking about, when there is no evidence in support of such assumptions. We can illustrate this issue by comparing statements by Benoît de Sainte-Maure and Chrétien de Troyes. When Benoît reports that he has drawn his *Roman de Troie* from Dares and Dictys,[16] we believe him because we have Dares and Dictys to show that he did so and how. When Chrétien asserts that he received his *Conte du Graal* in a book that Philippe de Flandre gave him,[17] however, we are suspicious because we do not have the book today. But in most instances such as this, there is, in fact, more evidence in favor of the authorial or textual statement than there is against it: the statement itself. Only silence refutes it. Moreover, the art of composition taught in the schools relied on rewriting antecedent material. Pierre Gallais has aptly put the issue for *Perceval*: "on ne voit pas pourquoi ils auraient si effrontément menti, puisque n'importe lequel de leurs auditeurs pouvait toujours demander à prendre connaissance du *livre*, et, au surplus . . ., un Philippe d'Alsace aurait trouvé d'assez mauvais goût que son romancier se targue d'une commande qu'il ne lui aurait jamais passée ou d'un intérêt qu'il ne lui aurait pas témoigné."[18] More important than identifying a source is the question of how the new author rewrote

it. As we shall see, rewriting a source is not, in medieval poetics, synonymous with copying or faithful translation.

In fact, both Benoît's and Chrétien's statements about their sources oversimplify complex phenomena. Benoît's *Troie* is not merely a French versification of Dares and Dictys. I offer as prima facie evidence that it is far longer than the two of them together, that it occasionally errs in claiming Dares as source,[19] and that it adds narrative lacking in both Dares and Dictys, notably the love story of Jason and Medea and that of Troilus and Briseida (both incomplete). Chrétien's allusion to a source book for his *Perceval* is important in the emergence of the French Grail legend in the late twelfth century, a tangle of problems so complex that cutting that Gordian knot by categorically denying the veracity of such allusions to source, rather than untangling it by careful analysis of the problem in medieval terms, produces only a heap of loose threads. Let us therefore examine some examples of rewriting sources similar to Benoît's to see whether they offer hints for interpreting statements such as Chrétien's.

We know that the anonymous author of the *Roman d'Eneas* used Vergil's *Aeneid*. Yet, like Benoît, he or she did more than merely translate the Latin epic into French verse.[20] Like Benoît's invention of the story of Troilus and Briseida, the *Eneas* not only amplifies sparse details in Vergil about Aeneas and Lavinia, but also revises them.[21] For example, Vergil has Lavinia inclined to love Turnus, or at least blush at his name.

> Cui plurimus ignem
> Subiecit rubor et calefacta per ora cucurrit
> . . . talis virgo dabat ore colores. (*Aeneid* XII, v. 65–69)[22]
>
> (A deep blush kindled its fire, and mantled o'er her glowing face. . . . Such hues her maiden features showed.)

The French adaptation includes extensive topical amplifications on Lavine's *gradus amoris*. Lavine falls in love with Eneas, but has no hot blushes for Turnus. The vernacular author suppresses this feature of the *Aeneid*, replacing it with a different, extensively amplified love story. Such invention is quite common in medieval rewriting.[23] The anonymous French author is in fact doing just what Matthew of Vendôme said poets should do: reproduce their sources, to be sure, but not as paraphrased commentary:

> Sequitur de executione materie, in qua quidam male disciplinati solent plerumque delirare et a semita doctrinali turpiter exorbitare, qui in scolastico exercitio fabulas circinantes poeticas verbum verbo sigillatim exprimunt tanquam super auctores metrice proposuerint commentare. Sed . . . eis consulendum est, ut in exequenda materia consuetudinarios eventus studeant emulari, ut scilicet vera dicantur vel veri similia.[24]

> (What follows concerns the working out of the material, an area in which the poorly instructed often act like fools and wander shamefully away from the narrow path of true learning. In school exercises they grind out stories, ransacking poems word for word for images, just as if they were setting out to write a verse commentary upon their authors. But . . . let them be *advised that, in following* their material, they seek to emulate the customary handling of events, and thus they *may* write with propriety or with the semblance of propriety.)[25]

Matthew's injunction recalls Horace's dictum not to follow the same path the source does,[26] but to alter it in a new and original way. Not only did the *Eneas* poet change Vergil's language and verse; he or she also revised the Latin epic's content and context (ethos) in conformity with contemporary standards and issues.[27] In doing so, the French author did not strive to emulate the style of the more elaborate metrical arts of Latin poetics, but rather that of Latin rhythmic verse, using the octosyllabic rhyming couplet appropriate to the vernacular.[28]

Matthew of Vendôme studied composition under Bernadus Silvestris,[29] to whom a commentary on the *Aeneid* has been ascribed.[30] This commentary gives two reasons for studying Vergil's epic and, therefore, for the commentary itself. They are analogous to those named by the authors of *Partonopeu* and *Ipomedon*. First, the Latin poem provides examples of moral conduct worthy of emulation. Second, its composition, especially its use of rhetorical embellishment and its account of the diverse fortunes and works of men, shows how, by imitation, the student can acquire great skill in writing—"maximam scribendi peritiam" (*Commentary*, 2:17). The *Aeneid* is, like the *Architrenius*, a virtual art of poetry. The *Eneas* for its part illustrates the vernacular author as reader, commentator, and original adaptor.

The Prologue to Gervase of Melkley's early thirteenth-century *Ars versificaria* cites Vergil (4:1)[31] together with Bernardus Silvestris and Jean de Hauville as excellent guides for apprentice poets (3:20–26). Other prominent writers, ancient and modern, are also named as models of the art of verse composition. These include "Dares" (*Ars versificaria*, 3:26). The reference recalls Benoît's and Joseph of Exeter's use of the *De excidio Troiae* as first or principal source for their respective adaptations (Kelly 1999, Chapter 4). Indeed, all the so-called *romans antiques* derive from works Gervase recommends as models of the art of composition and worthy, therefore, of study and imitation: Vergil and "Dares," Statius and Ovid (*Ars versificaria*, 3:26–4:2). In French between about 1160 and 1175 appear *Eneas* and *Troie*, as well as *Thèbes* and *Philomena* (ascribed to Chrétien de Troyes[32]) and the anonymous *Narcisse* and *Pyrame et Tisbé*.

Another passage at the beginning of Gervase's *Ars versificaria* links the masterpieces to treatises such as his own in a pedagogical program of progressively

more accomplished composition, as it were, from "paste" to "gems" in Emily Dickinson's words. After humbly acknowledging the elementary, limited scope of his own manual, Gervase asserts that three works excel in setting out the art of poetry: Matthew of Vendôme wrote a complete treatise, Geoffrey of Vinsauf an even more complete one, but Bernardus Silvestris's is the most complete of all, he who was a veritable nightingale in verse and a parrot in prose (*Ars versificaria*, 1:9–11).[33] Gervase is obviously referring to Matthew's *Ars versificatoria* and Geoffrey's *Poetria nova*. But modern scholars failed to identify what Gervase calls Bernardus's magisterial treatment of verse and prose composition, either on the shelves of modern manuscript collections or in catalogues of medieval libraries.

I have therefore suggested that Gervase is in fact referring to Bernardus Silvestris's *Cosmographia*.[34] Much as the *Aeneid* commentary ascribed to Bernardus describes Vergil's epic as a source of instruction in the art of writing, the *Cosmographia*, a prosimetrum, contains implicitly and, therefore, illustrates the art of poetry and prose at its fullest and most complete.[35] As we have seen, Gervase also asserts that John of Hauville's *Architrenius* contains all the diligent pupil needs to learn the art of poetry, provided he or she study it well and strive to emulate its qualities (*Ars versificaria*, 3:24–25).[36]

I should like to explore here this new, expanded feature of the medieval art of poetry and prose, that is the masterpiece, study and imitation of which might teach a consummate art of poetry and prose. In doing so, I shall delineate more clearly the "contextual environment" of the treatises and the masterpieces in order to get a better grasp of theory and practice of the art in Latin and the vernacular in the Middle Ages. I do so on the premise of the close relation between Latin and vernacular literary production referred to above for authors who received their training in good twelfth- and thirteenth-century schools and attempted to write within the constraints imposed or availed themselves of the possibilities opened up to them by the instruction they received.

Léopold Genicot is my source for the expression "contextual environment."[37] The term refers to the context in which a manuscript places a given work by locating it together with other works. The principle has received a good deal of attention in recent codicological studies of literary works.[38] Broadly speaking, "contextual environment" connotes not only the works in a given manuscript, but also sources or analogues that invite intertextual interpretation. An antecedent work, or source, may be read as an art of poetry and/or prose that the new author imitates, but does not copy, in a new version. Sources may therefore be models that can be rewritten and even corrected (Zink 1981, 4–5, 8, 11). What approaches to this sort of medieval intertextuality are apparent in the treatises and works I have been discussing here? What kinds of artifacts are we talking about? Let us start with the

second question by identifying some kinds of works that appear together in the manuscripts.

The Masterpiece

We begin with the masterpiece, that is, the canonical illustration of the art of poetry and prose. Gervase of Melkley's inclusion of a masterpiece of medieval poetics like Bernardus Silvestris's *Cosmographia* among the arts of poetry and prose has significant implications for our appreciation of both treatises such as Matthew's and Geoffrey's and the masterpieces they encourage writers to imitate. Imitation dominates the instruction in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century treatises on all levels of composition. Such imitation is not only rewriting of sources. It is an art that is most obvious in the masterpieces' use of their own sources. This entails "a comparison between *imitatio* as it appears in practice as well as in theory, since applications of *imitatio* in poetry have almost always been subtler than the doctrines enunciated by grammarians, rhetoricians, . . . and even by literary critics and theorists."[39] Imitation may be of parts or a whole. It can include rewriting topoi, as well as replacing one topos by another; it may also use the art illustrated in a work that is not, strictly speaking, a source, as when Ovidian commonplaces appear in Arthurian literature. Such imitation is therefore selective, deploying multiple sources in diverse and even original ways (cf. Ziolkowski 2001, 304–305).

Masterpieces are identified in medieval catalogues of recommended readings and in the actual manuals and treatises on the art of writing. Catalogues appear in the long version of the *Documentum*, Gervase's *Ars versificaria*, Eberhard's *Laborintus*, and elsewhere (see my note 36 above). What such catalogues reveal about specific works is significant. For example, both the *Documentum* and Gervase single out the prosimetrum. Gervase recommends Bernardus Silvestris's *Cosmographia*, but the *Documentum*, while acknowledging that work's qualities with the nightingale/parrot metaphor, extols Alain de Lille's *De planctu Naturae*, also a prosimetrum.[40] Both its author and Gervase admire Jean de Hauville's *Architrenius* as exemplary of state-of-the-art literature. They are models that illustrate and contribute to a traditional art of composition. But in what context were these works read? How were they read?

The parallel with foreign-language acquisition is apposite in answering questions such as these. One can, of course, as with any foreign language, pick it up on one's own. Gervase of Melkley seems to admit this private route in acquiring the art of poetry, but he claims that it is more practical and effective to proceed in a formal manner (*Ars versificaria*, 4–5). This includes the stages we have identified above, from elementary to advanced study and exercise. It will also, as in mastering a foreign language, entail detailed, highly focused and specialized, repetitive, and daily concentration over time on specific features of the poetic art. For example, when Gervase claims that he learned the art from Jean de Hauville, he seems

to refer to such instruction by adding that studious study of Jean's *Architrenius* can provide the same instruction: "Cuius quidem libelli sola sufficit inspectio studiosa rudem animum informare" (*Ars versificaria*, 3:24–25) [Concentrated study of whose little book is sufficient to form the unformed mind]. Such works are models that serve to illustrate and form traditional composition (Haye 1997, 1–4).

It follows that those studying the *Architrenius* in the way Gervase proposes and, moreover, under the supervision of a competent teacher would focus on diverse features of this poem that illustrate the art of poetry, and do so in a certain order. For example, the pupil might seek to identify features taught (orally or by reading) in treatises such as the *Ars versificaria* by imitating examples of those features in passages, glossed or unglossed, in the poem. Such passages would function much as analogous ones do in the treatises themselves. Both Geoffrey of Vinsauf and Eberhard the German illustrate ornamentation (*elocutio*) by composing illustrative poems and inserting them into their treatises; the instructor or the pupil would then identify examples of the devices in these insertions.[41] Topoi and topical invention can also be taught in this way. For example, Matthew of Vendôme describes the *locus a loco*, or the common place as place, first by a definition, then by reference to Cicero's description of Sicily in the Verrine orations, and finally by a description he himself wrote to illustrate a *locus amoenus* analogous to that which Cicero describes (*Ars versificatoria*, 1:109–111). Jean-Yves Tilliette has shown how Geoffrey of Vinsauf's examples function in much the same way (2000, Part Two).

Instruction based on works like the *Architrenius* is hardly for beginners. Such a work would therefore, like Bernardus Silvestris's *Cosmographia*, appear at the most advanced stage of composition.[42] This stage is represented, for both Latin and vernacular writers, by what Tony Hunt has termed the "bridge work," or accomplished composition intermediate between the student exercise and the masterpiece (Hunt 1978).[43]

But beginners require even less demanding exercises. Again the analogy with language acquisition is helpful.[44] At this stage, the material studied will be briefer, more elementary, and excerpted. This fits the three areas of grammatical instruction: learning rules as set out in traditional treatises in grammar and rhetoric and in the arts of poetry and prose, including commentaries on them and glosses as well as oral instruction analogous to that in these treatises; study of model authors such as those treated in *accessus* and in the catalogues of Gervase and Eberhard the German; and exercises on specific features of the art in verse and prose compositions and declamations, along the lines described for Bernard of Chartres in John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon*.

Recueils or Anthologies and Contextual Environment

Recent work on medieval literature both vernacular and Latin has brought to the fore the role of the *recueil* or anthology in providing context for the masterpieces and the arts of composition (see my note 38 above). Such collections illustrate what

Léopold Genicot terms "contextual environment." The collection of works in manuscripts, including illustration, rubrication, and selection, sometimes focuses on the art of writing. The best-known example of this kind of manuscript for the twelfth- and thirteenth-century classroom is the Glasgow Hunterian manuscript, edited partially by Edmond Faral and more recently by Bruce Harbert.[45] This manuscript groups together treatises, major works, and what appear to be student poems or exemplary pieces written by instructors, notably the "bridge works" in Tony Hunt's sense of transition pieces between student poems and masterpieces.

Other manuscript collections are known, or could and no doubt will be identified.[46] These anthologies bring the masterpieces together with treatises and student exercises, as in the Glasgow manuscript.[47] In such manuscripts, the student could find material for study and imitation. It is clear that the emphasis on instruction, reading, and practice was carried over into manuscript collections made for students. But this leaves unanswered the second question: How were such manuscripts read and used?

Glosses and Commentaries

Both Gervase and Matthew refer to instruction by, respectively, Jean de Hauville and Bernardus Silvestris (see my notes 14 and 29). Gervase claims that careful study of the *Architrenius* can teach the art of composition in verse and prose. Combining instructor and masterpiece, we have the instructor orally or in writing commenting on features of the masterpiece or other writings that the pupil will imitate in set compositions (*praeexercitamina*). An *accessus* or introduction might define the major features of each work, according to schemes that have been identified, ranging from earlier to later models.[48] However, most *accessus* in published today emphasize the ethical rather than the poetical or rhetorical intent of the masterpieces assigned for study. Conrad of Hirsau even leaves out Cicero's rhetorical treatises as being of no particular use.[49] Moreover, although *accessus* offer a theoretical framework and terminology on composition, the commentaries and glosses that follow them do not always use them.[50] These commentaries are meant to help the reader, not the writer.[51] Of course, oral instruction could supplant the artistic illustration of the *accessus* in ways evident in the arts of poetry and prose themselves (Ward, 237–242). Classroom compositions (*praeexercitamina*) are in themselves commentaries and glosses on models. More significant here are the commentaries and glosses written on rhetorical and poetic treatises, especially those on the rhetorics attributed to Cicero, Horace's *Art of Poetry*, and Geoffrey's *Poetria nova* (Woods, xix–xxi).

The *accessus* completed, the student plunged into the minutiae of glossing and commentary, looking to fill out what the *accessus* had prepared him or her to look for.[52] An *accessus* to Horace's poems refers to early commentaries (*Accessus ad auctores*, 50:11–12). But the *accessus* and commentary/gloss tradition itself inspired new commentaries on Horace's *Art of Poetry*, and these

were eventually set out formally in Matthew's and Geoffrey's treatises (see my note 7 above). Finally, the latter also inspired commentaries that, alongside those on Horace, continued in use and to be written into the Renaissance.[53] The manuscripts suggest that, where *written* commentary exists,[54] the works were often read only excerpted or through excerpts.[55]

Exemplary Illustrations and Imitation

The commentary and gloss focus on what Franz Quadlbauer has termed the small unit of discourse.[56] This means, as Gervase puts it in describing how to read the *Architrenius*, concentration on elegant expression, studious examination of which is sufficient to form the untrained mind. Such emphasis will form what Eugène Vinaver called "habit of conception"[57] that could easily become a habit of invention. The same is true, Gervase adds, for the other authoritative works he recommends. But explanation of errors and faults, or, more positively, of topoi and embellishment, is insufficient without practice in rewriting. The small unit of discourse is, therefore, not only identified, explained, and learned by heart, but also rewritten in model exercises such as those found in the anthologies and those that Bernard of Chartres refers to as "praeexercitamina" and that include oral declamation.[58] Rewriting is itself a kind of commentary, but not the commentary of the *fidus interpres* (Ziolkowski 2001, 304).

The "habit of conception" that emerged from instruction in such composition made the student concentrate on the set piece, acquiring the habit by imitations that apply principles of the art he or she learned. The mind so formed was capable, after years of study and practice, of "habitually" inventing works that illustrate in Latin the art of the *Cosmographia* and the *Architrenius* and the *Roman de Troie* and *Cligés* in French. We have returned full circle to the masterpiece.

The pedagogy is evident in John of Salisbury's description of Bernard of Chartres's teaching.[59] Attention to details, daily, step-by-step progress—today one device or fault, tomorrow another—are typical, as in modern language instruction. Memory work is very important.[60] Students not only learned the art, studied the examples, and imitated them in set pieces, but also memorized the examples and declaimed them. The learning and practice took years. The close analogy to learning a foreign language today from primary school on is cogent. One learns what *amare*, *aimer*, or *lieben* means and how to conjugate and locate it in a sentence; further study and practice will tell what it might really mean. Finally, some even write about love based on real or reading experience.

Excerpts

Memorization has its counterpart on the written page in the anthologies of excerpts, in florilegia, and other collections.[61] The treatises on poetry and prose may be described as florilegia of excerpts by the author of the treatise or by

other authors. Of the nineteen known and extant manuscripts of Matthew's *Ars versificatoria*, fully fifteen are incomplete, that is, excerpted texts (Kelly 1991, 100). The excerpt makes the treatises into a kind of anthology with commentary. This fits the model of commentaries on Horace's *Art of Poetry* that influenced the more formal treatises and were used by some of their authors. Recent work on these commentaries, including editions, illustrates the gradual systematization of this difficult work in order to make it accessible to medieval readers and students.[62] In so doing, a pedagogical approach to composition relied on Horace's authority to lay the groundwork for the composition in the later twelfth and the thirteenth century of the better-known arts of poetry and prose, from Matthew of Vendôme through Geoffrey of Vinsauf to John of Garland, Eberhard the German, and beyond.

The Art of Rewriting and Modern Scholarship

Where does this bring us today in reading and interpreting these works and their art of composition? What needs to be done? What can be done? A good start is to work with texts that permit us to bring together all aspects of the contextual environment and to do so in ways that include and even combine the Latin and vernaculars. This specimen project would provide a model for future work. It would also permit us to coordinate the various features of the medieval art of poetry and prose. One might, for example, follow Dares Phrygius through the ages in the context of the five foregoing contextual coordinates: masterpiece, collections, glosses and commentaries, imitations, and excerpts.[63] Programmatically, it would be appropriate to append Dictys Cretensis, as the two were associated throughout the medieval period, but excluding the Greek versions that had no direct influence on medieval Latin and vernacular writing.

Dares immediately confronts us with two problems. First, how could this curious piece of prose be considered a masterpiece worthy of imitation? Second, in a question that may not seem obvious at first, with whom or what are we to identify Dares Phrygius?

Dares's *De excidio Trojae* was widely known[64] as eyewitness history, the best kind of history in the common medieval view.[65] Most medieval authors who use or adapt this work found Dares superior to Homer because he was an eyewitness: Dares related what he saw each day of the war.[66] It is obvious, of course, that, whatever its perceived documentary value as an eyewitness report, the *De excidio* is hardly a masterpiece even by medieval standards of invention and embellishment. However, these defects made it excellent *material* for rewriting. The arts of poetry and prose look upon even the masterpieces as subject to modern correction and improvement (see *Ars versificatoria*, 4:3–31). Extensive "correction" of and "improvement" on Dares is apparent in some medieval masterpieces as well as other works that adapt the *De excidio* in verse and prose,

Latin and vernaculars. In them we find an answer to the second question as to whom or what the word "Dares" refers to.

Three works that use Dares, and admit that they use him as source, were commonly identified in the Middle Ages by the title *Dares*. One of them, the anonymous twelfth-century *Historia Troyana*, is anonymous because its author felt that it should be attributed to Dares because Dares was its first author and the medieval rewriter changed little in his version.[67] A passage in Gervase of Melkley also illustrates this sense of "Dares." On the *Architrenus*, it asserts that "sola sufficit inspectio studiosa rudem animum informare" (*Ars versificaria*, 3:24–25) [intense study alone is sufficient to inform the untutored mind] on the art of poetry, but that other works can lead to the same results: "Idem de Claudiano, de Frigio Darete, de Bernardo Silvestri" (*Ars versificaria*, 3:26) [the same holds for Claudian, Dares Phrygius, and Bernardus Silvestris]. The editor of Joseph of Exeter's *Ylias*, itself based on Dares, points out that Gervase is referring here to "Moderns," whom he distinguishes from "Ancients" such as Lucan, Statius, Vergil, and Ovid, who were also models.[68] His Moderns—Bernardus Silvestris, Dares Phrygius, and Claudian—are, in fact, Bernardus, Joseph of Exeter or "Dares" in his *Ylias*, and Alain de Lille or "Claudian" in his *Anticlaudianus*. May we not say that Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie* was a "Dares" for Guido de Columnis, Konrad of Würzburg, Boccaccio, Chaucer, and others (Eisenhut 1983, 5–7)?

The identification of works with first authors seems to have been common in the Middle Ages. The anonymous author of the fourteenth-century *Ovide moralisé* names his work's "first authors" who are the "most ancient," referring of course to the *Metamorphoses* as his source; but the statement leaves room for both ancient and modern "Ovids."[69] Among these were commentators and glossators, who, as Francine Mora and Raymond Cormier have shown in the case of the *Roman d'Eneas*, figure in the transmission and adaptation of the *Aeneid* as source.[70] The departures from Vergil in the *Eneas* may be explicable in this way. Similarly, departures from the "first author" Dares in the Benoît's *Roman de Troie* may derive from glosses, as in the *Eneas*, or mythographies, as in the *Ovide moralisé*. A. K. Bate has shown how extensively Joseph of Exeter not only adapted Dares but also availed himself of many other sources in his original retelling of the *De excidio*.[71]

However, the departures may also be original with the new author. We have seen that Matthew of Vendôme insisted that his pupils not merely paraphrase in their adaptations, but actually invent a new version of their source, whether in form, content, or both.[72] Such adaptations make possible the realignment of Lavinia's feelings in the *Aeneid* that we find in the *Eneas*, where Lavine falls in love with the Trojan knight, or the invention of the love of Troilus and Briseida in the *Roman de Troie*.[73] In an important summary article published more than fifty years ago, Berthe Marie Marti reported that, according to medieval commentaries on Lucan's *Pharsalia*, the author was expected to change

or adapt the source he or she rewrote.[74] If medieval authors took sources for granted, it would appear that good authors also rejected copying or faithful translation. The usual technique for such originality was topical invention.[75]

We can mention only briefly the manuscript *recueils* and excerpting. For the *Troie*, a number of collections have been identified. Some manuscripts combine it with other *romans d'antiquité*. Others copy these romances together with vernacular chronicles written in conjunction with them by Wace and Benoît de Sainte-Maure as well as *Eneas* in order to chronicle the Trojan migrations to Western Europe and the twelfth- and thirteenth-century present. Still others insert the *Troie* into French-language adaptations of biblical history (BNF fr. 903)[76] or in romance anthologies such as that by Perret de Nesle (BNF fr. 375).[77] The Trojan War in the context of Old Testament history is surely as fundamental an adaptation in *san* as that of Arthurian history into biblical typologies in the *Lancelot-Graal* prose cycle.[78] All of these original developments illustrate the art of poetry and prose that sprang from the medieval schools.

The Trojan matter in various works was not infrequently excerpted for various purposes.[79] However, this is true principally for Latin versions, not French ones,[80] doubtless because French was not the language of the schools, and its authors were, therefore, not represented among the masterpieces worthy of imitation. Of course, on occasion, vernacular works might influence adaptations, but they were not cited.[81]

This rapid survey has identified several features of the contextual environment referred to above, for both Latin and vernacular works. First and foremost is the paradigm for invention that emerges from the arts of poetry and prose, the uses made of it in classroom exercises, and the masterpieces studied and imitated by apprentices and practitioners in Latin and the vernaculars. All show that, first, the use of a source as model was taken for granted, and, second, that modification of the source or sources was also expected, whether such modification affected form, content, or context. Such modification might adapt, gloss, rearrange, or juxtapose new material, in part or in whole, including through collection in manuscript codices. Third, the source was a multiple phenomenon, such that the "first author" did not preclude "second" or more authors, the authors of glosses and commentaries, or scribes producing variant versions, including a "new" version.[82] Fourth and last, the modification in form, content, or context might be construed in figural, tropical, or topical terms—that is, in probable order of execution, topical elucidation, tropical adaptation of mode (use of tropes), and figural change in expression or form of expression. The master crafter invented using common features of amplification, abbreviation, and ornamentation that became habitual by schooling in composition.

In conclusion, I should like to insist on the fact that we are speaking here about habits of invention acquired by extensive, intensive training and practice by medieval writers who studied in good contemporary schools. They

were aware of the possibilities for invention at every level of composition because they learned to recognize and imitate them in specialized classroom study and exercise. They learned Latin grammar and rhetoric (and logic[83]); they read, heard, and memorized the masterpieces or excerpts from them; they studied commentaries on them; and they applied what they learned by imitating the examples and masterpieces in classroom exercises, or *praeexercitamina* such as those Jean of Salisbury refers to in the *Metalogicon*, and those published by Faral and Harbert from the Glasgow Hunterian manuscript. We cannot think of literary invention as medieval authors thought of it without knowing and understanding their curriculum.

The Middle Ages had no category for literary creation or writing *ex nihilo*.[84] However, they did have a very elaborate conception of original invention. They acquired this art of invention as a habit of invention learned in the schools. It behooves us to understand the art and its acquisition in order to interpret their accomplishments fairly and appreciate the quality of their alterity.

Notes

1. Updated, revised, and enlarged version of my "The Scope of Medieval Instruction in the Art of Poetry and Prose: Recent Developments in Documentation and Interpretation," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching* 6.2 (fall 1998), 49–68. Reprinted with permission.
2. Emily Dickinson, *The Poems*, ed. Thomas H. Johnson, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1951, 1955, 1979), vol. 1, 245. Context indicates that Dickinson uses "paste" in the sense of "a brilliant glass of high lead content used for the manufacture of artificial gems; *also*: an imitation gem made of this material" as defined in *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1986).
3. Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria nova*, in *Les Arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle: recherches et documents sur la technique littéraire du moyen âge*, ed. Edmond Faral, Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes, 238 (Paris: Champion, 1924); *Poetria nova* hereafter cited in the text as *Poetria nova*; Faral's edition hereafter cited in the text as Faral. On this passage, see also *An Early Commentary on the "Poetria nova" of Geoffrey of Vinsauf*, ed. and trans. Marjorie Curry Woods, Garland Medieval Texts, 12 (New York, London: Garland, 1985), 40; hereafter cited in the text as Woods.
4. Margaret F. Nims, trans., *Poetria Nova of Geoffrey of Vinsauf* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1967), 23–24.
5. Martin Camargo, "Defining Medieval Rhetoric," in *Rhetoric and Renewal in the Latin West 1100–1540: Essays in Honour of John O. Ward*, ed. Constant J. Mews, Cary J. Nederman, and Rodney M. Thomson, Disputatio, 2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 21–34.

6. For a good example of how Ovid influenced the rewriting of Vergil's *Aeneid* in the anonymous *Roman d'Eneas* and Heinrich von Veldeke's *Eneide*, see Peter Kern, "Beobachtungen zum Adaptationsprozeß von Vergils 'Aeneis' im Mittelalter," *Wolfram-Studien* 14 (1996), 109–133.
7. Karsten Friis-Jensen, "Horace and the Early Writers of Arts of Poetry," in *Sprachtheorien in Spätantike und Mittelalter*, ed. Sten Ebbesen, Geschichte der Sprachtheorie, 3 (Tübingen: Narr, 1995), 364–367; hereafter cited in the text as Friis-Jensen 1995A.
8. Emphasis is on French works that are informed by medieval Latin art and models of the art as the Middle Ages understood it. Other languages that adapted the Latin tradition, or that knew it through French intermediaries, use an analogous art.
9. *Partonopeu de Blois*, ed. Joseph Gildea and Leon Smith, 2 vols. (Villanova, PA: Villanova University Press, 1967–1970), v. 77–80; cf. v. 81–134.
10. Hue de Rotelande, *Ipomedon*, ed. A. J. Holden, Bibliothèque française et romane, B17 (Paris: Klincksieck, 1979), v. 21–42. See Francine Mora, "Les prologues et épilogues de Hue de Rotelande," in *Seuils de l'œuvre dans le texte médiéval*, ed. Emmanuèle Baumgartner and Laurence Harf-Lancner (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2002), 97–114.
11. On such adaptation, see Michel Zink, "Une mutation de la conscience littéraire: le langage romanesque à travers les exemples français du XIIe siècle," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 24 (1981), 9–11—hereafter cited in the text as Zink 1981; Karl D. Uitti, "Vernacularization and Old French Mythopoesis with Emphasis on Chrétien's *Erec et Enide*," in *The Sower and His Seed: Essays on Chrétien de Troyes*, ed. Rupert T. Pickens, French Forum, 44 (Lexington, KY: French Forum, 1983), 81–115, and "A Note on Historiographical Vernacularization in Thirteenth-Century France and Spain," in *Homenaje a Alvaro Galmés de Fuentes* (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo; Madrid: Gredos, 1985), 573–592. On the difficulty of adapting medieval Latin poetics to new languages, see Zink, "Héritage rhétorique et nouveauté littéraire dans le 'roman antique' en France au moyen âge: remarques sur l'expression de l'amour dans le roman d'*Eneas*," *Romania* 105 (1984), 248–269; hereafter cited in the text as Zink 1984.
12. On this problem, see especially Rolf Köhn, "Schulbildung und Trivium im lateinischen Hochmittelalter und ihr möglicher praktischer Nutzen," in *Schulen und Studium im sozialen Wandel des hohen und späten Mittelalters*, ed. Johannes Fried, Vorträge und Forschungen: Konstanzer Arbeitskreis für mittelalterliche Geschichte, 30 (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1986), 203–284; and my *The Conspiracy of Allusion: Description, Rewriting, and Authorship from Macrobius to Medieval Romance*, Studies in the History of Christian Thought, 97 (Leiden, Boston, Cologne: Brill, 1999), 93–97; hereafter cited in the text as Kelly 1999.
13. Winthrop Wetherbee, *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century: The Literary Influence of the School of Chartres* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 255; and Wetherbee, ed. and trans., *Johannes de Hauvilla: "Architrenius,"* Cambridge Medieval Classics, 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), xxiii–xxvii.

14. *Ars versificaria* = Gervase of Melkley, *Ars poetica*, ed. Hans-Jürgen Gräbener, Forschungen zur romanischen Philologie, 17 (Münster / W.: Aschendorff, 1965), 3:20–25; hereafter cited in the text as *Ars versificaria* with page and line numbers identifying the references. On the title used here, see Franz J. Worstbrock, *Anzeiger für deutsches Altertum*, 78 (1967), 99 note 1.
15. See Bernardus Silvestris, *Cosmographia*, ed. Peter Dronke, Textus minores, 53 (Leiden: Brill, 1978), "Megacosmos," pt. III, v. 55–56, and 2; hereafter cited in the text as *Cosmographia*. From there the pope went to Bingen to investigate Hildegard von Bingen's writings. On the differences between Hildegard's mystical works and allegories written in the school tradition, see Christel Meier, "Zwei Modelle von Allegorie im 12. Jahrhundert: das allegorische Verfahren Hildegards von Bingen und Alans von Lille," in *Formen und Funktionen der Allegorie: Symposion Wolfenbüttel 1978*, ed. Walter Haug, Germanistische Symposien: Berichtsbände, 3 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1979), 70–89.
16. *Le Roman de Troie*, ed. Léopold Constans, SATF, 6 vols. (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1904–1912), v. 87–144, 648–649, 24393–24424; hereafter cited in the text as Constans. On this issue of source and model, see my "Mirages et miroirs de sources dans le *Roman de Troie*," in *Le Roman antique au moyen âge: Actes du Colloque du Centre d'Etudes Médiévales de l'Université de Picardie, Amiens 14–15 janvier 1989*, ed. Danielle Buschinger (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1992), 101–110; my *The Art of Medieval French Romance* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 71–78 (hereafter cited in the text as Kelly 1992); Kelly 1999, Chapter 4; and Marc-René Jung, *Die Vermittlung historischen Wissens zum Trojanerkrieg im Mittelalter*, Wolfgang Stammler Gastprofessor für germanische Philologie: Vorträge, 11 (Freiburg: Universitäts Verlag Freiburg Schweiz, 2001), 25–26; hereafter cited in the text as Jung 2001.
17. *Le Roman de Perceval ou Le Conte du Graal*, ed. Keith Busby (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1993), v. 62–67.
18. "Recherches sur la mentalité des romanciers français du moyen âge," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 13 (1970), 345. On this issue see Kelly 1992, 71–74. For the most elegant expression of the opposing view, see Roger Dragonetti, *Le mirage des sources: l'art du faux dans le roman médiéval* (Paris: Seuil, 1987). The problem of falsification is vast and complex, and reaches well beyond the realm of literary invention, as the contributions to a symposium devoted to the subject attest: *Fälschungen im Mittelalter: Internationaler Kongreß der Monumenta Germaniae Historica, München 16.–19. September 1986*, especially *Teil I: Kongreßdaten und Festvorträge—Literatur und Fälschung* (Hannover: Hahn, 1988); see notably the papers by Umberto Eco, "Tipologia della falsificazione" (69–82), and Peter von Moos, "*Fictio auctoris*: eine theoriegeschichtliche Miniatur am Rande der Institutio Traiani" (739–780).
19. Wilhelm Greif, *Die mittelalterlichen Bearbeitungen der Trojanersage: ein neuer Beitrag zur Dares- und Dictysfrage*, Ausgaben und Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der romanischen Philologie, 61 (Marburg: Elwert, 1886), especially 15 note.
20. A later author or scribe revised the earlier, more original French antecedent in conformity with Vergil. This version has been edited by Aimé Petit, *Le Roman d'Eneas*, Lettres Gothiques (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1997); see 22–31. On the

Eneas and its antecedents, see Francine Mora-Lebrun, *L'"Enéide" médiévale et la chanson de geste*, Nouvelle Bibliothèque du moyen âge, 23 (Paris: Champion, 1994), and her *L'"Enéide" médiévale et la naissance du roman*, Perspectives littéraires (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1994).

21. On what follows, see Kelly 1999, 175–194.
22. *Virgil*, 2 vols., rev., ed., and trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1986), vol. 2.
23. On this technique, known as *immutatio*, see Alexandru N. Cizek, *Imitatio et tractatio: die literarisch-rhetorischen Grundlagen der Nachahmung in Antike und Mittelalter*, Rhetorik-Forschungen, 7 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1994), 122–124, 156–160; hereafter cited in the text as Cizek.
24. *Ars versificatoria*, 4.1, in vol. 3 of Matthew's *Opera*, ed. Franco Munari, Storia e Letteratura, 171 (Rome: Storia e Letteratura, 1988), 193; hereafter cited in the text as *Opera* with book and section numbers identifying the references.
25. *The Art of Versification*, trans. Aubrey E. Galyon (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1980), 100 (my changes in italics); hereafter cited in the text as Galyon.
26. The *fidus interpres* whom Horace criticizes in his *Art of Poetry* was discussed in twelfth- and thirteenth-century commentary and arts of poetry; see Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Traditions and Vernacular Texts*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 11 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 168–178; and my "The *Fidus interpres*: Aid or Impediment to Medieval Translation and *Translatio*?" in *Translation Theory and Practice in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeanette Beer, Studies in Medieval Culture, 38 (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University, 1997), 47–58.
27. Besides Mora's books (see my note 20, above), see Aimé Petit, *Naissances du roman: les techniques littéraires dans les romans antiques du XIIe siècle*, 2 vols. (Lille: Atelier National des Thèses, Université de Lille III; Paris, Geneva: Champion-Slatkine, 1985); Udo Schöning, *Thebenroman–Eneasroman–Trojaroman: Studien zur Rezeption der Antike in der französischen Literatur des 12. Jahrhunderts*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie, 235 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1991); *Relire le "Roman d'Eneas,"* ed. Jean Dufournet, Unichamp, 8 (Paris: Champion, 1985), especially the contributions on adaptation by Raymond J. Cormier, Marie-Luce Chênerie, Francine Mora, Aimé Petit, and Michel Rousse.
28. Zink 1984. The contrast is obvious if one compares the two adaptations of Dares, the one in Latin by Joseph of Exeter, the other in French by Benoît de Sainte-Maure; see Kelly 1999, Chapter 4. Cf. Tony Hunt, "Chrestien and the *comediae*," *Mediaeval Studies* 40 (1978), 120–156; hereafter cited in the text as Hunt 1978.
29. *Cosmographia*, 1, 9–10; *Opera*, vol. 2, Storia e Letteratura, 152 (Rome: Storia e Letteratura, 1982), 23. He thus anticipates Gervase of Melkley's study under Jean de Hauville.
30. On the debated authorship, *Cosmographia*, 3; and Julian Ward Jones and Elizabeth Frances Jones, ed., *The Commentary on the First Six Books of the "Aeneid" of Vergil Commonly Attributed to Bernardus Silvestris* (Lincoln,

London: University of Nebraska Press, 1977), ix–xi; hereafter cited in the text as *Commentary*.

31. See also Eberhard the German's *Laborintus* in Faral, 359, v. 631–632.
32. On other Ovidian adaptations Chrétien claims to have written, see his *Cligés*, ed. Stewart Gregory and Claude Luttrell, Arthurian Studies, 28 (Cambridge: Brewer, 1993), v. 2–4, 6–7.
33. The parrot's eloquence is a commonplace in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: "Quia psitacus optime avium loquitur continua oratione et prosa consistit in continua oratione potest dici quod iste est psitacus in prosa, id est optime loquens prosaice" (*Ars versificaria*, 133:21–134:2) [Because, of all birds, the parrot speaks most eloquently in continuous speech, and prose consists of continuous speech, he can be called a parrot in prose in the sense that he is the most eloquent speaker in prose]. Bernardus Silvestris underscores the aptness of the comparison in his *Cosmographia*, "Megacosmus" part III, v. 474: "Garrulus et nostro sitacus ore loquens" [The chatty parrot, who speaks with our voice] (*The 'Cosmographia' of Bernardus Silvestris*, trans. Winthrop Wetherbee, Records of Civilization: Sources and Studies, 89 [New York, London: Columbia University Press, 1973], 86). See as well Matthew's *Ars versificatoria*, 1.111, v. 123–124, and the references in the note to these lines, 123 (v. 19–20; 59, in Galyon's translation). The long version of the *Documentum* formerly ascribed to Geoffrey of Vinsauf also uses the commonplace; see John of Garland, *The "Parisiana Poetria,"* ed. Traugott Lawler, Yale Studies in English, 182 (New Haven, CT, London: Yale University Press, 1974), 329; hereafter cited in the text as Lawler. On the long *Documentum*'s authorship, see Martin Camargo, "*Tria sunt*: The Long and Short of Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi*," *Speculum* 74 (1999), 935–955.
34. Douglas Kelly, *The Arts of Poetry and Prose*, Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental, 59 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991), 57–59, 158–166 (hereafter cited in the text as Kelly 1991); cf. Jean-Yves Tilliette, *Des mots à la Parole: une lecture de la "Poetria nova" de Geoffroy de Vinsauf*, Recherches et rencontres, 16 (Geneva: Droz, 2000), 56–59; hereafter cited in the text as Tilliette.
35. Matthew's and Geoffrey's treatises, usually referred to today as arts of poetry, are also arts of prose; see Kelly 1991, 39–40.
36. Eberhard the German gives a lengthier catalogue of model works in his *Laborintus*, v. 597–686 (Faral, 358–361). The other treatises often refer to canon authors. On such authors and lists, see Ernst Robert Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, 2nd ed. (Bern: Francke, 1954), 58–64; Günter Glauche, *Schullektüre im Mittelalter: Entstehung und Wandlungen des Lektürekanons bis 1200 nach den Quellen dargestellt*, Münchener Beiträge zur Mediävistik und Renaissance-Forschung, 5 (Munich: bei der Arbeo, 1970). See also Kelly 1991, 99–101; A. G. Rigg, "Anthologies and Florilegia," in *Medieval Latin: An Introduction and Bibliographical Guide*, ed. F. A. C. Mantello and A. G. Rigg (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 708–712 (with additional bibliography); Thomas Haye, *Das lateinische Lehrgedicht im Mittelalter: Analyse einer Gattung*, Mittellateinische Studien und

Texte, 22 (Leiden, New York, Cologne: Brill, 1997), Chapter 10; hereafter cited in the text as Haye 1997.

37. Léopold Genicot, "Princes territoriaux et sang carolingien: la *Genealogia comitum Bulonensium*," in his *Etudes sur les principautés lotharingiennes* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Bibliothèque de l'Université, 1975), 224. On this subject, see Kelly 1991, 122.
38. Sylvua Huot, *From Song to Book: The Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca, NY, London: Cornell University Press, 1987)—hereafter cited in the text as Huot 1987; Ian Short, "L'avènement du texte vernaculaire: la mise en recueil," in *Théories et pratiques de l'écriture au moyen âge: Actes du Colloque du Palais du Luxembourg-Sénat, 5 et 6 mars 1987*, ed. Emmanuèle Baumgartner and Christine Marchello-Nizia, Littérales, 4 (Paris: Paris-X Nanterre, Centre de Recherches du Département de Français; Fontenay-Saint Cloud: Centre Espace-Temps-Histoire, 1988), 11–24—hereafter cited in the text as *Théories et pratiques*; Edmé R. Smits, "Aspects of Medieval Literary History," in *Mediaeval Antiquity*, ed. Andreas Welkenhuysen, Herman Braet, and Werner Verbeke, Mediaevalia Lovaniensia: Series I / Studia, 24 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1995), 1–20 (especially 3–7)—hereafter cited in the text as *Mediaeval Antiquity*; the articles in *Codices miscellanearum: Brussels Van Hulthem Colloquium 1999/Colloque Van Hulthem, Bruxelles 1999*, ed. R. Jansen-Sieben and H. van Dyjk, Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique / Archief- en Bibliotheekwezen in België, Special No. 60 (Brussels: Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique, 1999); Keith Busby, *Codex and Context: Reading Old French Verse Narrative in Manuscript*, Faux Titre 221–222, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2002), Chapter 5.
39. Jan Ziolkowski, "The Highest Form of Compliment: *Imitatio* in Medieval Latin Culture," in *Poetry and Philosophy in the Middle Ages: A Festschrift for Peter Dronke*, ed. John Marenbon, Mittellateinische Studien und Texte, 29 (Leiden, Boston, Cologne: Brill, 2001), 295; hereafter cited in the text as Ziolkowski 2001.
40. This passage is found in Lawler, 329.
41. See *Poetria nova*, v. 1098–1217, and *Laborintus*, v. 443–520, 525–594. Of course, these treatises in verse are themselves examples, as Tilliette shows.
42. An unresolved problem is the criticism of certain works such as that in Alain's *Anticlaudianus* that may criticize Joseph's *Ylias*; see Alain's *Anticlaudianus*, ed. R. Bossuat, Textes philosophiques du moyen âge, 1 (Paris: Vrin, 1955), Book One, v. 159–170. If Alain is indeed attacking Joseph and Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis* in this passage, Gervase does not follow him since he recommends Alain as a model author.
43. For further discussion of this term, see Kelly 1999, 102–118.
44. Since students would begin by learning Latin in basic, "pre-literary" grammar, the analogy with language learning suggests that literary composition is based on a paradigm adopted from grammar exercises.
45. Edmond Faral, "Le manuscript 511 du 'Hunterian Museum' de Glasgow: notes sur le mouvement poétique et l'histoire des études littéraires en France et en Angleterre entre les années 1150 et 1225," *Studi medievali* n.s. 9 (1936),

18–121; Bruce Harbert, *A Thirteenth-Century Anthology of Rhetorical Poems: Glasgow MS Hunterian V.8.14* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1975). The edition of the arts of poetry by Faral in *Arts poétiques* bases its text on this manuscript. See also Kelly 1999, 100–102. More recently, Jean-Yves Tilliette has shown that these same arts are constructed around exemplary poems and excerpts of poems and constitute, therefore, glossed anthologies; see Tilliette, Part Two.

46. See A. G. Rigg's Introduction in *Mediaeval Studies* 39 (1977), 281–285. The following "rhetorical or poetic anthologies" are identified in Rigg, "Medieval Latin Poetic Anthologies," *Mediaeval Studies* 39 (1977), 281–330; 40 (1978), 387–407; 41 (1979), 468–505; 43 (1981), 472–497; 49 (1987), 352–390 (with David Townsend); 52 (1990), 221–254 (by Peter Binkley); 64 (2002), 61–109 (by Greti Dinkova-Bruun).
47. For vernacular examples, see Kelly 1991, 158–166.
48. A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (London: Scolar Press, 1984)—hereafter cited in the text as Minnis 1984; Judson Boyce Allen, *The Ethical Poetic of the Later Middle Ages: A Decorum of Convenient Distinction* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1982).
49. *Accessus ad auctores–Bernard d'Utrecht–Conrad d'Hirsau: Dialogus super auctores*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 102:941–944; hereafter cited in the text as *Accessus ad auctores* with page and line numbers identifying the references; but Conrad refers to them again in treating Horace (112:1256–1272). On rhetorical commentaries, see John O. Ward, *Ciceronian Rhetoric in Treatise, Scholion and Commentary*, Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental, 58 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995); hereafter cited in the text as Ward.
50. Ralph J. Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling: Studies in Medieval Commentaries on Ovid's "Ars amatoria," "Epistulae ex Ponto," and "Epistulae Heroidum,"* Münchener Beiträge zur Mediävistik und Renaissance-Forschung, 38 (Munich: bei der Arbeo, 1986), 8–9; hereafter cited in the text as Hexter.
51. Cf. Gustavus Przychocki, *Accessus Ovidiani*, Symbolae ad Veterum Auctorum Historiam atque ad Medii Aevi Studia Philologa, 1 (Cracow: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności, 1911), 11–12.
52. Some of the subjects *accessus* refer to include topical invention based on the *quis? quid? ubi?* model (*Accessus ad auctores*, 19:12–13) as material drawn from persons in the material (31:19) and that rely on the *loci* of *descriptio personae* (43–44; see also 45–46 on *loci communes* and, similarly, 101, lines 904–918). There is also some general discussion of imitation of Vergil, either directly or through intermediaries (47, 48, 108, 120–123), reminiscent of the *Aeneid* commentary's reference to Vergil's epic as a model. The *accessus* assume progress from rhetoric to poetry (for example, 31 and 44) that recalls Alain of Lille's own reference to more or less advanced readers in the Prose Prologue to the *Anticlaudianus*, 56.
53. Marjorie Curry Woods, "A Medieval Rhetoric Goes to School—and to the University: The Commentaries on the *Poetria nova*," *Rhetorica* 9 (1991), 55–65;

Karsten Friis-Jensen, "Commentaries on Horace's *Art of Poetry* in the Incunable Period," *Renaissance Studies* 9 (1995), 228–239; hereafter cited in the text as Friis-Jensen 1995B.

54. Oral commentary does not survive, but was likely, as C. Stephen Jaeger has convincingly shown in *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950–1200*, Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994). Gervase treats Jean de Hauville's teaching as if it were oral, recalling John of Salisbury's description of Bernard of Chartres's instruction on composition (see Kelly 1991, 50–52).
55. Birger Munk Olsen, "L'Etude des textes littéraires classiques dans les écoles pendant le haut moyen âge," in *Itinerari dei testi antichi*, ed. Oronzo Pecere, Saggi di storia antica, 3 (Rome: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, 1991), 112. Catalogues of excerpts in critical editions would be useful; see Kelly 1991, 100, 122.
56. *Die antike Theorie der genera dicendi im lateinischen Mittelalter*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften: philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, 241:2 (Graz, Vienna, Cologne: Böhlaus, 1962), §37a3; on the importance of this concept, see Kelly 1991, 85–88.
57. "From Epic to Romance," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 46 (1964), 493; on the importance of this factor, see Kelly 1991, 87–88.
58. *Metalogicon*, ed. J. B. Hall and K. S. B. Keats-Rohan, Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio mediaevalis, 98 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991), 53:77 (page and line number identify the reference); see Peter von Moos, *Geschichte als Topik: das rhetorische Exemplum von der Antike zur Neuzeit und die "historiae" im "Policraticus" Johanns von Salisbury*, Ordo, 2 (Hildesheim, Zürich, New York: Olms, 1988), 254–255—hereafter cited in the text as von Moos 1988. On orality or vocality in the Latin tradition, see Haye, *Oratio: mittelalterliche Redekunst in lateinischer Sprache*, Mittellateinische Studien und Texte, 27 (Leiden, Boston, Cologne: Brill, 1999).
59. R. R. Bolgar, *The Classical Heritage and Its Beneficiaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), 196–197; von Moos 1988, 254–258; and Kelly 1991, 50–52.
60. Harry Caplan, "Memoria: Treasure-House of Eloquence," in his *Of Eloquence: Studies in Ancient and Mediaeval Rhetoric* (Ithaca, NY, London: Cornell University Press, 1970), especially 219–243. The *loci* of memory are closely related to the *loci* of topical invention. It would be desirable to study the relation between *loci* in arts of memory and *loci* in topical invention since both aim at "inventing" material stored as it were in the mind. Cf. in this context Stefano Pittaluga, "Memoria letteraria e modi della ricezione di Seneca tragico nel Medioevo e nell'Umanesimo," in *Mediaeval Antiquity*, 45–49. John of Garland refers to the Wheel of Vergil as a schematic representation of topical invention under the art of memory; see Lawler, 36–43, and Lawler's note, 237–239, as well as Kelly 1992, 51.
61. Rosemary Burton, *Classical Poets in the "Florilegium Gallicum,"* European University Studies, Ser. I: German Language and Literature, 633 (Frankfurt/M., Bern: P. Lang, 1983); Janet Martin, "Uses of Tradition: Gellius, Petronius, and John of Salisbury," *Viator* 10 (1979), 57–76; R. H. Rouse, "Florilegia and

Latin Classical Authors in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Orléans," *Viator* 10 (1979), 131–160; Hexter. Birger Munk Olsen has cautioned against making too much of florilegia for literary studies and composition; see his "Les florilèges d'auteurs classiques," in *Les Genres littéraires dans les sources théologiques et philosophiques médiévales: définition, critique et exploitation*, Actes du Colloque International de Louvain-la-Neuve, 25–27 mai 1981, Publications de l'Institut d'Etudes Médiévales, ser. 2: Textes, études, congrès, 5 (Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut d'Etudes Médiévales, Université Catholique de Louvain, 1982), 160–164. But see now Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), Chapter 2—hereafter cited in the text as Moss 1996.

62. Friis-Jensen 1995A and B, and his "The *Ars Poetica* in Twelfth-Century France: The Horace of Matthew of Vendôme, Geoffrey of Vinsauf, and John of Garland," *Université de Copenhague: Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Age Grec et Latin*, 60 (1990), 319–388; Claudia Villa, "Per una tipologia del commento mediolatino: l' 'Ars Poetica' di Orazio," in *Il Commento ai testi*, Atti del Seminario d'Ascona, 2–9 ottobre 1989, ed. Ottavio Besomi and Carlo Caruso, Fonte verità: Proceedings of the Centro Stefano Franscini, Ascona (Basel, Boston, Berlin: Birkhäuser, 1992), 19–42.
63. The material is available; see Birger Munk Olsen, *L'Etude des auteurs classiques latins aux XIe et XIIe siècles*, Documents, études et répertoires publiés par l'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des textes, 3 vols. (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1982–1989); Jung, *La Légende de Troie en France au moyen âge: analyse des versions françaises et bibliographie raisonnée des manuscrits*, Romanica Helvetica, 114 (Basel, Tübingen: Francke, 1996)—hereafter cited in the text as Jung 1996; Jung, "Les Manuscrits de la légende de Troie," in *Le Roman antique*, 83–99; and Jung 2001.
64. Olsen 1982–1989, vol. 1, Chapters 14 and 15 on Dares and Dictys, as well as his "La Diffusion et l'étude des historiens antiques au XIIe siècle," in *Mediaeval Antiquity*, 21–43. Dares was often bound with the *Aeneas* in manuscripts; see Olsen, "Virgile et la Renaissance du XIIe siècle," in *Lectures médiévales de Virgile*, Actes du Colloque Organisé par l'Ecole Française de Rome (Rome, 25–28 octobre 1982), Collection de l'Ecole Française de Rome, 80 (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 1985), 39 note 28.
65. Marie Schulz, *Die Lehre von der historischen Methode bei den Geschichtschreibern des Mittelalters (VI.–XIII. Jahrhundert)*, Abhandlungen zur mittleren und neueren Geschichte, 13 (Berlin, Leipzig: Rothschild, 1909), 16–23; Benoît Lacroix, *L'Historien au moyen âge* (Montréal: Institut d'Etudes Médiévales, Paris: Vrin, 1971), 34–35, 45–49. In general, see Bernard Guenée, *Histoire et culture historique dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1980), Chapter 3.
66. Werner Eisenhut, "Spätantike Troja-erzählungen—mit einem Ausblick auf die mittelalterliche Troja-Literatur," *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch*, 18 (1983), 11–18—hereafter cited in the text as Eisenhut 1983; on the legend of Homer's mendacity, see Max J. Wolff, "Der Lügner Homer," *Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift* 20 (1932), 53–65, 316.

67. *Anonymi Historia Troyana Daretis Frigii: Untersuchungen und kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Jürgen Stohlmann, Beihefte zum "Mittellateinischen Jahrbuch," 1 (Wuppertal, Ratingen, Düsseldorf: Henn, 1968), 266:12–17 (page and line number identify references); see also 15–20.
68. See Ludwig Gompf, ed., Joseph Iscanus, *Werke und Briefe*, Mittellateinische Studien und Texte, 4 (Leiden, Cologne: Brill, 1970), 14; hereafter cited in the text as Gompf.
69. *Ovide moralisé (livres I–III)*, ed. C. De Boer, Verhandelingen der koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen: Afdeeling Letterkunde, ser. 2, 15 (Amsterdam: Müller, 1915), Book I, v. 1140–1141; on this passage, see Kelly 1992, 76–77. On "Medieval Ovids," see A. J. Minnis, *Magister amoris: The "Roman de la Rose" and Vernacular Hermeneutics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
70. Francine Mora, "Sources de l' Énéas: la tradition exégétique et le modèle épique latin," in *Relire le "Roman d'Eneas,"* 83–104; Raymond J. Cormier, "Qui détient le rameau d'or devant Charon? (*Enéide*, VI.405–07)," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* n.s. 131 (1988), 151–156; Cormier, "An Example of Twelfth Century *adaptatio*: The *Roman d'Eneas* Author's Use of Glossed *Aeneid* Manuscripts," *Revue d'histoire des textes* 19 (1989), 277–289 and plates VI–IX. Cf. Paul M. Clogan, "Literary Genres in a Medieval Textbook," *Medievalia et Humanistica* n.s. 11 (1982), 199–209, especially the bibliography (207 notes 2–4).
71. Joseph of Exeter, *Trojan War I–III*, ed. and trans. A. K. Bate (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1986), 14–21, and notes to the text.
72. See in general the *Ars versificatoria*, Book 4; however, the entire treatise is devoted to different features of original or new rewriting.
73. On Eleanor of Aquitaine as "source" for Briseida, see my "Le Patron et l'auteur dans l'invention romanesque," in *Théories et pratiques*, 35–36, and, more generally on Benoît's invention of this material, my "The Invention of Briseida's Story in Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Troie*," *Romance Philology* 48 (1995), 221–241.
74. Berthe Marie Marti, "Literary Criticism in the Mediaeval Commentaries on Lucan," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 72 (1941), 245–254. See as well her edition of *Arnulfi Aurelianensis Glosule super Lucanum*, Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome, 18 (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1958); and Franz Quadlbauer, "Lukan im Schema des ordo naturalis/artificialis: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Lukanbewertung im lateinischen Mittelalter," *Grazer Beiträge* 6 (1977), 67–105.
75. See Kelly 1991, 71–78, and 1992, 49–61, as well as Eugene Vance, *From Topic to Tale: Logic and Narrativity in the Middle Ages*, Theory and History of Literature, 47 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987); and especially Cizek, 300–315. Cf. Richard McKeon, "Creativity and the Commonplace," in his *Rhetoric: Essays in Invention and Discovery* (Woodbridge, CT: Ox Bow, 1987), 25–36; Lothar Bornscheuer, *Topik: zur Struktur der gesellschaftlichen Einbildungskraft* (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1976); Bornscheuer, "Topik," in *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturgeschichte*, 2nd ed., vol. 4 (Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 1984), 454–475; von Moos 1988; and my "Ars versificatoria," in the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, vol. 1 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992), 1071–1080.

76. See Jung 1996, 199–204. In this way the scribe fits the Trojan War into traditional views of biblical history; on these views, see Adolf Emile Cohen, *De Visie op Troje van de westerse Middeleeuwse geschiedschrijvers tot 1160*, diss. Leiden (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1941); Jung 2001.
77. See John R. Reinhard, ed., *Amadas et Ydoine*, Classiques français du moyen âge, 51 (Paris: Champion, 1974), iii–iv; Huot 1987, 21–27; Lori Walters, "Le rôle du scribe dans l'organisation des manuscrits des romans de Chrétien de Troyes," *Romania* 106 (1985), 303–325; Jung 1996, 164–177.
78. See my "L'Invention dans les romans en prose," in *The Craft of Fiction: Essays in Medieval Poetics*, ed. Leigh A. Arrathoon (Rochester, MI: Solaris, 1984), 119–142; Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner, "Redefining the Center: Verse and Prose *Charrette*," in *A Companion to the "Lancelot-Grail Cycle,"* ed. Carol Dover, Arthurian Studies, 54 (Cambridge: Brewer, 2003), 95–105.
79. See, for example, Gompf, 51–55.
80. Constans identifies only one excerpt among the fragments in his edition of the *Troie*, vol. 6, 64; for others, see Jung 1996, 306–330.
81. For example, in Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis Troiae* (Jung 1996, 563) and, perhaps, in the anonymous *Historia Troyana*, ed. Stohlmann, 166–172.
82. "Author" was and had become a problematic term in medieval literature; see M.-D. Chenu, "Auctor, actor, autor," *ALMA* 3 (1927), 81–86. On Saint Bonaventure's classification of authors as scribe, compiler, commentator, and author proper, see Minnis 1984, especially 94–103.
83. Cf. Matthew of Vendôme's distinction between the topoi of logic and those of rhetoric and poetics, *Ars versificatoria*, 1:76; cf. Vance 1987. On distinctions one must make based on the technical terminology of indifferent disciplines, see Kelly 1992, 6–7; Moss 1996, Chapter 1.
84. Roger Dragonetti, *La vie de la lettre au moyen âge: "Le Conte du Graal"* (Paris: Seuil, 1980), 43; Kelly 1991, 64–68, and 1992, 38–41, 103–104.

2

Alphabets and Rosary Beads in Chaucer's *An ABC*

Georgiana Donavin

Chaucer's *An ABC*, a short lyric entreating the Virgin Mary's intercession, is shrouded in legend. The scholarly and critical tradition that Chaucer wrote this plea to the Virgin for Duchess Blanche of Lancaster's personal devotions still survives,[1] although little evidence exists for this contention and some danger lies in sequestering any of Chaucer's compositions at one reader's private altar. Chiefly, the belief that *An ABC* was intended for a single audience limits our inquiry into the possibility of the poem's public uses and various interpretations during Chaucer's own time.[2] Although overlooked, one significant use of *An ABC*, as its title suggests, is as a language-teaching tool. The poem's alphabetical structure provides a mnemonic for Marian words and phrases, rendering *An ABC* both a prayer to the Virgin Mary and a tutorial in basic English. This essay demonstrates how Chaucer compares alphabetical letters to rosary beads and thereby prompts his readers—probably adult foreigners at court—to remember their ABCs.

Before discussing *An ABC*'s function as an English-teaching text, it is necessary to call into question its reputation as a private prayer. *An ABC* is both tutorial and devotion, but it was probably not an oration for a single person to recite, least of all Duchess Blanche. Alfred David contends that Chaucer was not experimenting with such decasyllabic lines as control *An ABC* until after 1373, long after Blanche's death in 1368, when the poet possibly acquired and then imitated Boccaccio's *de casibus* tragedies (David, 149). In addition to the doubt cast by prosody on *An ABC*'s supposed date and purpose, the adaptations that Chaucer made to Guillaume Deguilleville's poem when he lifted this prayer to the Virgin out of *Le pèlerinage de la vie humaine* and translated it loosely in *An ABC* seem inappropriate for the Duchess Blanche's private religious narrative.[3] A few examples will reveal why. Even in the first stanza, where

Deguilleville introduces the theme of embattlement with sin, Chaucer deeply underscores the culpability of the poem's narrator by characterizing the soul in "langour" (7)[4] and praising Mary's mercy in hearing such an egregious case.[5] If Blanche, a widely respected woman, had commissioned such a prayer of Chaucer, it seems unlikely that he would have insinuated knowledge of her spiritual sickness and offered her words of such abjection. Again, in the "V" stanza, Chaucer represents the prayer's speaker as obnoxiously vile by revising Deguilleville's narrator, who is a base servant, to one who is covered with "filthe" and "errour" (167), rather like Langland's Haukyn.[6] In further debasing the prayer's speaker, Chaucer may be following the lead of the *Pèlerinage*'s narrative context in which the pilgrim has just been beaten by the Seven Deadly Sins and wounded by Venus before petitioning the Virgin Mary. Moreover, since *Le pèlerinage de la vie humaine* was copied in at least fifty French manuscripts,[7] many fourteenth-century readers would have known the poem and may have expected a humiliated narrator, similar to Deguilleville's. Nevertheless, it would have been disrespectful for Chaucer to have increased the sense of the narrator's culpability if *An ABC* had been intended for Blanche's personal recitation. Finally, in the "Y" stanza, Chaucer teasingly pleads with the Mother not to be "skant" since her son has been so generous in pardons (175), while Deguilleville merely requests that the Virgin show mercy toward him.[8] It is unlikely that Chaucer would interpolate such a joke for Blanche and thereby assume what sorts of flippancies she permitted herself with the divine.

The occasionally jocular but generally penitent narrator of *An ABC*, moreover, evokes a masculine subject, not the emotive, ingenuous reading voice that Elizabeth Robertson and Richard Osberg have demonstrated to be so common in medieval women's devotional literature.[9] In contrast to the style of women's devotional texts, apostrophes and other pathetic tropes are few in *An ABC*. The masculinized narrator of *An ABC* regards the Virgin as his beloved, his "ladi deere" (17) who will hide him in her tent (41) and heal his wounds (79). Providing an unsuitable persona for Blanche of Lancaster, the speaker of *An ABC* is a warrior, against whom Satan, the "enemy," gives "chace" (47–48). In light of the masculine voice, Chaucer could not have intended *An ABC* for a particular woman's devotions, in which the woman's voice would substitute for the narrator's as she prayed. Rather *An ABC* was meant for a purpose that would allow the poem to proceed continually from the Chaucerian narrator.

That purpose is pedagogical, and the poem's title is a clue to Chaucer's instructions. In Middle as in Modern English, the phrase "an ABC" refers to basic lessons, particularly in reading, and on one level this is what Chaucer aimed to provide. The titles and *incipits* of fifteenth-century manuscripts of *An ABC* regularly underscore its alphabetical and thus tutorial nature. For instance, in the Coventry manuscript the title given to *An ABC* is "a preiour of our ladie per Geoffrey Chaucer made affter the ordre of the a.b.c."[10] In Cambridge

University Library MS Gg.4.27, bold blue ink declares the poem "Chaucer's A.B.C."[11] Finally, Cambridge University Library MS Ff.5.30, possibly the earliest manuscript of the poem, begins "Incipit carmen secundum ordinem litterarum alphabeti."[12] As to the meaning of "an a.b.c.," *The Middle English Dictionary* emphasizes the instructional benefits of the alphabet in three of its four definitions of an "abece," the first of which is literally "an alphabet."[13] The second and most widespread meaning of "abece" cited in *MED* is a "primer," the sort of elementary Latin textbook common in song schools, which includes the "Pater Noster," "Ave Maria," and the "Credo" as well as miscellaneous moral and liturgical instructions in the vernacular. This primer often begins with the symbol of the cross above the alphabet and concludes with "amen." Imitating the content of the primer, Chaucer's *An ABC* follows the alphabet, offers instruction in Mariology and prayer, and finishes in "amen." The third definition for "abece" is "the rudiments of a discipline." Taken together, these three definitions set a paradigm for what Chaucer attempts in *An ABC*—an English-language primer of moral value.[14] Interestingly, *MED*'s fourth definition of "abece" cites Chaucer's poem as an example of a literary ABC. Thus, Chaucer's *An ABC* seems to encapsulate and cap all meanings.

Rhymed language instruction tools, such as Walter De Biblesworth's verse dictionary of French vocabulary with English gloss, were popular in the fourteenth century,[15] and Chaucer's *An ABC* belongs to this tradition. Like De Biblesworth's dictionary, *An ABC* was intended for adults who could already read in at least one language, not for children who would have learned their ABCs at three or four years old and found the divine paradoxes in the poem confusing. Imagine a child's comprehension, for example, of the references in the "M" stanza to Mary as the unconsumed burning bush on which the fiery tongues of the Holy Ghost descend (89–96). In any case, a poet as sensitive toward audience as Chaucer would have emphasized the humility and the simple humanity of Mary in her maternal role, if his student were to be a child. Instead, *An ABC* characterizes Mary etymologically, for instance, as the *Stella maris*.[16] Finally, the lavishness of the manuscript tradition suggests a reader more protective of pages than a child. *An ABC* was probably intended not for a child, but rather for adult readers, perhaps foreigners at English courts, who already knew French and could use Deguilleville's version in comparative exercises. For Chaucer, writing an educational poem for a varied audience would not have been an anomalous process. John Fisher argues that Chaucer translated Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* for the young King Richard's improvement.[17] Moreover, Chaucer treated the writing of the *Boece* seriously, consulting Nicholas Trivet's commentary and the French version by Jean de Meun and glossing interpretive challenges as a good schoolmaster should.[18] Later, he wrote the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, possibly for his son Lewis.

An ABC teaches English through the art of memory; its alphabetical order both declares the poem a tutorial and provides the means of learning from it. Frances Yates's and Mary Carruthers's work, documenting the use of the alphabet in medieval mnemonic devices, illustrates how Chaucer employed his ABCs.[19] While Yates demonstrates the alphabet's usefulness in retaining material, Carruthers extends this argument to show how alphabetical memory tools also aid in rhetorical invention. Absorbing knowledge and putting it to new creative uses are thus the goals of scholars and church leaders who have composed in alphabetical structures since the classical and Old Testament eras. In the *De memoria*, which was perpetuated by Cicero and Quintilian and revived in Western university studies in the twelfth century, Aristotle recommends the letters of the alphabet as "places" under which to file information in the mind.[20] The Bible includes alphabetical poems, such as Psalm 118, and Catholic churchmen classified their biblical learning according to alphabetical letters. Jerome's indices of the Vulgate Bible are alphabetical, and later exegetes such as Robert Grosseteste glossed the scriptures with *notae*, alphabetical characters functioning as a heuristic under which bits of the texts were classified.[21] In his rhetorical handbook, the *Parisiana poetria*, John of Garland illustrates how these *notae* might have prompted the memory.[22] Attempting to explain the Pseudo-Ciceronian instructions on *memoria* in the *Ad Herennium*, John of Garland creates a link between alphabetical memorization and the bestiaries. Bestiaries had always provided repositories of moral instruction, the figures of animals becoming *loci* from which to recall the moral wisdom illustrated by each particular beast. By connecting the animal and the first letter of its name, John of Garland advises that the sound of the letter can help retrieve similar-sounding words, and the image of the beast can create the visual prompt for this information.[23] Similarly in *An ABC*, the letter of the alphabet at the head of each stanza is a *nota*, associated with a Mariological image and evocative of words characterizing the Virgin that begin with the same letter.

The alphabet provides a mnemonic device not only for scholastic and ecclesiastical purposes, but also for popular literature in the vernacular. Lyrics such as "An Alphabetical Devotion to the Cross,"[24] "An A.B.C. of Devotion,"[25] and "An ABC Poem on the Passion" begin a new line with a succeeding letter of the alphabet.[26] These lyrics may imitate alphabetical Psalm 118 and seem to employ alphabetical letters mainly as an inducement for the reader to memorize a series of meditations. While the alphabet in Chaucer's poem may also promote the memorization of Marian meditations, *An ABC*'s articulation of linguistic commonplaces, such as the inexpressibility topos and the need for the Virgin's rhetoric at God's court, suggests a complementary purpose in language teaching. A longer work, Etienne de Besançon's *Alphabetum Narrationum* and its fifteenth-century Middle English translation, titled *An Alphabet of Tales* in Mary Macleod Banks's edition, illustrate how common stories were organized alphabetically.[27]

In *An Alphabet of Tales*, a Marian miracle occurs under almost every letter, showing the sort of common discursive inducement Chaucer might have had to structure his praises of the Virgin in an alphabetical rubric. Since scholastic, religious, and popular traditions employed the alphabet as an aid to memory and thus the perpetuation of knowledge, it seems sensible to suppose that Chaucer was doing the same in *An ABC*—teaching by classifying information according to letters.

The layout, illustration, and glosses of the medieval manuscripts reinforce the notion that the alphabetical letters provide *notae* in *An ABC*. These *notae*, the foundation for language learning, offer a mnemonic device for English words and Marian phrases. Although all of the existing copies of *An ABC* were produced in the fifteenth century, their uniformity indicates a standard, possibly derived from Chaucer's original, in presenting the poem.[28] Commenting on this uniformity, George Pace describes how the initial letters at the head of each stanza are illuminated, focusing the reader's attention on the alphabet as a structural device. According to Pace, thirteen of sixteen manuscript copies show artistic initials for each of the stanzas (90), ten of these being large lombardic capitals especially associated with religious verse (92–93). In my own review of the manuscripts, I was impressed with the contrast between the illumination of the alphabetical letters for *An ABC* and the illustrations for other writings in many of the collections. For instance, in Bodley MS 638, a Chaucerian compendium, the alphabet of *An ABC* is more intricately drawn and illuminated than anything else in the rest of the manuscript. Some of the earlier folios show small decorated capitals, lines between stanzas and stanza breaks, but nothing as out of the ordinary as *An ABC*'s large, colorful Anglicana lettering. Five manuscripts of *An ABC* doubly underscore the alphabetical letter by enlarging the first letter of each stanza and also repeating the same alphabetical letter in the left margin.[29] In three of these five, the marginal letters are certainly drawn by another hand than that which inscribed the text of the poem, giving the marginalia the status of a gloss.[30] The design of these five manuscripts especially prompts the reader to associate the subject matter of the stanza with the correspondent capital letter. For example, under "P" for "[p]urpos" (11), Chaucer teaches the vocabulary of the Annunciation when the divine purpose of Jesus's conception was communicated to Mary. Under "R" for "[r]edresse" (129), Chaucer places the Middle English verbs or actions through which Mary makes the sinner worthy: "chastise" (129), ("merci") "springe"(133), "biseeche" (136). In *An ABC*, the illuminated capitals remind the prayerful of the next set of Marian praises, and each letter is a cue to related vocabulary.

An attractive pedagogical tool, *An ABC* turns "abstract typological figures into pictures" (David, 151). This is true not only of the manuscripts' visual artistry, but also of the poem's content. Consistent with the alphabetical prompts in the manuscripts, Chaucer enhances Deguilleville's metaphors and often replaces conceptualization of the Virgin with imagery. As Donald Howard sums

it up, "[e]verything [in Chaucer's version] is more concrete and specific" (90). In stanza two—the "B" stanza—Chaucer specifies Deguilleville's reference to the Virgin as a "haven" by creating a harborside picture of his soul as the Ship of Faith, which, without the Virgin's help, would "to-breste" (16).[31] Brilliantly "coloring in" Deguilleville's poem, in the "V" stanza Chaucer sets the scene more particularly with heavenly furniture, as he refers to the Virgin's bench (159). The ultimate pictorial enhancement occurs in the "M" stanza, where Chaucer pushes Deguilleville's motif of fire to the limit. Whereas the French poem contends that Mary, the unconsumed burning bush, is a sign to all sinners to quench their ardor, Chaucer adds an allusion to the pentecostal flames of the Holy Ghost and takes his readers into the fires of hell.[32] Chaucer's extensions of Deguilleville's motifs provide a more coherent vision of related epithets for the Virgin. Chaucer not only amplifies Deguilleville's metaphors, but also supplies roles for the Virgin where the French offers abstractions. Where Deguilleville calls Mary a place of refuge (1–2), a bounty of relief (154–156), a great person (165), Chaucer calls her "quene" (1), "advocat" (102), and "maistresse" (109).[33] Such personification supplies a much clearer immediate audience to the praying narrator. It thereby encourages the reader to contemplate separate visions of Mary and memorize her names. Finally, Chaucer often replaces Deguilleville's doctrinal truisms with actions. For instance, Chaucer asks that the Virgin chastise him (39) when Deguilleville requests intercession (59–60), and depicts the Annunciation as an antidote to war with God ("P" stanza) when Deguilleville generally mentions Mary's role in the Incarnation as a key to universal peace (179–180).[34]

By evoking mental pictures, Chaucer offers his reader iconographic reminders of the information filed under the letters of the alphabet. These pictures prompt the reader to remember the Marian diction placed under each particular letter. While the alphabetical letter provides a phonetic prompt for Marian concepts, the poetic image offers a pictorial summary of these concepts. The medieval practice of teaching the alphabet by associating letter and image begins even in infancy, when children were given embroidered cloth alphabets. Each square cloth shows a letter of the alphabet at its center and a pictorial border. Game pieces, these textiles were intended to be tossed in the air and replaced in alphabetical order: Small children would first complete the puzzle by matching up the pictorial borders around the letters.[35] In *An ABC*, Chaucer paints word pictures that will help the student associate the alphabetical letter heading each stanza with Marian English phrases. For instance, under "B" for "[b]ountee" Chaucer lists all of the characterizations of Mary as a generous lady in heaven's court and also associates with [b] the consequence of failing to seek Mary's succor—the to-*b*resting of one's Ship of Faith. This stanza's depiction of Mary as the port and the soul floundering in the water presents a mental image under which to recall the Virgin's

fredom. Similarly, in the "V" stanza, Chaucer situates the "Virgine" in her current settings (153), the tower of Paradise and Seat of Judgment. Through [v] he links "virgine" and "e*v*er" (153, 160), underscoring that these are the scenes of Mary's activity into perpetuity. The apostrophe to the Virgin "O fresshe flour!" provides a pictorial image under which to classify mentally these Marian scenarios. The ever-flourishing flower, in other words, is an icon prompting the reader's memory of the vocabulary for Mary's everlasting roles. Finally, the "Y" stanza is a veritable cache of associations through [y], mentally unlocked by the image of Mary as a shield. Since the head word to this stanza is "Ysaac," whom God called upon Abraham to sacrifice and the prophets called a precursor of the Messiah (171), [y] underscores the polarized concepts of death and redemption. On the one hand, [y] stands for the Law that mandates death for sinners: Isaac's death was "certe*y*n" (169); Abraham must God "obe*y*e" (170); he must not mourn to see his son "sla*y*n" (171). On the other hand, [y] communicates redemption from the Old Law: Jesus became the lamb to "de*y*e" (172); Mary is now a "lad*y* ful of mercy" (174); sinners may now "pre*y*e" (173) for the salvation of their souls.[36] Belief in the resurrection that permitted divine justice to convert to mercy requires faith, and so the mental picture for the "Y" stanza's vocabulary of redemption is the "targe" (176), Mary as the Shield of Faith.

As *An ABC* teaches a Marian lexicon, it also contextualizes a basic vocabulary for court and society. Since Chaucer's language is much more pictographic than Deguilleville's, new words would create an image in the reader's memory. Teaching a variety of social titles, *An ABC* outlines the roles of important personages. The opening stanza characterizes the queen as one to whom inferiors sue for mercy—a characterization popular since the legend that a pregnant Queen Philippa kneeled before Edward III for a pardon for the burghers of Calais.[37] Also dramatizing the roles of lawyers and judges since Mary both intercedes as advocate and supersedes God as judge in this poem, *An ABC* sets scenes of justice, such as the "grete assyse" and the "hye justyse" (36–37), clarifies the use of a "bille" (59, 110), and explains the process of "acquitaunce" (60).[38] Beyond the terms of judicial settings, the poem provides place-names of royal housing (the "tente" [9, 41] and the "tour" [154]), of the city ("crooked strete" [70] and "[t]emple" [145]), and of the cosmos ("erthe" [50, 54], "see" [50], "stink eterne" [56], and "Paradys" [155]). Overall, *An ABC* models polite language for petitions as the Chaucerian narrator makes his petition to Mary (to make her petition to God at the final judgment). The word "pitee/pitous" (68, 88, 126, 135, 137) is one of the most often repeated, reflecting an audience's proper attitude toward earnest requests and, of course, one of Chaucer's most prevalent themes.

The method for learning Marian and courtly vocabulary in *An ABC* is similar to counting rosary beads. The poem's capital letters, *notae* facilitating memory, unlock each stanza of Marian praises in the same way that rosary beads

cue "Ave Marias." Chaucer himself likens the appeal to Mary in *An ABC* to that in the rosary: The poem is meant to solicit the same support as "an Ave-Marie or tweye" (104). Furthermore, the structure and content of *An ABC* are comparable to those of the most popular fourteenth-century rosaries. In Chaucer's time, the rosary, although different from today's Catholic meditation, was a well-recognized mode of prayer and often mentioned in literature. Chaucer's Prioress owns a pair of beads "gauded al with grene" (General Prologue, 159),[39] and Gower's Amans of the *Confessio Amantis* reaches for his beads at the end. Prayer beads are common to many religions; however, in the Roman Catholic tradition the beads themselves were considered holy and often lovingly carved.[40] In the early Middle Ages, beads were used to count "Pater Nosters," but as Roman Catholic Mariology developed, they also served Marian prayers (Boyd, 405–409). In the eleventh century, Peter Damian appropriated to the West the earliest Marian prayer from the Eastern liturgy for the Annunciation and Ember Wednesday, and Franciscan and Dominican friars spread the prayer among the Roman Catholic laity.[41] Popular throughout Europe by the twelfth century, the first "Hail Mary" or "Ave Maria" combines two biblical texts in the Virgin's praise: the angel Gabriel's greeting in Luke 1:28 ("Hail full of grace") and Elizabeth's adoration of her cousin in Luke 1:42 ("Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb") (Winston-Allen, 13–14). Adding the name "Jesus" in the thirteenth century, this simple prayer was sometimes known as the "Psalter of Our Lady" and was recited instead of the Divine Office by uneducated lay members of monastic communities who could not be expected to memorize the Psalms[42] (Boyd, 407). Tales of Marian miracles such as are included in *The Middle English Miracles of the Virgin* argue the efficacy of repetitions of this prayer (Boyd, 50–55, 119–22). In them, the Virgin appears to rescue the faithful at the mere articulation of an "Ave Maria." By the fourteenth century, an expanded rosary, influenced by Marian psalters interpreting the 150 Psalms as prefigurations of the lives of Jesus and Mary, included 150 verses in praise of the Virgin. These praises were often counted on a chain of fifty beads. During Chaucer's lifetime, this traditional form of the rosary was transforming again to include narrative meditations on the life of Christ, an amplification arising from the popularity of the Passion story (Winston-Allen, 15–20). As Anne Winston-Allen remarks, however, the most common form of fourteenth-century rosary was "a typical list of unconnected [Marian] accolades" (19).

Chaucer's *An ABC* is a rosary in that it is a poetical circlet dedicated to the Virgin Mary (Pace, 95). *An ABC*'s closing reference to penitents who are "merci able" returns the reader to the opening invocation to the "al merciable queene" of heaven, imitating the rosary's never-ending cycle of prayer. Like the poem's circular structure, the rhyme scheme (ABABBCBC) produces tightly integrated stanzas, inviolate virginal bodies. Also an ABC, the rhyme scheme shapes a trinity of rhymes from the Mother's *materia*. This enclosed form renders *An ABC* a

hortus conclusus, which the rosary reproduces, structurally similar to *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, two poems that begin and end at the same scene (David, 150). Since in *An ABC* Chaucer is, notwithstanding, less concerned than the *Pearl* poet with thematic unity, P. M. Kean complains that "[b]eyond the fact that each [stanza] is addressed to the Blessed Virgin, there is no consecutive thread running through the poem."[43] It is precisely this loose connection of apostrophes and epithets, however, that makes *An ABC* a fourteenth-century rosary. Declaring repetitive devices and circularity characteristic of Marian compositions, Patrick Diehl argues that cohesiveness lies in the stability of the tenor around which vehicles, sometimes as various as creation itself, cluster.[44] Donald Howard calls the logic of *An ABC* "centrifugal," as its associations gravitate to the Virginal center (90). As Alfred David remarks, if "repetitiousness . . . make[s] [*An ABC*] tedious to the modern reader, . . . that is, of course, what makes it a prayer" (David, 150). When the prayer is also a language-instruction tool, repetitiousness encourages memorization.

Primer and prayer, *An ABC* takes for granted the Virgin Mary's presence at the beginning of language instruction. Perhaps the narrative context of *Le pèlerinage de la vie humaine* encouraged Chaucer to link the Virgin Mary to language study in *An ABC*, since Grace Dieu gives Pilgrim a "scripture" to study before he prays to Christ's Mother. Even without this context, however, Chaucer—and every other medieval schoolboy—would have associated the Virgin Mary with ABCs. For instance, "dame schools," established in fourteenth-century nunneries to teach the *trivium*, would have connected the Virgin and virgins to the alphabet.[45] Moreover, the textbooks used in "dame schools" as well as cathedral schools prefer Marian images as mnemonics, such as the depiction in one fourteenth-century English psalter of Saint Anne teaching the child Mary from an alphabet book.[46] Overall, medieval pedagogy in Latin for children was saturated with the language of devotions, often specifically Marian devotions. As Daniele Alexandre-Bidon remarks, the "Ave Maria" is the prayer most often appropriated as an exercise in medieval alphabet books (Alexandre-Bidon, 995). English children might have learned the Latin alphabet in three different ways once they attended school. They might have studied a horn book—a wooden slab, possibly in the shape of a cross, with the alphabet pasted on top in parchment and covered with a protective layer of horn.[47] They might have learned the alphabet from a mural of black letters written upon a whitewashed wall, as exists on the vestry wall of the church in North Cadbury, Somerset. Finally and most importantly, they might have memorized their letters from a "Criss-Cross Row," an alphabet divided into three rows, inscribed on parchment, and preceded by a cross. The "Criss-Cross Row" (or "Christ's Cross Row") usually headed up the song school primer, which often included the Little Office of the Virgin Mary (Orme, 62). Learning the alphabet and then phonetically applying it to the Little Office, a schoolboy could not escape associating his ABCs and

elementary Latin instruction with the Virgin Mary. Chaucer revives this association for the adult learner of the English language.

Chaucer notes the importance of the Virgin to early language learning in not only *An ABC* but also the Prioress's Tale; in fact, the Prioress's Tale seems to argue for more Mariology in primary classrooms. When the little "clergeon" begins his Latin studies by memorizing the *Alma redemptoris mater* from the antiphoner, instead of practicing basic pronunciation in the primer, he reveals a natural impulse to apply the building blocks of language to Marian hymns as well as prayers. The threat that the boy would be punished for advancing to Marian hymns instead of limiting himself to practicing prayers induces the reader's sympathy for more instruction in Mariology along with the alphabet. The Prioress's Tale clearly identifies the Virgin's rightful place in song schools, and *An ABC* provides a Marian primer for an adult context.

The Virgin was associated with not only the most basic language learning, but also with the entire curriculum for the Seven Liberal Arts, as is portrayed in the Rose Window at Chartres. The Rose Window is perhaps the best artistic analogy to the rosary form of *An ABC* since in both all precepts for instruction gather in a circle around the Virgin Mary. In the depiction at Chartres, Mary, as the *Theotokos*, bears creation as well as the best ideas in it, including the principles of the *trivium*. So-named Mother of God since the Council at Ephesus in 431, Mary allows the physical manifestation of the Word and the fulfillment of prophetic words concerning the Messiah. For Mary, giving birth constitutes a divine speech act in that she conceives upon Gabriel's suggestion and, according to some medieval depictions of the Annunciation, through the ear. She is a great reader, as Susan Bell has illustrated with wonderful examples,[48] and in a fifteenth-century Book of Hours, Mary reads in the stable while Joseph comforts the baby Jesus.[49] Moreover, in Annunciation paintings, the Virgin is almost always perusing the Book of Wisdom and is therefore named the Christian Sophia. The implication in all of these depictions is that Mary is well educated in the prophecies that she brings to fruition and in the pedagogical means of communicating divine signification. She is not only erudite in texts, but also talented in creative writing. Like her ancestor David, she is, according to medieval Catholic belief, the poet of the "Magnificat" (Luke 1:46–55). In sum, Mary provides both icon and example of the language arts. Besides placing the Virgin at the center of a language-instruction text in *An ABC*, Chaucer will attribute the production and knowledge of language to the Virgin again, through both the Prioress and the Second Nun's invocations to Mary as muse.

Invoking and describing the Virgin Mary, *An ABC* represents the Mother as both the body and the deployment of language: She is the form and content of the narrator's petition and the rhetorician capable of rendering it meaningful to God. The integrity of Mary's virginal body is the model for the poem's circular structure; her attributes are the matter for its praise, and her eloquence is

the only hope of its argument's delivery. In the *ABC* narrator's variant on the inexpressibility topos, Mary is the sole advocate at the court of judgment who can render his plea persuasive to God. One learns language through the Virgin Mary in order to sue her for what must be construed and granted in heaven. Begging her to initiate a conversation with Jesus about redemption, the narrator cries out to Mary:

> He vouched sauf, *tel him*, as was his wille,
> Bicome a man, to have oure alliaunce,
> And with his precious blood he wrote the bille
> Upon the crois as general acquitaunce
> To every penitent in ful creaunce . . . (57–61, emphasis mine)

These lines foreground the need for the Virgin to express the narrator's desire for forgiveness. Communication is a mystery in which Christ's blood betokens a judicial pardon and the Virgin's reminder makes it perpetually "legal." Only through a rosary-like prayer to Mary that imitates both the Virgin's integrity and God's eternity in its circularity can the narrator activate such divine intercourse. While in *An ABC*, English words must materialize imagistically so that student's memory can grasp them, they must finally disperse into heavenly air so that God can hear them. The student may learn the perfection of a Marian prayer, but not actually reproduce it without the intervention of the Virgin herself. Suggesting a Marian reader response theory in *An ABC*, the narrator implies that no text of his poem exists until the Virgin creates a rhetorical scene for it at God's court.

When the narrator calls upon the Virgin to take his petition to heaven, in this celestial translation the linguistic beads of the illuminated alphabet dissolve between the Alpha and the Omega. By equating the alphabet with rosary beads, Chaucer unlocks an inviolate set of Marian phrases for his adult language learner, and thereby brings his reader into discursive contact with the Word.

Notes

1. In the first printing of *An ABC* in 1602, Speght began the tradition of attributing the motivation for the poem to Blanche's devotional requirements. He glosses the poem as follows: "Chaucer's A.B.C. called *La Priere de nostre Dame*: made, as some say, at the request of Blanch, Duchesse of Lancaster, as a praier for her priuat vse, being a woman in her religion very deuout" (quoted in Alfred David, "*An ABC* to the Style of the Prioress," *Acts of Interpretation: The Text in Its Contexts, 700–1600* [Norman, OK: Pilgrim Books, 1982], 149; hereafter cited in the text as David). "[A]s some say" carries a great burden in the preceding quotation since no corroborative evidence exists for Blanche's patronage or ownership of the poem. For criticisms of Speght's romanticizing of the connection between Chaucer and the house of Lancaster, see Derek

Pearsall, *The Life of Geoffrey Chaucer: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 83–84.

2. A few readers have taken exception to the critical commonplace that *An ABC* was intended for Blanche of Lancaster. See, for instance, Jay Ruud, *"Many a Song and Many a Leccherous Lay": Tradition and Individuality in Chaucer's Lyric Poetry*, Garland Studies in Medieval Literature, 6 (New York: Garland, 1992). Ruud argues that the poem is "universal rather than personal" (31). Alfred David has also argued on the basis of prosody that the poem could not have been written before Blanche's death. See David, 149.
3. For a side-by-side comparison of Deguilleville's French and Chaucer's English versions of *An ABC*, see W. W. Skeat's edition of the poem in *The Complete Works* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960). All quotations from Deguilleville's works are taken from this edition with citations listed parenthetically by line number.
4. Larry D. Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987). All quotations from Chaucer's works are taken from this edition with citations listed parenthetically by fragment and line number.
5. Compare Deguilleville's lines five and six—"Relieve moy, abatu suy: / Vaincu m'a mon aversaire" with Chaucer's "Have mercy on my perilous langour! / Venquisshed me hath my cruel adversaire" (7–8).
6. Compare Deguilleville's "Se vil sui, si me raournes" (235) with Chaucer's "Al have I been in filthe and in errour" (157).
7. Avril Henry, Introduction, *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode*, vol. 1, ed. Avril Henry, EETS n.s. 288 (London: Oxford University Press, 1985), xxviii.
8. Compare Deguilleville's "Fai que grace si m'apere" (260) with Chaucer's "Now lady, ful of mercy, I you preye, / Sith he his mercy mesured so large, / Be ye not skant;" (173–175).
9. Richard H. Osberg, "A Voice for the Prioress: The Context of English Devotional Prose," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 18 (1996), 25–54; Elizabeth Robertson, *Early English Devotional Prose and the Female Audience* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990).
10. Coventry MS PA325, 75r.
11. This title appears on 5r.
12. This *incipit* occurs at 112r and can be translated, "Here begins a song according to the order of the letters of the alphabet."
13. "Abece," *The Middle English Dictionary* (*MED*), ed. Hans Kurath, et al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956–2002).
14. To avoid a confusion of terms, I should note here that in the fourteenth century, the word "prymer" often referred to vernacular service books that the laity would carry to church. An example of such a primer is that edited by Henry Littlehales for EETS. See Henry Littlehales, ed., *The Prymer or Lay Folks' Prayer Book (With Several Facsimiles)*, EETS o.s. 105 (London: Kegan Paul, 1895). Littlehales's primer from Cambridge MS Dd. 11, 82 (circa 1420–1430) is based on the Sarum service and includes the The Hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary, The Seven Penitential Psalms, The Fifteen Gradual Psalms, The Litany, The Office for the Dead, and The Commendations. In contrast, the service books

from which children first learned their alphabet and liturgical song were abbreviated—and mainly in Latin.

15. Walter De Biblesworth, *The Treatise of Walter De Biblesworth. A Volume of Vocabularies*, 2 vols. (London: privately printed, 1857).
16. Sumner Ferris, "The Mariology of *The Prioress's Tale*," *American Benedictine Review* 32 (1981), 249–250.
17. John Fisher, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of Geoffrey Chaucer* (New York: Holt, 1977), 814.
18. Donald R. Howard, *Chaucer: His Life, His Works, His World* (New York: Dutton, 1987), 380; hereafter cited in the text as Howard.
19. Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966); Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 10 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), hereafter cited in the text as Carruthers.
20. Aristotle, *On Memory*, trans. Richard Sorabji (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1972).
21. Lawrence Besserman (*Chaucer's Biblical Poetics* [Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998], 119) notes the existence of alphabetical poems in the Bible that may have provided a model for Chaucer's *An ABC*.
22. John of Garland, *Parisiana Poetria*, ed. Traugott Lawler, Yale Studies in English, 182 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974).
23. For a detailed discussion of the texts for the methods of memorization mentioned here, see Carruthers, especially 29–30, 115–118, and 126–127.
24. "An Alphabetical Devotion to the Cross," *Religious Lyrics of the XVth Century*, ed. Carleton Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), 149–150.
25. "An A.B.C. of Devotion," *Medieval English Lyrics: A Critical Anthology*, ed. R. T. Davies (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 209.
26. "An ABC Poem on the Passion," *Cambridge Middle English Lyrics*, ed. Henry A. Person (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), 5–6.
27. I consulted two British Library manuscripts of Etienne de Besançon's *Alphabetum Narrationem*, Harley MS 268 and Arundel 378. Mary Macleod Banks, ed., *An Alphabet of Tales*, EETS o.s. 126 (London: Kegan Paul, 1904).
28. Manuscripts in which *An ABC* occurs are the following. Group A: **Bod** Bodley 638, Bodleian; **Cov** Coventry MS (Accession 325), City Record Office, Coventry; **F** Fairfax 16, Bodleian; **Gg** Gg. 4.27, Cambridge University Library; **H3** Harley 2251, British Library; **H5** Harley 7578, British Library (lines 1–50 only); **P** Pepys 2006, Magadalene College, Cambridge (two copies, P1 and P2, lines 1–60 only). Both Pace and Benson include Speght's second edition in this list of manuscripts. Group B: **A6** Additional 36983, British Library (formerly Bedford); **Ff2** Ff.5.30, Cambridge University Library; **G** Hunter 239, Glasgow University Library; **J** G.21, St. John's College, Cambridge; **L** Laud Miscellany 740, Bodleian; **Mel** Melbourne MS, State Library of Victoria (Felton Bequest); **S** Arc. L.10.2/E.44, Sion College, London. George Pace, "The Adorned Initials of Chaucer's *A B C*," *Manuscripta* 23.1 [1979] 98—hereafter cited in the text as Pace—notes three other unclassified manuscripts under "Unplaced Fragments." **Ff2** provides the basis of Benson's edition.

29. Pace (92–93) notes only four manuscripts that contain two alphabets. These four manuscripts are **Bod**, **H3**, **J**, and **S**. However, **A6** also includes two alphabets. Speght's edition follows the practice of two alphabets in the text.
30. The three manuscripts are **H3**, **A6**, and **J**.
31. Compare Chaucer's extenuation of the harbor imagery with Deguilleville's "Ma povre arme je t'aporte: / Sauve la:ne vaut que morte; / En li sont tous bien avortez" (22–24).
32. Compare Chaucer's "The Holy Gost, the which that Moises wende / Had ben a-fyr; and this was in figure. / Now lady, from the fyr thou us defend / Which that in helle eternally shal dure" (93–96) to Deguilleville's "Et tu, buisson de recreuz / Es, pour tremper leur ardure" (140–141).
33. Compare Chaucer's "Almighty and al merciable quene, / To whom that al this world fleeth for socour" (1–2) to Deguilleville's "A toy du monde le refui, / Vierge glorieuse, m'en fui. . . ." (1–2). Compare Chaucer's "We han non other melodye or glee / Us to reioyse in or adversitee, / Ne avocat noon. . . . (100–102) to Deguilleville's "N'avons autre tirelire / . . . Ta bonté comme est parfonde" (150, 156). Finally, compare Chaucer's "From ancille he made thee maistresse" (109) with Deguilleville's "Ains toy deis chamberiere / Quant en toy vint li grans geans" (164–165).
34. Compare Chaucer's "[B]ut thou er that day me wel chastyse, / Of verrey right my werk me wol confonde" (39–40) with Deguilleville's "Las m'en clain quant bien m'avise, / Souvent en doy dire heu!" (59–60). Also, Chaucer's "Purpos I have sum tyme for tenquere, / Wherefore and why the Holy Gost thee soughte, / Whan Gabrielles vois cam to thyn ere. / He not to werre us swich a wonder wroughte" (113–116) with Deguilleville's "Pris m'est volenté d'enquerre / Pour savioir que Diex vint querre / Quant en toy se vint enserrer; / En toy devint ver de terre; / Ne cuit pas que fust pour guerre. . . ." (169–173).
35. Daniele Alexandre-Bidon, "La lettre volee: apprendre a lire a l'enfant au moyen age," *Annales ESC* 44 (1989), 982; hereafter cited in the text as Alexandre-Bidon.
36. All italics for the underscoring of [y] are mine.
37. Jean Froissart, *Oevres*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, vol. 5 (Brussels, 1868), 215.
38. See Joseph Allen Hornsby, *Chaucer and the Law* (Norman, OK: Pilgrim, 1988), 150–154, on the use of bills and writs in *An ABC*.
39. See Beverly Boyd's close analysis of the meaning of the phrase "gauded al with grene" in "Chaucer's Prioress: Her Green Gauds," *Modern Language Quarterly* 11 (1950), 404–416; hereafter cited in the text as Boyd.
40. Prayer beads are used in Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu traditions. According to Anne Winston-Allen (*Stories of the Rose: The Making of the Rosary in the Middle Ages* [University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997], 14; hereafter cited in the text as Winston-Allen), Marco Polo recorded that King Malabar wore a prayer chain. She also notes that it is commonly thought that crusaders were mainly responsible for the popularization of rosary beads as they returned from the Holy Land with such prayer chains.
41. Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (New York: Vintage, 1976), 306.

42. Beverly Boyd, ed. *The Middle English Miracles of the Virgin* (San Marino, CA: Huntingdon Library, 1964), 407.
43. P. M. Kean, *Chaucer and the Making of English Poetry*, vol. II, *The Art of Narrative* (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), 193.
44. Patrick Diehl, *The Medieval European Religious Lyric* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 105.
45. On dame schools, see Nicholas Orme, *English Schools in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen, 1973), 55; hereafter cited in the text as Orme; and Eileen Power, *Medieval Women*, ed. M. M. Postan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 80–82.
46. The psalter is in Bodleian Library, Oxford MS Douce 231, fol. 3.
47. Andrew W. Tuer, *History of the Horn Book* (New York: Benjamin Blum, 1897, reprinted 1968), 53–69.
48. Susan Groag Bell, "Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture," *Signs* 7.4 (summer 1982), 742–768.
49. The Book of Hours is in Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore; MS 10.290, fol. 69.

3

On the Usefulness and Use Value of Books
A Medieval and Modern Inquiry

Ann W. Astell

One volume of Propertius and eight ounces of snuff may have the same exchange value, despite the dissimilar use value of snuff and elegies.

—Karl Marx

Utilitas *in duas partes . . . dividitur.*

—Rhetorica ad Herennium

Omnis Scriptura divinutus inspirata est et utilis *ad docendum. . . .*

—2 Timothy 3:16

"At the start of this book we must enquire into . . . the usefulness of the book."[1] So writes an anonymous commentator in his introduction to Ovid's *Heroides*. Beginning in the twelfth century, the question of a book's usefulness (*utilitas*) belonged to a set of six questions that were routinely asked and answered in the prefaces to classical and biblical texts. These introductions (in Latin, *accessus*) provided readers with an interpretive key that gave them "access" to the work under discussion. They glossed the book's title (*titulus*), characterized the subject matter (*materia*) of the book, asserted the author's intent in writing (*intentio scribentis*), described the work's formal and generic features (*modus*), announced the benefit to be gained by the reader (*utilitas*), and assigned the book its proper philosophical classification (*cui parte philosophiae supponitur*).[2]

Scholars distinguish various kinds of *accessus*, of which only the so-called Type C asks specifically about the book's usefulness.[3] Positioned centrally in the *accessus* tradition, "Type C" addressed the issue of *utilitas* in a way that both reflects its double origin in ancient philosophical and rhetorical theory and anticipates the manner in which the question will subsequently be raised not

only by later medieval commentators in their prefaces to vernacular works, but also by modern literary critics and cultural philosophers.

My focus in this essay is on the medieval theoretical approach to the question of *utilitas*. My interest in and analysis of the topic are, however, animated by the ongoing modern conversation about use value, first initiated (however problematically) by Karl Marx. I first, therefore, survey the modern discussions of utility to show their Augustinian and medievalist underpinnings. I then turn to the topic of utility in the medieval *accessus*, to highlight its complexity as a point of intersection among philosophy, rhetoric, and theology. Like their modern and postmodern successors, medieval commentators were cognizant first of multiple possible uses (and misuses) of books; second, of the possibility for their proper and ordinary use as books to be changed or exchanged into a range of other values; third, of the ethical issues surrounding such uses and conversions. Drawing upon the work of Jean Baudrillard and Walter Benjamin, I argue finally that Christian, Augustinian piety and mysticism sought in the end to convert the use value of books via cultic practice into a symbolic exchange value, and that they employed antisacrificial rhetorical strategies to that end, making gifts to God and others of the instrumental books they offered.

A Marxist, Augustinian, and Medievalist Propaedeutic

Since some basic definitions are needed and the connections between medieval *utilitas* and Marxist "use value" are unlikely to be immediately apparent, I beg the reader's patience and begin at a seemingly distant starting point, Marx's *Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy* (1859). Drawing upon a distinction made in Aristotle's *Politics*, from which he gives an extended quotation in a footnote, Marx asserts: "Every commodity has a twofold aspect—use value and exchange value."[4] As Aristotle explains and Marx affirms, a shoe is made to be worn on one's foot (its proper use value), but it can also be used in barter (its improper, secondary use) in order to obtain some other good, for which the shoe can be exchanged.[5] "Use value as an aspect of the commodity" has various features, according to Marx: It "has value only in use and is realized only in the process of consumption. One and the same use value can be used in various ways. But the extent of its possible applications is limited by its [physical, palpable] existence as an object with distinct properties" (27). A thing—a shoe on one's foot, for example, or a manuscript that one is reading—can have use value without its necessarily being or becoming a commodity, but every commodity as a marketable object of human wants will have some use value. Therefore, "use value as such, since it is independent of the determinate economic form, lies outside the sphere of political economy" (*Critique of Political Economy*, 28). When it inheres within a commodity, however, use value becomes subject to exchange and can be converted into exchange value within a given economy.

Classical Marxist theory concerns itself primarily with how the exchange value of commodities is determined. How is it, Marx wondered, that things utterly incomparable with regard to their "natural forms of existence" and "the needs they satisfy as use values" are valued equally in exchange? (28). Observing that "one volume of Propertius and eight ounces of snuff have the same exchange value, despite the dissimilar use values of snuff and elegies," Marx sought for the "common [economic] denominator" and found it in the cost of a generalized Labor (28).

Marx's analysis extended only to the different commodifications of use value within trade, mercantile, and early capitalist economies. Marx did not foresee the developments within late capitalism, as analyzed by Jean Baudrillard, whereby a totalizing "ideology of 'consumption'" has so overtaken simple use value through the infinite creation of desires that contemporary critics of capitalism must also depart from Marx, "surpassing . . . a spontaneous vision of objects in terms of needs and the hypothesis of the priority of their use value."[6] In late capitalist economies, sign value, as created by the media, actually takes precedence over use value, predetermining what people imagine themselves to need. In a world of virtual realities, according to Baudrillard, "use value is fundamentally an alibi for sign exchange value" (*For a Critique of the Political Economy*, 55). "Today," Baudrillard observes, "the . . . generalized order of consumption is nothing other than that sphere where it is no longer permitted to give, to reimburse, or to exchange, but only to take and to make use of (appropriation, individualized use value)" (*For a Critique of the Political Economy*, 171).

If capitalism as analyzed by Marx converted use value into a special form of exchange value, with all things measured by "universal labour-time" (47), late capitalism would transvalue all values into sign value, measured by the (artificially created and manipulated) desires of consumers. Whereas Marx posited genuine human needs (for food, clothing, shelter, education, and aesthetic expression) and a pure use value for objects (prior to their status as commodities) as a double basis for a utopian, classless society, Baudrillard despairs of such a foundational correlation of material needs and uses (given the conversion of laborers into consumers) and hopes instead for the overturning of capitalism through a quasi-mystical event, a transgressive overturning of sign exchange value through its conversion into a transcendent, symbolic exchange value.[7]

In defining what he means by symbolic exchange, Baudrillard points to "the gift" as "our most proximate illustration" (*For a Critique of the Political Economy*, 64). The "logic of the gift" is *sui generis*, he maintains, and stands in fundamental opposition to "a logic of utility, a logic of the market, . . . and a logic of status" (*For a Critique of the Political Economy*, 66). When he describes the giving and receiving of a gift, Baudrillard consciously counters the terms used in defining commodities. Unlike a commodity, a gift "has neither use value nor (economic) exchange value. . . . This is the paradox of the gift: it

is on the one hand (relatively) arbitrary: it matters little what object is involved" (*For a Critique of the Political Economy*, 64). Unlike a sign, which is encoded by convention and capable of being appropriated by an endless succession of consumers, each of whom can be substituted by any other, the gift receives its symbolic meaning from "the concrete relation in which it is exchanged, the transferential pact it seals between two persons: it is thus not independent as such" (*For a Critique of the Political Economy*, 64). Because the gift "signif[ies] the relation" itself, from which it is "inseparable," it participates in the uniqueness of that interpersonal relationship: "Once it has been given—and *because* of this—it is *this* object and not another. The gift is unique, specified by the people exchanging and the unique moment of the exchange. It is arbitrary, and yet absolutely singular" (*For a Critique of the Political Economy*, 64).

Baudrillard's emphasis on the gift's uniqueness and concreteness within a specific human relationship aligns his understanding of the gift as symbol with the thought of Saint Augustine, on the one hand, and of Walter Benjamin, on the other. Thomas Ryba has wonderfully highlighted the Augustinian connection, arguing that the transcendent symbolic exchange described by Baudrillard stands apart from the other kinds of possible exchanges—use value for exchange value, use value for sign value, exchange value for use value, exchange value for sign value, sign value for use value, sign value for exchange value—because a symbol (as scholars of religion maintain) actually "mediates the transcendent"; it is "a *presentational* sign which—in proper context—presents the very reality it signifies."[8]

Because Baudrillard does not admit the existence of God and understands use value per se in traditional, Marxist, and materialist terms, however, he is reluctant to attribute any usefulness to the symbol as such. According to Baudrillard, symbolic exchange value can be converted into use value, but only through a degradation that alienates the symbol from its original context and meaning, as, for example, if someone uses a consecrated chalice as an ordinary wine cup, or a wedding band in a key chain or as a ring binder. For him, the symbol itself lacks use value; the gift is by definition something useless and therefore incapable of commodification, outside of any economy.

In sharp contrast to Baudrillard, Saint Augustine as a spokesperson for the Christian tradition affirms humankind's need for the Divine, the usefulness of gifts, the sacramental mediation of grace, and the reality of God. In *De trinitate*, Augustine repeats Saint Hilary's formulation of the attributes of the three divine Persons as follows: "'Eternity in the Father, the Form in the Image, and the Use in the Gift.'"[9] Identifying the Holy Spirit as the Gift of God, proceeding from both the Father and the Son, Augustine first defines the gift in relational terms: "When therefore we speak of the gift of a giver and the giver of a gift, we are clearly expressing their mutual relationship. Hence the Holy Spirit is in a certain sense the ineffable communion of the Father and the Son"

(*The Trinity*, V.11.12, 190). Augustine posits a relationship among the Persons of the Trinity wherein the use of the Spirit as Gift is identical with the enjoyment of divine love: "This ineffable embrace of the Father and the Image is . . . not without pleasure, without love, or without joy. Consequently, this joy . . . is briefly defined as Use" (*The Trinity*, VI.10.11, 213).

Knowing from all eternity that the divine gift of the Spirit would be given to humans, in order to draw them into union with God, the Spirit was "already the Gift by the very fact that God intended to give Him, even before He was actually given. . . . The Spirit is a gift eternally but has been given in time" (*The Trinity*, V.15.16–17, 194–195). As the gift of love given to humans, the Spirit is infinitely useful in the concrete circumstances of time, place, and interpersonal relationships, fructifying all the other gifts of God: "The Spirit is especially called the Gift for no other reason except love. . . . What else is to be understood by the Gift in the strict sense except charity which leads to God, and without which any other gift, no matter what, does not lead to God?" (*The Trinity*, XV.18.22, 497).

As the final cause, the end for whom human beings were created and without whom they cannot be perfected in happiness, God defines the usefulness of all created things. Given as gifts to humanity, all things are to be used as instruments toward the fulfillment of the commandment to love God and one's neighbor (Matthew 22:37, 39–40) and the attainment of final union with God. We are, in short, responsible for the proper use of all the earthly goods entrusted to us. As Augustine emphasizes in *De doctrina Christiana*, "Those things which are to be used help and, as it were, sustain us as we move toward blessedness in order that we may gain and cling to those things which make us blessed."[10] God is to be enjoyed by humans in eternity and whatever mediates his grace and presence to us on earth is to be both used and enjoyed, whereas some things are simply to be used toward that same end. To rest in the enjoyment of an earthly good without at the same time using it in God's service would be idolatrous, the mistaking of a means for an end (*On Christian Doctrine*, I.3.3–I.5.5, 9–10).

Our correct use of things enables God in turn to use us as his instruments on earth, "but He does not use a thing as we do. For we refer the things that we use to the enjoyment of the goodness of God, but God refers His use of us to His own good. . . . That use which God is said to make of us is made not to His utility but to ours," because it increases our capacity to receive God's goodness and mercy: "When we are merciful to anyone and assist him, we do so for his utility, which is our goal; but in a curious way our own utility follows as a consequence when God does not leave that compassion which we expend on one who needs it without reward" (*On Christian Doctrine*, I.32.35, 27–28).

Responding both to the Augustinian, biblical insistence on human responsibility for gifts received (especially as taken up and given a radical, new expression in the writings of Jan Patoĉka and Emmanuel Levinas) and to Augustine's admission of an indirect link between earthly utility and heavenly

reward (although Augustine goes unnamed), Jacques Derrida questions the idea of the gift as standing outside of an economy of exchange: "Another economy? Perhaps the same one in simulacrum, an economy that is ambiguous enough to seem to integrate non-economy."[11] In order to preserve the noneconomic purity of the gift as Baudrillard would have it, Derrida insists, one must keep "in the gift only the giving. . . . One must give without knowing, without knowledge or recognition, without *thanks*," because "the moment the gift, however generous it be, is infected with the slightest hint of calculation, the moment it takes account of knowledge or recognition, it falls within the ambit of an economy: it exchanges" (Derrida, 112).

Derrida would preserve gift giving as a symbolic exchange standing apart from all other exchanges, as Baudrillard does. Like Baudrillard, he defines the gift in itself as immaterial and useless: "the given . . . in the end doesn't count" (Derrida, 112). Unlike Baudrillard, however, Derrida recognizes that a gift, because it expresses, mediates, and secures a relationship, has a definite use value and thus an exchange potential that, in his view, contaminates the gift giving. He envisions, therefore, the gift as a nongift, lacking any power to "burden" another either with the "guilt" of responsibility for its use in service of the Other or with the Pauline "debt" of love and gratitude (cf. Romans 13:8–10).[12] Such a gift has been effectively removed from the context of relationship as such, since one is to receive a gift without knowing one has been given and give without knowing that one has given. Only such a nongift can be transcendent over economic exchange.

Derrida's "gift of death" curiously recalls the bookish reflections on death by a closer (and more Dionysiac) disciple of Nietzsche, Georges Bataille. Just as a gift is seen to mediate a relationship between persons, so too a book. Reflecting on his own writing, Bataille observes that "the reasons for writing a book can be traced back to a desire to modify the relations that exist between a man and his fellow-creatures."[13] Even as Derrida imagines a nongift as a pure mediator, Bataille hopes for a nonbook: "Yet as I wrote this book I discovered that it was powerless to remedy this affliction. At a certain point, the desire for human interactions that are perfectly clean and that escape convention becomes a desire for annihilation" (Bataille, 11). Since the book's impurity, like the gift's, stems from the self-interest of the author/giver, Bataille finds the only solution in the author's (that is, his own) death, reasoning that since "that which I desired to *be for others* [was] excluded by *being for me*, . . . it was only natural that the use to which I wanted to be put by others . . . require that I cease to be, that is, in words more immediately intelligible, *that I die*" (11). Identified completely with the book as a pure self-expression, Bataille equates his own usefulness as author with the book's utility: "*the use to which I wanted to be put by others*" (emphasis mine). For Bataille, however, since a pure self-expression is impossible, given the nature of the self, the use value of the book is irreducibly limited by the very fact of its being authored. The book cannot mediate purely, cannot be a nongift, as long as its author lives.

In the thought of Roland Barthes, the "death" of the author who enters into language as he writes is analogous to the demonic possession of the shaman in antique cultures, to the prophetic oracle of the priest, or to the Homeric singer of traditional stories in formulaic language. For Barthes, the distinction between the author, who is used by language, and the journalistic, professional writer, who uses language in a quasi-scribal manner, marks the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern period.[14]

Barthes's association of the authorial book with ritual use, on the one hand, and of the writer's book with marketable uses, on the other, closely approximates Walter Benjamin's distinction between the uses of medieval and modern art forms. Broadly defined as inclusive of all those artifacts produced by craftsmen proficient in some art, medieval art was imbued with what Benjamin calls "aura." In "the presence of the original" work of art—be it a statue, a painting, a candlestick, an ornamented reliquary, or an illuminated book—the person of the Middle Ages held a "concept of authenticity," authorship, and authority.[15] According to Benjamin, the "uniqueness" of the work constituted its "aura," an aura that "decayed" in the modern age of mechanical reproduction (225).

The "uniqueness" of the medieval work was "inseparable from its being embedded in the fabric of tradition" that established a specific relationship among persons (Benjamin, 225). The work of art expressed, continued, and secured that interpersonal relationship in particular through its use in communal worship. "The existence of the work of art with reference to its aura is never entirely separated from its ritual function," Benjamin writes: "In other words, the unique value of the 'authentic' work of art has its basis in ritual, *the location of its original use value*."[16]

Reading Barthes and Baudrillard alongside Benjamin, then, highlights a close, positive association of use value (at the foundation of Marx's scale) with symbolic exchange value (at the top of Baudrillard's) and suggests a strain of medievalism in twentieth-century Marxist thought.[17] Baudrillard, as we have seen, emphasizes the uniqueness and concreteness of the gift, the meaning and value of which depend on a specific human relationship located in space and time. More important, given my immediate purposes in this study, however, is the indication that the usefulness (*utilitas*) ascribed to a medieval book is best understood first in terms of its mediation to the reader of traditional, authoritative knowledge and wisdom; second, in its symbolic status as a unique gift between persons; and third, in its cultic potential as an offering to God. In order to test the validity of these claims, I turn to the evidence of the *accessus* themselves.

Utilitas in the *Accessus ad auctores*

The *accessus* answer the question regarding the book's utility in various ways. In "Type C" introductions, *utilitas* almost invariably refers to the book's usefulness to the reader, rather than to the scribe, the author, or the owner. Very

rarely, however, the usefulness to the author is mentioned, as, for example, in the case of the *accessus* to Ovid's collected letters from Pontus, where the commentator remarks: "Its usefulness is very great, if he can obtain mercy from Octavian Caesar through the intercession of his friends to whom he sends the letters" ("Introductions to the Authors," 26) ["Utilitas est maxima, si posit misericordiam consequi apud Octavianum Cesarem intercessione amicorum suorum quibus mittit ipsas epistolas"].[18] Similarly, the commentator on Ovid's *Tristia* remarks: "The usefulness is that the work might cause Caesar's fierce wrath to subside" ("Introductions to the Authors," 26–27) ["Utilitas est vehementis irae Cesaris cessatio" (*Accessus ad auctores*, 35)]. In the vast majority of examples, however, the question of utility is answered in terms of the benefit to be derived by readers. This application is signaled in the *accessus* in three different ways: first, by explicit third-person references to the readers (*legentes*), such as "The usefulness for those reading this book is . . ." ["utilitas est hunc librum legentibus . . ." (*Accessus ad auctores*, 21)];[19] second, by the use of the first-person plural pronouns "we" and "our" in relation to the book's putative benefit, as in the introduction to the *Physiologus*: "Its usefulness is that we should learn of the natures of animals and their figurative properties" ("Introductions to the Authors," 17) ["Utilitas est ut naturas et figures animalium cognoscamus" (*Accessus ad auctores*, 26)]; and, third, by the content of the answer itself.

Many of the introductions are short, but the longer *accessus* distinguish among immediate, proximate, and final benefits; between general and specific advantages to be gained; between uses and abuses of the book's literal content; and among the various uses of the different matters of the book, whenever the literal matter itself is varied (as, for example, in the case of a collection) or serves as an allegorical veil for hidden subjects. Minnis rightly refers to the perceived "diversity of the *utilitas* or final cause" of a book such as Ovid's *Heroides*, for example, when he summarizes: "The general intention of the work is [regarded by the commentator as] perfectly compatible with different intentions, materials, and modes of procedure in different parts of the book" (Minnis, 56).

In "Type C" *accessus*, the question of the usefulness to the reader is paired conceptually with the question of authorial intent. Ideally the reader's understanding and application of the text perfectly realizes the author's intention in composing the work. Indeed, the close correlation of the two questions and their respective answers in the *accessus ad auctores* makes the answer to the question of *utilitas* almost seem redundant, since it amounts in most cases to a rephrasing of the earlier answer to the question regarding *intentio*. For example, in the introduction to Prudentius's *Psychomachia*, the commentator writes: "His intention is to exhort us to the love of virtues and the scorning of vices. . . . [I]ts usefulness is that we might know how to be armed with virtues against the vices we ought to resist" (*Accessus ad auctores*, 20) ["Intentio sua est nos hortari ad appetitum virtutum et contemptum viciorum. . . . Utilitas est ut sciamus

qualiter armati virtutibus viciis resistere debeamus"].[20] The introduction to Horace's *Art of Poetry* explicitly links intention and utility: "You can gather what the usefulness of the work is from the author's intention, which is that aspiring poets should be instructed in all the precepts given in this book" ("Introductions to the Authors," 33) ["Utilitatem ex intentione collige, quae est omnibus illis quae hic precipiuntur instructum esse" (*Accessus ad auctores*, 50)].

This seeming redundancy, however, points to an ideal relationship between author and reader and defines a position of personal responsibility for the reader that he or she is asked to occupy. The book, as it were, becomes the commentator's gift to the reader—a gift offered on behalf of the classical or biblical author in order to express, continue, and safeguard a personal relationship that exists within a traditional, communal, and pedagogical context. The *auctor* exhorts and teaches; the reader responds, learns, and applies the message. The physical existence of the book in the unique form of a manuscript, laboriously copied from an exemplar by a scribe or scribes, contributes to its singular aura. The common understanding, oft repeated in the *accessus*, that all poetry, regardless of its particular realization in matter and form, shares the general purpose of delighting and instructing (as Horace had taught) makes it possible for virtually any work to mediate this kind of author–reader relationship.[21]

If the reader's intention to learn from the book conforms to the author's intention in writing it, and if the reader applies the text accordingly, then the final cause (*causa finalis*) is realized. Thus, in "Type C" *accessus* the question of utility is sometimes answered in terms of the book's end or ultimate purpose (in Greek, *telos*). Commenting on Sallust's "On Catiline," Conrad of Hirsau, for example, observes: "The final fruit has been achieved if the reader pursues what is just and does not imitate the evil about which he hears" ["Fructus finalis profectus legentis est, si quod honestum, si quod iustum est sequator, nec malum quod de malis audit imitatur"].[22]

What distinguishes the "Type C" *accessus* from the previous grammatical and later Aristotelian introductions is precisely the explicit inclusion of the question of utility to the reader and the pairing of this question with that of authorial intention. The question of the book's utility, more than any other, specifically addresses the concern of the reader and thus establishes the rhetorical purpose of the *accessus* as such in its appeal to the reader, who is about to undertake the labors of studying the text in the hope of gaining some spiritual or practical benefit.

As Alastair J. Minnis and A. B. Scott have demonstrated, "The 'Type C' prologue, to some extent modified and amplified by critical vocabulary and concepts from other types of introductions, flourished throughout the later Middle Ages and continued to be used well into the Renaissance period."[23] In explanation of the popularity and relative dominance of "Type C," Minnis and Scott point to the ways that it combined philosophical, grammatical, and rhetorical

interests and thus "enhanced the prestige of secular literature" by "displaying the philosophical credentials of any poem to which it was applied" (Minnis and Scott, 13). Viewed in terms of this display, the "Type C" *accessus* confer a sign value on the works they introduce, marking them as "philosophical" within a medieval university milieu where philosophy was deemed the science of sciences.

The philosophical origins and affinities of "Type C" are clear.[24] As indicated previously, "Type C" introductions routinely asked and answered the question: "cui parti philosophiae supponitur" ["Under which branch of philosophy is it to be classified?"]. The "Type C" questions of *materia* and *modus* could easily be correlated, moreover, with the Aristotelian material and formal causes, while the questions of *utilitas* and authorial intent (especially if a *vita poetae* was added) pointed in the direction of the Aristotelian final and efficient causes. Minnis notes: "While some twelfth-century commentators spoke of the *causa finalis* of a work (instead of, or in conjunction with, its *utilitas*), the complete system of the four causes was not applied" (Minnis, 29).

What Minnis fails to recognize is a subtle difference between the understandings of final causality in the twelfth-century introductions, which devote a separate heading to *utilitas*, and the later, Aristotelian *accessus*, which do not. The later, purely Aristotelian *accessus* do not concern themselves directly with the question of utility to the reader, since the final cause of the work is seen in them simply as the perfect realization of the author's intention vis-à-vis the reader, rather than as the result of the reader's active cooperation with authorial intent. In the Aristotelian introductions, the reader is not treated as a co-responsible agent (*causa efficiens*), consciously and freely cooperating with the author toward the achievement of the book's final cause, but rather as an aspect of the work's matter, to be shaped by the author through the instrumentality of the book.[25] The "Type C" introductions, by contrast, admit the reader's agency in the determination of the book's usefulness, even as they invite cooperation with authorial intent. The extent of the reader's role and responsibility is what is at issue in the difference between the two types.

Utilitas as a Problematic Topic: From Matter to Mysticism

Indeed, the marriage of philosophy, rhetoric, theology, and poetry in the "Type C" *accessus* was not without tension, as a closer examination of *utilitas* shows. Bernard of Utrecht's late-eleventh-century commentary on Theodolus predates Conrad of Hirsau's *Dialogus super auctores* (early twelfth century) and points, according to Minnis, "to the emergence of the 'type C' prologue-paradigm as the dominant form" (Minnis, 29). Bernard sets the seven questions of the ancient commentators concerning the circumstances of the text—*quis*, *quid*, *ubi*, *quibus*, *auxiliis*, *cur*, *quomodo*, *quando*—in opposition to the three basic questions of the moderns, namely, "operis materiam, scribentis intentionem, et ad quam

philosophiae tendat partem."[26] To these three questions of subject matter, authorial intent, and philosophical classification, Bernard, on the authority of Boethius, adds utility as a fourth concern: "His addunt quartum utilitatem auctoritate Boetii" (67). Bernard accordingly treats utility fourth and last, in contrast to the twelfth-century introductions, where it usually appears in fifth position. It emerges seamlessly but belatedly from his discussion of the parts of philosophy. Theodolus's works can be classified under ethics, Bernard asserts, which is one of the three subdivisions of philosophy: physics, logic, and ethics.[27] Listing the four cardinal virtues (prudence, temperance, fortitude, justice) that pertain to ethics, Bernard bows to the authority of "Cicero ad Herennium," a source that allows him to segue into the topic of *utilitas* (68).

In the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* attributed to Cicero, utility is treated as the proper concern of political deliberation and subdivided into considerations of security and honor: "Utilitas in duas partes in civili consultatione dividitur: tutam, honestam."[28] The topic of Security, in turn, is divided according to its chief means, whether by force of arms (*vis*) or craft (*dolus*), even as the Honorable subsumes both what is right and what is praiseworthy. The practice of the cardinal virtues mentioned by Bernard of Utrecht can unite the right with the laudable (although the two motivations may be at odds), but upholding those same virtues is often (as the author of *Ad Herennium* admits) in direct conflict with arguments for self-protection through aggression or craft, the latter subsuming bribery, empty promises, deception, and dissimulation.

The self-division within utility as a topic of rhetorical deliberation is highlighted by later rhetoricians who distinguish the good and the useful as separate topics. Isidore of Seville divides deliberation into three topics: "honesto, utili, et possibili."[29] Conrad of Hirsau mentions four means of persuasion: "ab utili, ab honesto, a possibili, a necessario."[30] Quintilian mentions three—honor, expediency (*utilitas*), and necessity—only to reject the topic of necessity as inadmissible to debate.[31] Citing Cicero, Quintilian writes with candor about probable conflicts between what is advantageous (*utile*) from an immediate, temporal perspective and what is ideally virtuous from an eternal one, even as he hopes for their reconciliation in a single, recommended course of action.

In deriving the definition of utility from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and applying it to the *utilitas* of books, therefore, Bernard of Utrecht effectively argues for an identification of the good with the useful through the personal learning of a moral lesson. Of Theodolus's eclogues, he writes: "The usefulness of this work, moreover, . . . is the recognition of truth and the confirmation of right belief" ["Huius autem operis utilitas . . . est veritatis cognitio et rectae fidei confirmatio" (*Commentum in Theodolum,* 68)]. This declaration of the book's *utilitas* stands, as it were, as a thesis statement, for which the commentary that follows must offer convincing proofs. If and only if the reader accepts the book in this spirit will it prove useful to him or her in obtaining an eternal security

in Heaven. Interpreted wrongly, the book may well be instrumental in ways incompatible with the good, because not everything in it can be taken at face value. Just as "Cicero ad Herennium" mentions a deceptive craft (*dolus*) as belonging to utility, Bernard points both to Theodolus's dual identity as the authorial discerner of divine (*Theo*) and deceitful (*dolus*) things and to the duplicity of his fictional characters: "quia aut contraria contrariis aut *dolose* aut increptative . . . respondent" ["Because they answer their opponents either with contradictions or deceptively or chidingly"].[32]

Bernard emphasizes the need for a discerning interpretation of Theodolus's text. Similarly, the writers of other *accessus* characterize the examples given in books as useful illustrations of the good (to be followed) and of the bad (to be avoided). In so doing, they implicitly admit the possibility that the reader will emulate a bad example, since the result of reading the book depends on the reader's intention, as well as the author's. One commentator on Ovid's *Heroides* indicates a full range of possibilities: "The usefulness or ultimate end (*causa finalis*) of the book differs according to the various intentions, depending on whether the intention is the recognition of unchaste or foolish forms of love, or else to show how some women may be courted by letter, or how the results of living chastely may benefit us" ("Introductions to the Authors," 23) ["Utilitas vel finalis causa secundum intentiones diversificantur, vel illicitorum vel stultorum amorumcognitio vel quomodo aliquae per epistolas sollicitentur vel quomodo per effectus ipsius castitatis commodum consequamur" (*Accessus ad auctores*, 32)].

The question of utility is noticeably absent in "Type C" introductions to books of the Bible. Perhaps the decision of the biblical exegetes to omit it as a separate heading also has a sign value in the Baudrillardian sense, since the absence of a philosophical *utilitas* asserts a theological transcendence over philosophy. Whereas other books are to be used, the Bible is to be both used and enjoyed (as Saint Augustine taught), since it mediates the presence and grace of God sacramentally.[33] The absence of *utilitas* as a sign value points, as it were, to the Bible's symbolic status.

Minnis explains that in the twelfth century, exegetes began to apply "Type C" *accessus*, which had originally been used to introduce secular works by classical authors, in biblical commentaries. "In this new context," Minnis writes, "the 'Type C' headings altered in meaning" (Minnis and Scott, 70). The *materia* of the biblical book was understood to include both its literal subject matter and its veiled, allegorical referents; the question of authorial intent was answered in terms of the allegory. "This approach," Minnis concludes abruptly and without further explanation, "renders superfluous any consideration of the work's usefulness (*utilitas*)."[34]

Minnis's conclusion gives reason to pause. He explains the absence of an explicit treatment of *utilitas* here in terms of the allegorical "approach" to the

Bible, as if to suggest that the salient features of biblical allegory—(1) a polysemous subject matter, (2) an audience whose members varied in their capacity for understanding literal and spiritual meanings, (3) a mediated authorship (human and divine, immediate and remote, historical and prophetic), and therefore (4) a hierarchy of intentions—so complicated the theoretical relationship between authorial intention and *utilitas* as to render a separate consideration of the latter "superfluous."

The allegorical "approach" does not in itself, it seems to me, suffice to explain the absence of *utilitas* as a heading. Even if we admit (as we must) a substantial difference between the allegory of the poets and that of the theologians,[35] it remains true that the allegorical "approach" to nonbiblical poetry—that of Virgil, Ovid, Boethius, Alain de Lille, and Dante, for example—did not preclude, but rather promoted, the commentators' inquiry into *utilitas*. Every level of textual meaning was understood to be useful (albeit in different ways) for knowledge and instruction. In his twelfth-century commentary on Virgil's *Aeneid*, for example, Bernard Silvestris first numbers Virgil among those philosophical poets who write "with a useful purpose in view" ["causa utilitatis"].[36] Then he points to "a twofold benefit" for the reader at the literal level of meaning: "The first is skill in writing, acquired by imitation. The second is the knowledge of how to act properly, acquired from the exhortation imparted to us by the examples" ["Itaque est lectoris gemina utilitas: una scribendi peritia que habetur ex imitatione, altera vero recte agendi prudential que capitur exemplorum exhortatione"].[37] Finally, he indicates the value of the allegorical meaning of the *Aeneid*: "Man derives benefit from this work, the benefit being self-knowledge" ["Utilitatem vero capit homo ex hoc opere, scilicet sui cognitionem"].[38]

Elsewhere, however, Minnis gives a somewhat different rationale for the omission of *utilitas* in biblical *accessus*. In *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, he interprets a book's utility to mean "the reason why it was part of a Christian curriculum," and concludes: "The utility of the Bible was self-evident; works of lesser authority required some justification" (23). If Minnis's "allegorical" explanation fails to satisfy, what then of his second rationale?

Sacred Scripture accords utility to itself in its entirety in 2 Timothy 3:16: "Omnis Scriptura divinitus inspirata est et *utilis* ad docendum, ad arguendum, ad corrigendum, ad erudiendum in iustitia, ut perfectus sit homo Dei, ad omne opus instructus" ["All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work"].[39] In his Anchor Bible edition of the epistles to Timothy, Luke Timothy Johnson notes: "Here is Paul's emphasis, on the 'usefulness' of Scripture."[40] Citing five other passages where Saint Paul stresses the utility of the inspired word, Johnson observes that Paul's emphasis accords with that of "ancient philosophers," Plato among them, for whom "it was the usefulness of doctrine for the transformation of life that

measured its value: the question *ti ophelos* (what use is it) is raised frequently as a criticism of arcane or useless teaching or teaching without a corresponding practice."[41]

Using the *Glossa ordinaria* to analyze the four ways in which, according to 2 Timothy 3:16, sacred Scripture is useful—namely, for teaching the ignorant, for refuting heretics, for correcting sinners, and for training the penitent in virtue—Henry of Ghent asserts that the passage proves the usefulness of all the biblical senses: allegorical, tropological, and anagogical (Minnis and Scott, 259–260). Extending this commonplace understanding of 2 Timothy 3:16 to every writing ("omnis scriptura") from which a moral lesson or biblical teaching can be derived, Dante accords a fourfold interpretation to his *Commedia*, likening its moral lesson and multivalent usefulness to that of the Bible,[42] and Geoffrey Chaucer twice similarly applies the Pauline verse (in passages to which I will return) to his *Canterbury Tales*.

Scripture itself, then, does not find it superfluous to assert its own utility in matter and mode to the reader. Medieval interpreters understood both allegorical meaning and literal allegories—the parables, for example, and the Song of Songs—to share in the general usefulness of the Bible.[43] Nonbiblical works of preaching and poetry were acknowledged to participate, moreover, in the Bible's efficacy to the extent that they were assimilated to it and inspired by the same Spirit. Since the question of utility is explicitly raised and carefully answered in the *accessus* to mystical texts claiming divine inspiration and closely assimilated in content to the Bible, it would seem that Minnis is right to argue that the absence of *utilitas* as an explicit heading in scriptural commentaries has something to do with the Bible's unique status.

In his prologue to Mechthild of Magdeburg's *Flowing Light of the Godhead*, Brother Heinrich emphasizes parallels between the mystical text and the Bible, and he proceeds according to the usual "Type C" headings—omitting, however, the question about the book's philosophical classification. The ultimate author of *Flowing Light* is the Triune God, and God's instrument, Mechthild, is a holy woman. Its "manner of proceeding" is "historical and mystical."[44] Its subject matter is the same as the Bible's, as characterized by Tychonius: "It treats Christ and the Church, as well as Satan and his body."[45] Its purpose is "the ordering of the present life, the useful calling to mind of things past, and the prophetic disclosure of things to come" (*The Flowing Light of the Godhead*, 32). The mystical book will benefit its scribes and readers immensely, provided they have the proper attitude toward it: "So, too, shall all who write or read this book, if they approach it with pious intent, attain an increase in solace and spiritual grace, as the Lord promises them in the book itself. This writing must be read in a pious spirit, however," and understood "in a wholesome manner and in good faith" (*The Flowing Light of the Godhead*, 32).

In the prologues to their own writings, both Mechthild of Magdeburg and Gertrude of Helfta attribute their books to the inspired authorship of God, who

also titled them. God himself guarantees the utility of Gertrude's book, as he does Mechthild's: "By virtue of my divinity, those who read this book for my glory with upright faith, humble devotion, and devote gratitude, seeking edification, will obtain remission of their venial sins, the grace of spiritual consolation, and, what is more, they will be made more receptive to grace."[46] A wonderful *utilitas*, indeed!

These mystical *accessus* have many noteworthy features. The claiming of divine authorship and the condition of a pious benevolence on the part of the reader obviously protect the woman mystic who writes about the mysteries of the faith against possible charges of heresy. Especially striking is the emphasis on the reader's intent in reading the book and his or her responsibility for the book's *utilitas*. Given the conditions for receiving the book's promised benefits, to fail to be edified by the mystic's book is to bring a judgment against oneself as a reader.

More importantly, these introductions represent the book itself as a gift of the Spirit to be used and enjoyed. A symbol reflecting and affecting a relationship between persons, the book's meaning is inseparable from that relationship. In the *Inferno* (Canto 5, lines 127–136), Francesca da Rimini tells the pilgrim Dante how a book of Arthurian romance became a "Galehault," a panderly go-between, for her husband's younger brother Paolo Malatesta and her, when their reading of it together occasioned their first adulterous kiss.[47] Gertrude of Helfta imagines that her book will have a similar, but salvific use, mediating a love relationship between God and the soul of the reader. In the prologue to her *Herald of Divine Love*, the Lord himself makes the following promise:

> If anyone with devout intention desires to read this book for the good of his soul, I will draw him to myself, so that it will be as if he were reading it in my hands, and I will take part in his reading. And as usually happens when two are reading one page, each feels the breath of the other, so I will breathe in the desires of his soul. . . . Moreover, I will breathe forth over him the breath of my divinity, and he will be renewed by my Spirit within him.[48]

In a devotional reading such as Gertrude's God describes, the words on the page (whether the book is the mystic's or the Bible) are in themselves relatively unimportant; what matters instead is the mutual intent of love, the intimate exchange of the breath of inspiration, the physical holding of the book in hand as a kind of relic, possessing aura. Reading and meditation have turned into contemplation, an experience of pure presence. In Baudrillardian terms, use value has been converted into a symbolic exchange value. Thomas Ryba concurs: "If the text constitutes a near 'sacramental' mediation of an outside reality which it represents, then it has symbolic value. A truly symbolic literature—in the Baudrillardian sense—would have to be a perfect mediator of that which it presented. It would function as the perfectly efficient cause of the author's

intentionality, a kind of angelic communication. . . . The Bible comes closest as such a literary text."[49]

From Use Value to Symbolic Exchange Value: The Conversion of Books (and Poets)

In *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (a book titled as an obvious response to Marx's *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*), Baudrillard provides a "general conversion table of all values," an "orientation table for a general anthropology" (123).[50] His chart provides for twelve different possible conversions, for each of which Ryba has supplied a concrete example (197–199). What interests me here in particular is the conversion of use value into symbolic value. Ryba offers the following explanation: "The symbolic is operative in all of those things, actions, or processes when the use value, the exchange value, and the semiotic exchange value are annihilated. Examples of such transgressions are religious sacrifice (the annihilation of use value), the defacement of currency (the annihilation of exchange value), or the desecration of a popular icon (the annihilation of sign exchange value)" (187).

How might the use value of books be converted into a symbolic exchange value? Opposite actions—destructive and honorific—come immediately to mind. Converts to Christianity publicly burned the books of magic and astrology that they had previously consulted, and which were valued at "fifty thousand pieces of silver" (Acts 19:18–19). Holy books were also removed from the ordinary economy of the book market, distinguished from other books by their ornamental beauty, by being carried in procession, by being venerated with kisses and enthroned in places of honor. As we have seen, if a book becomes an avenue for contemplative experience, its proper use value as something to be read and studied has been utterly transcended.

Medieval authors often included prayers for divine guidance and assistance in the prologues to their books, and similarly concluded with a benediction. Sometimes they requested their readers to pray for them. Ritual framing gestures such as these effectively turned the literary work and its ordinary uses into an offering to God and others, a sacrifice that is paradoxically antisacrificial, because the act of entrustment to God and through him to the audience serves to preserve and possibly to canonize the work, even as it secures God's mercy and human benevolence for the writer.

I conclude this essay with the example of one such poet, Geoffrey Chaucer, whose *Canterbury Tales* thematizes the use values of stories, develops a fictional response to the questions traditionally posed in the *accessus*, and demonstrates the possible conversion of literary use value into a symbolic exchange. As I have emphasized, the "Type C" introductions attempt to bring about an agreement between the author's intention and the book's *utilitas* for the reader. In the

General Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*, which serves as an *accessus* to the collection as a whole, the general, Horatian intention of all poetry is claimed for the *Tales* when Harry Bailly announces a prize for whoever tells the "Tales of best sentence and moost solaas" (I.798).[51] The criteria of instruction and delight are recalled again and again in the headlinks. The Host, for example, asks the Pardoner first to "Telle us som myrthe" (VI.319) and then, on second thought, begs him, "Telle us som moral thing" (VI.325). Similarly, Harry Bailly interrupts the pilgrim Chaucer and begs him to tell a tale "In which ther be som murthe or som doctrine" (VII.935). He also appeals to the individual pilgrims for instruction in the arts they know best. To the Merchant who laments his personal knowledge of woman's perfidy, Harry says: "Syn ye so muchel knowen of that art, / Ful hertely I pray yow telle us part" (IV.1241–1242). From the Squire he requests a lesson on love: "And sey somewhat of love; for certes ye / Konnen theron as muche as any man" (V.2–3). Similarly, the Pardoner asks for the Wife of Bath's instruction in a tale: "And teche us yonge men of youre praktike" (III.187). From the Parson, who promises "a myrie tale in prose," the band of pilgrims eagerly awaits "som vertuous sentence" (X.46, 63).

The general, poetic intention of delight and instruction is complicated by the individual intentions of the various storytellers. Whereas the *accessus* to books of the Bible develop the idea of a mediated authorship whereby God (as principal Author) works through an inspired, human writer, Chaucer's prologues invert that relationship within the human realm, making the poet (as principal author) the mouthpiece and faithful recorder of the pilgrim tale-tellers, whose voices he supposedly ventriloquizes.[52] The different rivalries among the pilgrims and their impulse to "quite" each other in "cherles termes" (I.3916–3917) dramatize the possibility for conflicting intentions, not only among the storytellers but also between them and their fictive audience, which includes the pilgrim-poet. About to relate the drunken Miller's fabliau, the narrator distances himself rhetorically from the churlish tale-teller: "For Goddes love, demeth nat that I seye / Of yvel entente" (I.3172–3173). The Pardoner tells "a moral tale" that stirs the consciences of his auditors, but his acknowledged "entente is nat but for to wynne" (VI.460, 403); moral instruction, if it occurs, has nothing to do with his actual motives or beliefs. Drunk not with wine but supposedly with the Spirit, the Prioress seeks and claims inspiration from God and Mother Mary, but the gruesome tale she tells, as reported by Chaucer, leaves the audience in an embarrassed silence. Her mediation of divine inspiration is so limited by her prejudices that Chaucer, too, distances himself from her so that she alone speaks: "quod she" (VII.581).

Whereas the "Type C" *accessus* imagine a perfect accord between author and reader and make the *utilitas* of the work dependent on them both, Chaucer tries at first to imagine himself as a neutral party, presenting an impartial array of materials, upon which the formative intention of the reader is decisive: "Blameth

nat me if that ye chese amys. / The Millere is a cherl, ye knowe wel this; / So was the Reve, and othere manye mo, / And harlotrie they tolden bothe two. / Avyseth yow, and put me out of blame" (I.3181–3185). Chaucer proceeds to show the possible misuses and misunderstandings of the stories through the responses of the pilgrim auditors. Harry Bailly is convinced, for example, that "The Clerk's Tale" contains a moral lesson not for himself, but for his wife: "Me were levere than a barel ale / My wyf at hoom had herd this legende ones!" (IV.1214–1215).

Confronted with the evident possibilities for the misuse of material he has shaped, a humbled Chaucer assumes responsibility for the *utilitas* of his poetry. Speaking at the end of the *Canterbury Tales*, the Chaucer whose voice is heard is that of Chaucer the pilgrim, speaking in response to the penitential Tale of the Parson, but also that of Chaucer the poet. In the twelve lines of prose that comprise the so-called retraction, Chaucer uses the first-person pronoun "I" seven times in an intensely personal appeal, directed first to the readers of his work, and then to God.

The rubric indicates: "Heere taketh the makere of this book his leve," and the leave-taking is cast in clearly ritual, indeed sacrificial, terms. As he did earlier in "The Nun's Priest's Tale" (VII.3442), Chaucer boldly applies the Pauline word about the purpose of sacred Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16) to his own writings, whether or not they please his readers: "For oure book seith, 'Al that is ywriten is written for oure doctrine,' and that is myn entente" (X.1083). Insisting that his "wyl" desires what is good, Chaucer begs pardon from his audience for his lack of "konnynge" (X.1082).

As proof of that goodwill, Chaucer acknowledges his guilt before God and his readers, begging them to intercede for him for God's mercy. He revokes as his "giltes" his "translacions and enditynges of worldly vanities" (X.1084–1085)—listing among them *Troilus and Criseyde*, the *House of Fame*, the *Parliament of Fowls*, the *Book of the Duchess*, "the tales of Caunterbury, thilke that sownen into synne" (X.1086), and "many a song and many a lecherous lay" (X.1087). But he also thanks "oure Lord Jhesu Crist and his blissful Mooder, and all the seintes of hevene" for having translated Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, and "othere bookes of legends of seintes, and omelies, and moralitee, and devocioun" (X.1088–1089). Having listed all of his writings in a two-part prayer for forgiveness and of thanksgiving, Chaucer leaves them behind, as it were, as a sacrificial offering, entrusting his life's work to God's mercy. He announces his intention "hennes forth unto [his] lyves ende" to focus on the salvation of his soul, begging God's grace to walk the way of heavenward pilgrimage that the Parson has outlined: "verray penitence, confessioun, and satisfaccioun to doon in this present lyf" (X.1090). He hopes to do so through the gracious sacrifice offered by Christ, the "kyng of kynges and preest over alle preestes, that boghte us with the precious blood of his herte" (X.1091).

Chaucer's ritual sacrifice of his poetry to a merciful God is and remains profoundly antisacrificial. Given to God in an attitude of repentance, even those tales of Chaucer's that "sownen into sinne" are incorporated, alongside the legends of saints, into his prayer and thus become sacred and possessive of what Walter Benjamin terms "aura." Taken out of the realm of ordinary use and exchange and put to a ritual use in prayer, Chaucer's confessed "giltes" become gifts and symbols. If sealing his career with a prayer also accords a sign value to his work in the eyes of others, helping to effect his literary canonization, that is a downward conversion on Baudrillard's scale (and on Chaucer's own) that removes the gift from its original context in the relationship between the poet and his God. The poems and the prayer belong together.[53]

Notes

1. "Introductions to the Authors," in *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c.1100–c.1375: The Commentary Tradition*, ed. A. J. Minnis and A. B. Scott with the assistance of David Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988, reprinted 1991), 21; hereafter cited in the text as "Introductions to the Authors."
2. See Alastair J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, 2nd ed., rev. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 9–39; hereafter cited in the text as Minnis.
3. For pioneering work in the *accessus* and their classification into types, see Richard William Hunt, "The Introductions to the '*Artes*' in the Twelfth Century," in *Studia mediaevalia in honorem admodum Reverendi Raymundi Josephi Martin* (Bruges: Apud Societatem Editricem "De Tempel"), 85–112; Edwin A. Quain, SJ, "The Medieval *Accessus ad auctores*," *Traditio* 3 (1945), 215–264; hereafter cited in the text as Quain.
4. Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, ed. Maurice Dobb, trans. S. W. Ryazanskaya (New York: International Publishers, 1970, reprinted 1999), 27; hereafter cited in the text as *Critique of Political Economy*.
5. Marx quotes the example from Aristotle's *Politics*. See Aristotle, *The Politics*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1932), [1257A, I.iii.11] 38/39–40/41.
6. Jean Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, trans. Charles Levin (St. Louis, MO: Telos Press, 1981), 29; hereafter cited in the text as *For a Critique of the Political Economy*.
7. See Jean Baudrillard, *Forget Foucault* (New York: Semiotexte, 1987), 70; hereafter cited in the text as *Forget Foucault*. It would be worthwhile to compare and contrast Baudrillard's Apollonian notion of transcendence with Georges Bataille's Dionysiac treatment of eros and excess. What the Marxist mystic Simone Weil (+1943) wrote concerning Bataille could also have been written of him by Baudrillard: "Now the revolution is for [Bataille] the triumph of the irrational—for me, of the rational." Quoted in Simone Pétrement, *Simone Weil: A Life*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Schocken, 1976), 208. Friedrich

Nietzsche famously distinguishes between Apollo and Dionysius as artistic types in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872).

8. Thomas Ryba, "Postmodernism and the Spirituality of the Liberal Arts: A Neo-Hegelian *Diagnôsis* and an Augustinian *Pharmakon*," in *Divine Representations: Postmodernism and Spirituality*, ed. Ann W. Astell (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1994), 199 note 10. I wish to acknowledge gratefully that this essay and conversations with its author were inspiring and immensely instructive for me.
9. Saint Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Stephen McKenna, C. SS. R., The Fathers of the Church (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1963), [VI.10.11] 212; hereafter cited in the text as *The Trinity*.
10. Saint Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D. W. Robertson Jr. (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1958), [I.3.3], 9; hereafter cited in the text as *On Christian Doctrine*.
11. Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, trans. David Wills (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 109; hereafter cited in the text as Derrida.
12. See especially Derrida, 49–52.
13. Georges Bataille, "The Reasons for Writing a Book," trans. Elizabeth Rottenberg, *Yale French Studies* 79 (1991), 11; hereafter cited in the text as Bataille.
14. See Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Authorship from Plato to the Postmodern*, ed. Seán Burke (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 125–130; "Authors and Writers," in *A Barthes Reader*, ed. Susan Sontag (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 185–193.
15. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1968), 222; hereafter cited in the text as Benjamin.
16. Benjamin, 226. Emphasis mine. Benjamin's insight has generally been affirmed by art historians. See especially Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Jean C. Wilson, "Reflections on St. Luke's Hand: Icons and the Nature of Aura in the Burgundian Low Countries during the Fifteenth Century," in *The Sacred Image East and West*, ed. Robert Ousterhout and Leslie Brubaker, Illinois Byzantine Studies, IV (Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 132–146.
17. Fredric Jameson compares the medieval, fourfold interpretation of Scripture (literal, allegorical, tropological, and anagogical) to the Marxist understanding of history in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 29–33. See my chapter on "The Marxist Joan of Arc" in *Joan of Arc and Sacrificial Authorship* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003).
18. *Accessus ad auctores*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970), 35; hereafter cited in the text as *Accessus ad auctores*.
19. Translation mine.
20. Translation mine.
21. Horace, "On the Art of Poetry," trans. T. S. Dorsch, in *Classical Literary Criticism* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1965), [lines 333–337] 90–91. Horace writes: "Poets aim at giving either profit or delight, or at the giving of pleasure with some useful precepts for life" (90).

22. Conrad of Hirsau, *Dialogus super auctores*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970), 104; translation mine (hereafter cited in the text as *Dialogus super auctores*).
23. *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c.1100–c.1375: The Commentary Tradition*, ed. A. J. Minnis and A. B. Scott with the assistance of David Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988, reprinted 1991), 14; hereafter cited in the text as Minnis and Scott.
24. Boethius used "Type C" headings in his commentary on Porphyry's *Isagogue*, and that Boethian introduction seems to have been "the main channel through which it was disseminated in the Latin West" (Minnis, 18). See Quain, 243.
25. On the definition of the audience as *materia*, see my *Political Allegory in Late Medieval England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), especially Chapter 1. On the audience as a "fifth cause" of books, see my "Chaucer's 'Literature Group' and the Medieval Causes of Books," *English Literary History* 59 (1992), 269–287. The latter essay appears in a revised form in my *Chaucer and the Universe of Learning* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).
26. Bernard of Utrecht, *Commentum in Theodolum*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970), 66; hereafter cited in the text as *Commentum in Theodolum.*
27. On the classification of fiction under ethics, see Judson B. Allen, *The Ethical Poetic of the Later Middle Ages: A Decorum of Convenient Distinction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982).
28. [Cicero], *Rhetorica ad Herennium Libri IV*, Loeb Classical Library, ed. and trans. Harry Caplan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954, reprinted 1968), III.ii.3, 160.
29. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* II.4.4., PL 82, c125.
30. *Dialogus super auctores*, 101.
31. Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, trans. H. E. Butler, 4 vols., Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920, reprinted 1969), III.8.22, vol. 1, 490.
32. *Commentum in Theodolum*, 68–69. Emphasis and translation mine.
33. The most powerful statement of the sacramental efficacy of the Bible is perhaps Hebrews 4:12–13: "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And before him no creature is hidden, but all are open and laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do." I quote from *The Holy Bible*, Revised Standard Version (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1966).
34. Minnis and Scott, 71; cf. Minnis, 46.
35. This is, of course, a major topic for Dante scholars. See, for example, David Thompson, "Figure and Allegory in the *Commedia*," *Dante Studies* 90 (1972), 1–11. The difference between the two kinds of allegories is also taken up in Conrad of Hirsau's *Dialogue on the Authors*. See Minnis and Scott, 51.
36. I use the translation in Minnis and Scott, 152; *Commentum quod dicitur Bernardi Silvestris super sex libros Eneidos Virgilii*, ed. Julian Ward Jones and Elizabeth Frances Jones (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977), 2; hereafter cited in the text as Jones and Jones.

37. Minnis and Scott, 152; Jones and Jones, 2.
38. Minnis and Scott, 153; Jones and Jones, 3.
39. For the Latin text, I use *Nova Vulgata Bibliorum Sacrorum* (Rome: Libreria editrice Vaticana, 1986).
40. Luke Timothy Johnson, ed. and trans., *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 420; hereafter cited in the text as Johnson.
41. Johnson, 421. Johnson cites 1 Timothy 4:8, Titus 3:8, Romans 2:25, 1 Corinthians 13:3, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Galatians 5:2, and Plato's *Republic* 607D. Cicero's *De finibus* reflects this tradition, as do Saint Augustine's treatises "On the Usefulness of Belief" and "On the Usefulness of Fasting."
42. See "The Letter to Can Grande" and "The Four Levels of Interpretation" in *Literary Criticism of Dante Alighieri*, trans. and ed. Robert S. Haller (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), 95–111, 112–114. On the question of authorship, see Robert Hollander, *Dante's Epistle to Cangrande* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993).
43. On the Song of Songs as a literal allegory, see my *The Song of Songs in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990, reprinted 1994).
44. Mechthild of Magdeburg, *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*, trans. Frank Tobin, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1998), 32; hereafter cited in the text as *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*.
45. *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*. For this Rule of Tyconius for biblical interpretation, see Saint Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, III.37.55, 115–116.
46. Gertrude of Helfta, *The Herald of Divine Love*, trans. Margaret Winkworth, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1993), 48; hereafter cited in the text as *The Herald of Divine Love*.
47. Francesca's use of the word "Galeotto" alludes to Galehault, who served as a go-between for Lancelot and Guinevere. Chaucer also refers obliquely to this episode in "The Nun's Priest's Tale." The role of the romance in determining the fate of real-life lovers was an example that troubled the consciences of both Dante and Chaucer. See Karla Taylor, *Chaucer Reads "The Divine Comedy"* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989).
48. *The Herald of Divine Love*, 47. Notice the echo of the first creation of humankind in Paradise, when God breathed into Adam (Genesis 2:7).
49. Thomas Ryba, personal correspondence to Ann Astell, dated November 15, 1999; quoted with permission.
50. *For a Critique of the Political Economy*, 123.
51. F. N. Robinson, ed., *The Poetical Works of Chaucer* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1933). All quotations from Chaucer's works are taken from this edition with citations listed parenthetically by fragment and line number.
52. Cf. Minnis, 190–210. Minnis emphasizes that Chaucer "was an author who hid behind the 'shield and defence' of the compiler" (210).
53. I wish to thank the members of the New Chaucer Society's e-seminar on Rhetoric and History (Martin Camargo, Rita Copeland, Mary Carruthers, Georgiana Donavin, Richard Gleizer, Robin Hass Birky, Peter Mack, Timothy L. Spence, Denise Stodola, Scott D. Troyan, and Marjorie Curry Woods) for their initial response to this investigation at the NCS Meeting held in London, England, in July 2000.

4

The Prioress's *Oratio ad Mariam* and Medieval Prayer Composition

Timothy L. Spence

In all this discussion, what is important is the structural fact—the a priori *fact—that is, that late medieval poetry is what it is because one reached the making of it through certain forms of thought.*

—**Judson Allen, *The Ethical Poetic of the Later Middle Ages***

Si enim pure oraueris, auxilium habebis.

—**Richard Rolle, *Emendatio vitae***

Introduction

This paper discusses similarities found between the compositional method used by Chaucer through the poetic *persona* of his Prioress to compose prayers to the Virgin Mary and the compositional techniques developed in the pastoral manuals and other so-called *artes orandi* of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[1] There is a common, discernible structure in the Prioress's *Oratio ad Mariam* that reflects a particular genre-type encompassed by a more general theory of prayer composition taught and practiced in England in the late fourteenth century. This prayer-oriented compositional theory was a mature and deliberate application of the general theories of verbal composition derived from the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition outlined in such primary school texts as Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova* and *Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi*, Matthew of Vendôme's *Ars versificatoria*, and John of Garland's *Poetria parisiana*, among others.[2] A better understanding of the rhetorical roots of this method of prayer composition should enable modern scholars to discern similarities between the structures of particular genres of prayers on the one

hand and the structures of other verbal compositions produced in a widely diverse group of medieval texts on the other. One might, for example, begin to discern similarities in the composition of an epistle, as outlined in the numerous *artes dictaminis* of the late thirteenth century, and the composition of prayers such as the one composed by Chaucer's Prioress in her tale's prologue.

It is also hoped that the discussion of the formal characteristics of the type of prayer Chaucer uses to construct his Prioress's prologue will strengthen our understanding of the Prioress's *persona*; for, though she claims rhetorical ignorance, the structuring of her prologue and tale is similar to liturgical structures of the late fourteenth century.[3] It can be argued that the fashioning of this larger structure was done by Chaucer the poet; but we must at least consider the possibility that Chaucer crafted his Prioress's poetic *persona* in such a way that would be harmonious with the structure she helps him, as the poet's medium, fashion in her tale. The notion that the Prioress's *persona* should be considered in relationship to the discursive structure of her prologue and tale is strengthened by the fact that the Prioress repeatedly inserts herself into this structure through a series of apostrophes and supplications. The Prioress's interaction with the very traditional liturgical structure of her tale occurs often enough that Alfred David concludes:

> The poem and the Prioress help explain one another. They reveal between them a new and fashionable religiosity that combines gentility with emotion, decorousness with enthusiasm. . . . [Hers] is a sentimental religiosity that worships beauty as a version of truth (157).

Since the Prioress's prayer serves as a structural link-pin between prologue and tale,[4] a more comprehensive understanding of this prayer's formal characteristics should also yield deeper insights into her *persona* and the socio-historical context in which it would have operated in late-fourteenth-century England. Finally, though such contributions lie beyond the scope of this work, it is hoped that a fuller understanding of how Chaucer constructed his Prioress's *persona* might also contribute to a clearer understanding of Chaucer's ephemeral, satiric voice that haunts this piece and that has drawn the attention of so many scholars who have worked on it in the second half of the twentieth century.[5]

Before analyzing the similarities found between the Prioress's *Oratio ad Mariam* and fourteenth-century rhetoric of prayer, however, it is necessary to review a few critical generalizations that the nature of this present essay forces me to use without fleshing out as fully as I do elsewhere.[6] The first of these generalizations allows that a significant percentage of all verbal composition in the later Middle Ages stemmed from practical adaptations of a small but complex group of rhetorical strategies with pre-Christian, Greco-Roman roots.[7] The commonality of this rhetorical method suggests that the medieval literate would not have discerned between the composition of a lyric and the composition of

a prayer in the same manner that, for example, a twentieth- or twenty-first-century scholar might in retrospect.[8] Where modern editors have tended to make textual divisions based primarily on a twentieth-century understanding of the collected poems' content,[9] the medieval composers of the texts in question would have also focused on the form and style of their compositions in the creation of textual meaning in ways outside the theoretical spectrum of most twentieth-century scholarship.[10] When analyzed from the perspective of textual composition, the activity of composing a prayer to the Virgin Mary and the activity of composing a lyric to one's beloved both would have activated similar processes of closely related rhetorical techniques, most falling under the traditional rhetorical activities of *inventio*, *elocutio*, and *dispositio*.[11] It is highly unlikely that the heuristic similarities involved in these two examples would have escaped the notice of a literate individual engaged in the composition of a prayer at one moment and in the composition of a lyric at another.[12] It is therefore a goal of this essay to suggest how the structure of Chaucer's *Oratio ad Mariam* reflects an application of a rhetorical method of composition, the general tenets of which were available to medieval *oratores* such as Chaucer in both theoretical texts on affective prayer composition as well as exemplary prayers that demonstrated this compositional theory in practice.[13]

Richard Rolle represents the rhetorical theory informing fourteenth-century affective prayer composition for the purposes of this essay, and this for two reasons. First, Rolle wrote theoretical pieces on the compositional practice of two types of affective prayer quite prevalent in the later Middle Ages: penitential prayer and *pura oratio*, or "pure prayer."[14] *Pura oratio* is a genre of prayer defined by Hugh of St. Victor in his treatise *De modo orandi*. The affective nature of this genre is revealed in the elaborate, juridical-based metaphor Hugh uses to define it:

> Pura oratio est, quando ex abundanta devotionis mens ita accenditur, ut cum se ad Deum postulatura converterit, prae amoris eius magnitudine etiam petitionis suae obliviscatur; et dum amore eius, quem videt, perfrui vehementer concupiscit totaque iam illi vacare desiderat,[15] eius etiam pro quo venit, curam libenter postponat. Hoc genus orandi in forma est, et quam prae caeteris omnibus unicum, tam est apud Deum prae caeteris omnibus pretiosum. Sed inter haec tria supplicationum genera infirmum locum captatio, medium exactio, supremum et excellentissimum pura oratio obtinet.[16]

> (*Pura oratio* is, when, out of an abundance of devotion the mind is so inflamed that, about to make a claim to God, it becomes so transformed before the magnitude of his Love it even forgets the petition. While on account of the Love of whom she sees, she urgently desires to enjoy [him]; and to abandon all to give him her leisure, she freely sets aside her care for him for whom she comes. In form, this genre of praying is as unique before all others as it is precious before

> all others in the eyes of God. Among these three genres of supplication, *captatio* holds the lowest position, *exactio* the middle, and *pura oratio* the highest and most distinguished.)

Three generic characteristics of *pura oratio* that can be immediately gleaned from this definition are: This genre of prayer is affective; its composition originates in Divine Love; and its expression is of the high style allowed by Augustine in *De doctrina christiana* as a spontaneous flowing forth of divine eloquence.[17] Rolle's chapter on praying in his *Emendatio vitae* is theoretically focused on this particular genre of prayer.

In addition to his theoretical/didactic tracts, Rolle composed numerous affective prayers celebrating the name of *Ihesu*, as well as several long treatises that are consciously structured like songs, or psalms, of praise to God.[18] For the purposes of this essay, these "literary" pieces represent Rolle's specific applications of the theory of affective prayer composition outlined in his didactic works.[19] Considered as such, we can begin to see in Rolle's works both a theory and practice of affective prayer composition formulated by the same author. This dual perspective allows for a particularly illuminating vantage point into one component of the complex rhetorical milieu of the first half of fourteenth-century England. Rolle thus serves as an interlocutor between the general compositional theory articulated by the major *artes* of the thirteenth century and the compositional method of Chaucer's Prioress in the production of the *Oratio ad Mariam* and the subsequent tale.

Lectio

Chaucer reintroduces his reader to the Prioress in preparation for her tale through a dramatic series of events, which I will here rehearse in brief to frame the discursive context within which the Prioress composes her prayer. Our scene opens with Harry Bailey's bastardization of the oath "*corpus domini*," spoken in response to the Shipman's tale: "Wel seyd, by *corpus dominus*" (line 435). Then, after drawing the conclusion that we should beware all monks, he turns with a shift in style to the Prioress, asking her "as curteisly as it had been a mayde" if she would tell the next story.[20]

The Prioress responds to the Host's request for a tale by using the substance of his vulgar oath as the commonplace for composing her own prayer and subsequent tale.[21] She begins by recalling Psalms 8:1–3, a hymn addressed to "*noster Dominus*":

> Domine Dominus noster quam admirabile est nomen tuum in universa terra quoniam elevata est magnificentia tua super caelos ex ore infantium et lactantium perfecisti laudem propter inimicos tuos ut destruas inimicum et ultorem.

(Oh Lord, my Lord, how wonderful is your name throughout all the world, since your magnificence is raised above the heavens; because of your enemies you have perfected your praise from the mouth of infants suckling so that you might destroy your enemy and avenger.)[22]

The Prioress's translation of this verse can also be read as a gloss underscoring her compositional intent; for she twice amplifies the psalm's singular *laudem*—first with the descriptive image of men of dignity, and a second time through the expanded description of children's mouths performing laud to the Lord:[23]

O Lord, oure Lord, thy name how merveilous
Is in this large world ysprad—quod she—
For nat only thy laude precious
Parfourned is by men of dignitee,
But by the mouth of children thy bountee
Parfourned is, for on the brest soukinge
Sometime shewen they thyn heryinge. (lines 453–459)

The Prioress's intention in the composition of her tale is—like the innocent children invoked in these lines—to praise her Lord, whom Harry Bailey's oath had in ignorance just defiled.[24]

Once the Prioress has quoted and commented on this appropriate psalm, thereby introducing her intention to praise, she then utters a prayer that in its compositional structure contains the traces of a complex heuristic process of rhetorical invention applied in the expression of both prayer and tale in a manner appropriate to her intention, subject matter, and audience. The verse she has just translated, for example, gives her important compositional *materia* with its image of the suckling child, for this image invokes that of the Christ child at Mary's bosom.[25] It is from this fecund image of Divine Love that the Prioress discovers and subsequently develops her compositional theme in greater detail: She will praise her *Dominus* by amplifying the divine paradox that is his Virgin Mother.[26] With this freshly arranged, archetypal theme in the inner chamber of her mind, the Prioress begins to compose a prayer asking Mary to help her lowly self to embody her intended praise with proper stylistic decorum:[27]

O moder maide, O maide moder free!
O bussh unbrent, brenning in Moises sighte!
That ravisshedest down fro the deitee,
Thurgh thyn humblesse, the gost that in th'alighte,
Of whose vertu whan he thyn herte lighte,
Conceived was the Fadres sapience:
Help me to tell it in thy reverence. (lines 467–473)[28]

Her prayer, consisting of this and two subsequent stanzas, is exemplary of the closely related functions of rhetorical invention and the development of style—of *inventio*, *elocutio*, and *dispositio*—as they were realized in fourteenth-century prayer composition. Therefore, we now turn to an initial clarification of the theoretical relationship among these three rhetorical functions within the context of fourteenth-century prayer composition. This theoretical clarification will, in turn, inform our analysis of the Prioress's *Oratio ad Mariam* with a critical perspective that is endemic to the prayer's own historical context.

The mental activities that make up the process of *inventio*—the contemplation of one's theme and the discovery of one's archetype—are, of course, cognitive processes, and therefore lie beyond the material remains of the resulting textual artifact. However, fourteenth-century *auctores* working within all types of rhetorical contexts crystallized these processes through literary forms common to the discursive tradition chosen as part of the compositional process.[29] The verbal adornment that fashions each of these forms (*elocutio*) and the overall structural relationship among the various forms within any particular composition (*dispositio*) seem to have been two major components of both medieval textual composition and textual interpretation.[30] Through the *forma tractandi*—as it enables the analysis of the base-text's *elocutio*—and the *forma tractatus*—as it enables the analysis of the base-text's *dispositio*—the commentator gains access to the author's *intentio*.[31] As a result of this complex relationship, the analysis of a medieval literary composition's form and style will reveal traces of the important compositional technique of *inventio*.[32] Such a hermeneutic is possible because the textual formulation of any given *intentio auctoris*—especially in such a formal application as a prayer of praise to the Virgin Mother—would have been, from at least Anselm forward, governed by the relatively standard technique of rhetorical *inventio*.[33] From the middle of the thirteenth century on, the acquisition of this technique had fallen almost completely under the auspices of *grammatica*, the traditional field of hermeneutics from antiquity forward.[34] It is within this critical context that I have interwoven an analysis of the Prioress's prayer with an explication of a more general rhetoric of prayer along two parallel lines: *forma tractandi* and *forma tractatus*.

Forma tractandi

Rolle's chapter on prayer in his *Emendatio vitae* is a useful resource for appreciating how English *oratores* of the fourteenth century understood the rhetorical style of prayer composition in terms of its *forma tractandi*. The *Emendatio*, assumed to be one of Rolle's later Latin works,[35] provides a model for the pursuit of lived perfection, and has much in common with works such as Richard of St. Victor's *Benjamin* texts, his *De quator gradibus violentae charitatis*, Guigo II's *Scala claustralium*, Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*, and the *Cloud*-author's

Book of Wisdom and *Letter on Prayer*. In addition to acting as a guidebook for the individual realization of an intimate experience of Divine Wisdom, or Love, Rolle's *Emendatio* has an implicitly rhetorical component to it, in that it is an attempt to articulate a method of prayer composition in such a way that his readers might practice its techniques in their own prayer composition.[36]

Rolle introduces this chapter's topic, the practice of prayer, in its first two sentences, which describe the state of mind out of which prayer emerges: "Si in temptacione uel in tribulacione positus fueris, mox ad oracionem recurras. Si enim pure oraueris, auxilium habebis" (50) [If you shall ever find yourself in temptation or tribulation, return immediately to prayer; for, if you pray purely, you will have help].[37] The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to explaining the method of *pure orare*.[38] Rolle spends the first half of this section describing in practical terms what is best identified as a process of *inventio*, particularized to the context of daily prayer, which, for the spiritually advanced, should consist primarily of *pura oratio*.[39] Rolle begins his description of the inventional process associated with *pura oratio* by describing the emotional state out of which pure prayer must arise and against which it must define itself as an ordering of inchoate *materia*:

> Veniunt quandoque dispersiones et evagaciones cordis, et cogitaciones rapiunt ad diversa, nec sinunt cor stare in laude Dei (50).
>
> (Whenever dispersed thoughts and wanderings of the heart carry it towards diverse matters, they do not allow your heart to stand in praise of God.)

Rolle emphasizes that such a vagrant state of mind is incapable of praising his Lord, and thereby implies that only a mind well disciplined with a method that aids the *orator* in focusing on a particular commonplace will be able to compose *purae orationes*.

Rolle continues his discussion of the process of *inventio* by suggesting appropriate commonplaces as sources for decorous prayer: "Tunc forte bonum esset per aliquod momentum *de divinis* meditari, donec mens stabiliatur, et sic oraciones complere" [Then, perhaps it might be good to meditate for a bit on divine matters, until the mind might be stabilized, and thus complete (your) prayers (50, emphasis added)]. Rolle clarifies the ambiguity of "*de divinis*" by giving a more detailed account of the process he is describing, and it is in this more detailed account that he suggests an appropriate heuristic used by "prayer experts":

> In illis quippe viris qui longo exercicio ad orandum in consuetudine habent, aliquando maiorem suauitatem et feruencius desiderium orandi inueniunt. . . . Quando vero cessauerit . . . possunt ad meditandum scripturas sanctas, uel aliquid aliud agendum utile accedere (ita tamen quod cogitacionem a Deo euagari non permittant), ut cum statim ad orandum se erexerint ardenciores sint quam fuerint (50).

> (Indeed, those men, who through much training are in the habit of prayer, sometimes discover a greater sweetness and more fervent desire for praying. . . . Whenever it might cease, however, . . . they are able to take up meditating on holy scriptures, or doing something else that is helpful [in such a way that they do not allow their thought to wander from God], so that when they will have lifted themselves [again] to praying, they will be more ardent than they had been [before].)

Rolle's *de divinis* are here clarified as either *scripturas sanctas* upon which one should meditate, or any other activity that locks the mind on God (*non permittere cogitacionem a Deo euagari*). As such, *de divinis* here function in the same way as the *locum certum* that Geoffrey of Vinsauf charges his reader to take up in order that the art of rhetoric might subdue the mind.[40] For Rolle, this divine material serves as a cornerstone for a compositional method mastered by those men long in the habit of prayer, a method that restricts the mind from wandering from the fecund place that is God's Word.[41] The *materia* for all "pure" prayer is, for Rolle, to be found in God, his host of saints, and his Divine Word.[42]

Rolle closes his description of *inventio* with a summation of what he has just described, even as he transitions into a discussion of style, or what might be called "*elocutio orandi*":

> Tunc enim veraciter oramus cum de alio non cogitamus, sed tota nostra intencio ad summa dirigitur, et animus noster igne Sancti Spiritus inflammatur. Sic profecto in nobis mira affluencia bonitatis divine inuenitur, quia ex intimis medullis cordis nostris exurget amor Dei, et tota oracio nostra cum affectu et effectu erit; ut iam non uerba in oracione transcurramus, sed omnes eciam pene sillabas, cum clamore valido et desiderio incense, Deo nostro offeremus (50).

> (For we pray truthfully when we think about nothing else, but direct all our intention to the uppermost, and our spirit is inflamed by the flame of the Holy Spirit. Thus, assuredly is the wonderful abundance of divine goodness found in us, since God's love rises forth from the inner marrow of our heart, and all of our prayer will be with love and effect, so that we shall not hasten through the words in our prayer, but rather shall we offer every syllable fully to our Lord, with strong voice and kindled desire.)

Here Rolle articulates the relationship between *inventio* and *elocutio*: Once the *orator* has cleared his or her thoughts of all but the topic of prayer, a wonderful flowing forth of divine eloquence is "discovered" within.[43] Rolle's divine eloquence, gained by this process of *inventio* described above, thereby allows the *orator* to offer each syllable to the Lord with strong voice and burning desire. The vehicle and tenor of this closing metaphor resembles Vinsauf's advice in his *Poetria nova*, in particular its opening metaphor:

> Si quis habet fundare domum, non currit ad actum
> Impetuosa manus: intrinseca linea cordis
> Praemetitur opus, seriemque sub ordine certo

> Interior praescribit homo, totamque figurat
> Ante manus cordis quam corporis; et status ejus
> Est prius archetypus quam sensilis. Ipsa poesis
> Spectet in hoc speculo quae lex sit danda poetis
> Non manus ad calamum praeceps, non ligua sit ardens
> Ad verbum: neutram mainbus committe regendam
> Fortunae; sed mens discreta praeambula facti,
> Ut melius fortunet opus, suspendat earum
> Officium, tractetque diu de themate secum. (lines 43–54)

> (If a man has a house to build, his impetuous hand does not rush into action. The measuring line of his mind first lays out the work, and he mentally outlines the successive steps in a definite order. The mind's hand shapes the entire house before the body's hand builds it. Its mode of being is archetypal before it is actual. Poetic art may see in this analogy the law to be given to poets: let the poet's hand not be swift to take up the pen, nor his tongue be impatient to speak; trust neither hand nor tongue to the guidance of fortune. . . . [L]et the discriminating mind, as a prelude to action, defer the operation of hand and tongue, and ponder long on the subject matter.)

Both Vinsauf and Rolle call for a discriminating mind that reflects long on its subject matter before acting in composition.[44] For Rolle, the primary *materia* to be pondered by the *orator* is Divine Love, the discovery of which both precedes and enables the *mira affluencia bonitatis* in the well-spoken words and syllables of pure prayer.[45]

Rolle continues his discussion of prayer composition by describing another effect of the affective style appropriate to the sublime *materia* of pure prayer:

> Incenso enim corde nostro amore feruido, eciam oracio ipsa incenditur, et in odorem suauitatis ex ore nostro in conspectus Dei adoletur, vt magna iocunditas sit orare, quia dum in oracione ineffabilis dulcor oranti infunditur, ipsa oracio in iubilum commutator (50–51).

> (For, with my heart kindled with fervid love, even my prayer itself is inflamed, and smolders from my mouth with a sweet odor in God's sight, so that it is a great delight to pray; since, while the ineffable sweetness of the one praying is infused into the prayer, the prayer itself is changed into joy.)

The fiery image conveyed by the noun phrase "*incenso . . . fervido*," as well as the verbs "*incenditur*" and "*adoletur*" are all common to the mystical traditions of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[46] Here, however, the *odorem suauitatis* that is offered up *ex ore nostro* links this flamboyant quality to rhetorical style. This style's ardent nature makes the activity of prayer itself a great joy: The ineffable sweetness of God's love discovered through the process of invention described by Rolle above imbues the language of *pura oratio* with stylistic intensity, the affectivity of which converts the prayer itself to an act of joy. For Rolle,

style not only affects meaning, but is also integral to its composition.[47] The medieval *orator*, it seems, used rhetorical skill to become the medium of God's own divine message; only then, when the art of memory had subdued the mind and assisted in the discovery and contemplation of ineffable *materia*, would the full sweetness of God's love have flown forth in the *forma tractandi* of pure prayer.[48]

The *materia* for fourteenth-century *oratores* concerned with expressing prayers discovered in the commonplaces associated with the concept Divine Love was often beyond the realm of human understanding. Such is the case with Chaucer's Prioress, for example, who takes up as her *materia* the divine paradox of the Blessed Virgin Mother.[49] The style, or *forma tractandi*, of the Prioress's prayer is an appropriate amplification of this sublime theme. For example, the prayer begins with a chiasmus, a rhetorical figure that enacts a crossing out, and therewith invokes the Virgin Mother: "O mooder Mayde, O mayde Mooder free" (line 466). The Prioress then offers a typological symbol of that same paradox in the image of the burning bush: "O bussh unbrent, brennynge in Moyses sighte" (line 467).[50] The next three lines continue to amplify her paradoxical *materia*, for the Virgin is said to have ravished the Holy Spirit with her humility in the conception of the Christ child: "That ravyshedest doun fro the Deitee, / Thurgh thyn humblesse, the Goost that in th'alighte" (lines 468–469). For a woman of "wayk konnyng," the Prioress is pressing her rhetoric to the limits of meaning with rather deft artistry.[51]

The first three lines of the prayer's second stanza trace the reason—the archetype—informing the Prioress's affective style:

> Lady, thy bountee, thy magnificence,
> Thy vertu and thy grete humylitee
> Ther may no tonge expresse in no science. (lines 474–476)

The Virgin Mary is an ineffable subject matter for those confined to human speech. Rather than giving up the possibility of expressing the sublime nature of her subject matter in words, however, these very lines can be seen as an articulation of a heuristic device that the Prioress invokes to discover topics of praise for the composition of her tale dedicated to the Blessed Mother. The Prioress's invocation calls to mind several of the Virgin's virtues: Goodness, Magnificence, Moral Excellence, Grace, and Humility. The Virgin Mary embodies, in a sense, a catalogue of *communes loci*—a *speculum virtuorum* containing images of virtuous topics—to be used as heuristic devices by poets and *oratores* alike in the composition of hymns, songs, and prayers to the Blessed Mother.[52] The Prioress calls upon the Virgin Mother's grace, that—despite her ignorance, like the children in the Mass of the Holy Innocents with which she has begun and the child protagonist of her tale to follow—she might find the proper magnificence to decorously praise her Lord and her Holy Mother in song.

Forma tractatus

The Prioress's prayer to the Holy Mother also preserves traces of a stylistic development of the *forma tractatus* common to English *oratores* during the fourteenth century. Since Chaucer's *forma tractatus* grew out of this preexisting tradition of forms appropriate to *pura oratio*, it is necessary to return to the theoretical texts of Rolle and Hugh of St. Victor for a broader, critical perspective of compositional form before analyzing the Prioress's structuring of her prayer. Though we must look outside of Rolle's own text to find the generic distinction that clarifies the contemporary nomenclature of the chapter's subject matter, his *de oratione* is explicitly focused on a genre of prayer that he identifies as *pura oratio*: "si enim *pure oraueris*, auxilium habebis" (emphasis mine). Likewise, in *De modo orandi*, Hugh of St. Victor seems particularly interested in *pura oratio*, though he is quite clear that it is only one of three genres, and that these three genres all belong to the first of three general "species" of prayer.[53] There is clearly some theoretical expatiation to be found between Hugh and Rolle's comments on *pura oratio*. Rolle seems, for instance, to collapse all three subgenres of *suplicatio—pura oratio*, *captatio*, and *exactio*—into one all-encompassing notion of *pura oratio*. Nevertheless, it seems safe to assume that, despite his theoretical differences with Hugh, Rolle consciously limits his discussion to a particular genre of prayer that was distinct in form and purpose from other genres of prayer commonly used in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and that he considers *pura*.[54] What Rolle has to say about the *forma tractatus* of prayer in *Emendatio vitae*'s seventh chapter, *de oratione*, is, other words, applicable specifically to the genre *pura oratio* as he understands it to be sometime in the second quarter of the fourteenth century.

Despite its limited perspective, Rolle's text still provides some useful formal information that helps identify the Prioress's *Oratio ad Mariam* as an example of late-fourteenth-century *pura oratio*. For example, Rolle opens the final paragraph in this chapter by emphasizing the highly affective nature of *pura oratio*:

> Hic reprehenduntur quidam qui magis meditacioni quam oracioni indulgent, nescientes quod eloquium Dei ignitum sit, quo et purgantur sordes peccatorum et inflammantur amore mentes orancium. Dicunt se prius uelle meditari ut sic possent cor stabilire; sed eo tardius ad stabilimentum perducitur, quo illi ad continue orandum non confortantur (51).
>
> (Here, those who indulge in meditation more than in prayer must be censured, ignorant as they are that God's eloquence might be ignited, through which the minds of those praying are both purged of sin's stains and kindled to [divine] love. They say they would rather meditate to quiet their heart; but those who are not comfortable with continual prayer find this stability so much the later.)

Rolle makes an effort to explain that *pura oratio* is more affective even than meditation,[55] since, according to Rolle, *pura oratio* simultaneously purges, calms, and kindles the orator's soul.[56] That divine eloquence has such a singular affectivity seems to be related to the form of the prayer as it is experienced as a whole: "the minds of those praying" are kindled to love by the prayers they rehearse. This experiential component of *pura oratio*'s affectivity seems to be related to its *forma tractatus*.

Hugh's *De modo orandi* helps clarify how the *forma tractatus* of *pura oratio* contributes to its affective function. Unlike Rolle, however, Hugh divides the effects of purgation, soothing, and kindling of the soul—the three components of Rolle's *pura oratio*—into his three specific genres of *supplicatio*:

> Sed inter haec tria supplicationum genera infimum locum captatio, medium exactio, supremum et excellentissimum pura oratio obtinet. Quia captatio timorem, exactio fiduciam, pura oratio perfectum habet amorem (PL 176, 980.B).
>
> (But among these three genres of supplicatio, captatio holds the lowest place, exactio the middle, and pura oratio the premier and loftiest; since captatio has perfected fear, exactio assurance, pura oratio love.)

Hugh's division of *supplicatio*'s affective functions among three genres seems based on the three levels of rhetorical style as they relate to the prayer's subject matter. For Hugh, *materia* determines the form and genre of the prayer, which work to fulfill the prayer's intended, affective function. For example, fear generates forms that purge the soul, assurance forms that calm, and love forms that kindle the soul. According to Hugh, if the *materia* of a particular prayer is generated from commonplaces of fear, then the genre of the prayer will be *captatio*, and its form will be composed of nouns and verbs alike. If, on the other hand, the prayer's *materia* is discovered in the commonplaces of Divine Love, then the genre will be *pura oratio*, and its form will be composed of nouns alone. Hugh explains this equation in detail:

> Sciendum est etiam, quod supplicatio aliquando fit per sola nomina[, a]liquando per sola verba[, a]liquando simul per nomina et verba. . . . Sed illud genus supplicationis, quod per sola nomina fit, quo magis est foris significatione imperfectum, tanto magis intus est abundantia dilectionis plenum. Affectus enim hoc proprium habet, quo quanto major et ferventior intus est, tanto minus foris per vocem explicari potest. Illud vero genus supplicationis, quod per sola verba exprimitur, minorem quidem isto devotionem indicat, majorem autem illo, quod nominibus simul et verbis, plena videlicet significatione pronuntiatur. Illud igitur, quod solis nominibus fit, ad puram orationem pertinere videtur, quod solis verbis ad exactionem, quod nominibus simul et verbis ad captationem (PL 176, 980.B–D).

> (It should be known, however, that supplicatio might sometimes be [formed] through nouns alone, other times through verbs alone, sometimes through nouns and verbs. But that genre of supplicatio, which might be [formed] through nouns alone [i.e., *pura oratio*], as much as it is imperfect in its external signification [i.e., *forma tractatus*], so much so is it internally filled with an abundance of affection [i.e., *forma tractandi*]. For affection has this characteristic, by which however great and fervent it is inwardly, so much the less able is one to articulate [it] outwardly with one's voice. In fact, that genre of supplicatio expressed through verbs alone indeed indicates a lesser devotion than this genre, though more than the one which might be pronounced clearly with full signification through nouns and verbs alike. That, therefore, which might be [formed] through nouns alone, seems to pertain to pura oratio; that through verbs alone, exactio; that through verbs and nouns alike, captatio.)

Again, Hugh seems to root style (*elocutio*) and structure (*dispositio*) in the prayer's affective subject matter.[57] While the individual nouns chosen to invoke *pura oratio*'s subject matter might be aureate—even flamboyant in the Prioress's case—the word's external arrangement remains "imperfect" since it lacks verbal clarification that might complete the image introduced by the noun catalogue. It is, we might assume, the noun catalogue's verbal incompleteness that structures without closing off the ineffable welling-up of emotion associated with the archetypes used to generate *pura oratio*. The result of such a *forma tractatus* is the same as that claimed by Rolle: The soul in both cases is kindled to Divine Love by the experience of the *pura oratio*'s *forma tractatus*, or overall form. Though Rolle's theory clearly modifies Hugh's earlier, more complex conception of affective prayer by collapsing its sister genres into the highest form of *supplicatio*, we can safely say that in early-fourteenth-century England, *pura oratio* still had its own, significant, or signifying, form that an *orator* activated by discovering a proper, affective archetype within his or her own soul.

The image of the Blessed Virgin Mary was just such an emotional archetype to the Prioress in the composition of her prayer, and she activates a modification of the affective *forma tractatus* proper to *pura oratio* as described by Hugh above.[58] As P. M. Kean demonstrates in *The Art of Narrative*, the "imperfect" *forma tractatus* was still commonly used by *oratores* in the fourteenth century. In fact, Chaucer himself uses it in his *ABC*, his longer *Oratio ad Mariam* from which he pulls several of the images for the Prioress's *Oratio*. Kean explains that:

> The *ABC*, presumably written before he came under Italian influence, reproduces the familiar, fourteenth-century mode of writing, in which imagery is discursively presented and in which there is little clear thematic development. Each image or figure, in poetry of this type, stands alone, and one image cannot take fire from another. . . . Here the types and figures of the Virgin are set out in a list, without any attempt at connection or systematic development (197).

Kean then quotes as an example of the older "mode" of writing a stanza from William of Shoreham's poem to the Virgin:

> Thou art the boshe of Sinai,
> Thou art the righte Sarray;
> Thou hast ibrought ous out of cry
> Of calenge of the Fende;
> Thou art Cristes owene drury
> And of Davies kende. (lines 19–24; quoted by Kean, 197)

Returning to lines already cited above, we see that Chaucer follows this traditional *forma* in setting up his presentation of the ideas bound up within the Blessed Virgin Mother in the second stanza of the Prioress's *oratio*, the prayer's central stanza:[59]

> Lady, thy bountee, thy magnificence,
> Thy vertu and thy grete humylitee. (lines 474–475)

Having firmly established his composition within the genre of *pura oratio* by the verbal incompleteness of this catalogue of nominal attributes, Chaucer draws attention to the endemic ineffability of his chosen genre: "Ther may no tonge express in no science" (line 476). He then proceeds to modify this genre's form by supplying a *narratio* that presents an image of the prayer's *petitio* being fulfilled by its addressee:[60]

> For somtyme, Lady, er men praye to thee,
> Thou goost biforn of thy benyngnytee,
> And getest us the light, of thy preyere,
> To gyden us unto thy Sone so deere. (lines 477–480)

These four lines describe the overaching idea conveyed by this *oratio*: They present Mary guiding prayer "unto thy Sone so deere." The Prioress's prayer is that her *petitio* receive such benevolence, and be answered before it is even uttered. The second stanza's *narratio* presents an image that fulfills the Prioress's *petitio* articulated in stanzas one and three; the two parts work together to illuminate her prayer's central message.

This embodiment or enactment of the *petitio*'s fulfillment is a common aspect of epistles where "difficult matter be unavoidable," according to John of Garland in his *Parisiana poetria*.[61] For example, the second exemplary letter provided by John in Chapter 2 deals with the difficult *materia* of requesting a promotion from an abbot where one had not been given. John's epistle introduces its *petitio* in its first two sentences:

> Ad altare sanctum non vrtice mordaces sed amena lilia collocantur. R., lator presentium, conformis lilio castitatis albedine, doctrinamque Theologie redolens, pridem promeruit ad altaris ministeria pomoueri. (34, 35)

> (On the holy altar we set, not biting nettles, but pleasant lilies. R., the bearer of this letter, like to the lily in the whiteness of his chastity, and redolent of the teaching of Theology, has long since merited to be promoted to the ministry of the altar)

The following sentence provides a *narratio* that it focuses on the *petitio*'s fulfillment, thus providing an image of the letter's central idea in much the same manner as the Prioress's second stanza: "Vnde, cum a Sanctitatis Uestre gratia spem susceperit de beneficio concedendo, vestre concessionis gratiam prestolatur" (34, 35) ["In view of that, and since he has taken hope from the kindness of Your Holiness that he will be given a benefice, he is now expecting the kindness of the actual grant from you"]. In prayer and letter alike, the depiction of the composition's central point also contains a description of the audience's desired response; that is to say, the audience in both cases is depicted as the subject of the *narratio*'s action verb.

The affective structure of the Prioress's prayer emanates from an amenable image of the Blessed Virgin Mother guiding prayer to her Child. Having introduced this image in the prayer's first stanza, and having then clarified her prayer's overarching idea in the second stanza, the Prioress then develops her own *ethos* in the prayer's final stanza. The identification with simple, childlike innocence is decorous, since it legitimizes the affective *forma tractatus* of both prayer and the tale to follow. In fact, the development of the child *ethos* in the prayer's final stanza, linked through the *petitio*'s content to the "song" that follows, indicates that the Prioress is positioning herself for an extended composition within the already established genre of *pura oratio*. We can see, through the structuring of the Prioress's childlike *ethos*, the benevolent depiction of the Blessed Virgin Mother's *persona*, and the enactment of the prayer's main idea, that the prayer is meant to be affective: It is meant to persuade Mary to bless the Prioress's tale. The prayer also clearly links itself to the tale that follows in both the first and final stanzas. Since the *materia* of tale and prayer are the same (the Virgin Mother), it seems safe to assume that the Prioress, as an *orator*, conceived her tale as an extended prayer. Based on this assumption, the opening prayer's success is realized in the affectivity of the song that follows.[62]

Conclusion

In prayers as well as in poems, forms of rhetorical composition presented their medieval composer with certain technical options through an acquired, i.e., learned, method of composition. The composer developed his or her capacity for style within any particular method of composition by mastering the complex heuristic network governing the selection of specific compositional elements from a ready-to-hand catalogue of potential elements in any given compositional moment. The choice of form, in turn, was determined by the concept of decorum

learned as a component of literacy; in any given compositional moment, the concurrence of audience expectation and the composer's specific intention limit what forms the composer may apply to any particular subject matter in order to get the desired response from his or her audience.[63] The more comfortable a medieval composer became with the decorous demands and formal options surrounding a particular compositional moment, the more developed his or her list of choices at any given moment became.[64] Style was primarily a function of the medieval composer's ability first to discern compositional options within a large, yet limited potential set, and then to make function-oriented judgments by coordinating all options with a primary, overarching intention.[65]

Rhetoric provided the training for using these heuristic techniques, as well as the primary tools used in their subsequent development. As the corporate structure of the church grew, the types of activities that the literate individual found him- or herself in became more diverse and fragmented. With the reinvigoration of interest in Ciceronian rhetoric during the eleventh and twelfth centuries came the modernization of older compositional techniques. This modernization in part particularized the more generic methods of rhetorical composition found in Cicero's *Inventio* and the Pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium* into the cracks and crevices of every department of the catholic literary edifice. This particularization seems to have been fragmentary, with certain rhetorical *artes*—such as the three main *artes* outlined by J. J. Murphy's *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*—spawning their own, subsequent *artes*. Contemporary scholarship seems to still be in the process of unearthing the particular departments of composition that resulted from rhetoric's institutionalization during the later Middle Ages.

It is clear that prayer was an institution with its own particularized and clearly discernible rhetorical method of composition developed in the wake of the Ciceronian renaissance of the twelfth century.[66] We know that prayer had species and genres, that there existed heuristic techniques of *inventio*, that decorum governed the style and form of prayers in terms of *elocutio* and *dispositio*. We also know that prayers were offered publicly as exemplars to be imitated and/or used by others in prayer composition.[67] Surviving manuscripts of prayer-related books indicate that these compositions were quite precious and that they had a large audience. Our understanding of prayer's genres and their use must be developed outside of divisions inherent to modern scholarship. For example, we must resist the temptation to divide literature into categories defined in terms of a clear division between religious and secular literature, especially in terms of prayers, songs, hymns, and lyrics.[68] The same rhetorical theories informed the compositional techniques of prayers as informed the composition of letters and sermons.

The *Oratio ad Mariam* of Chaucer's Prioress, for example, is but one of several examples that share many characteristics of the genre of prayer known as *pura oratio*. That this prayer represents this particular genre of prayer lends support to claims made by certain critics that Chaucer's satire does not reveal itself in the representation of the Prioress's compositional intention.[69] Rhetorical decorum is manifest in this prayer's compositional structuring. In "Acts of Interpretation," Alfred David outlines very well the parallels to be drawn between the Prioress's *Oratio ad Mariam* and her affective tale itself:

> Although it tells a story, the miracle of the little clergeoun is also a prayer and a lyric poem. The narrative is framed by two prayers, the Prologue, which is a prayer to the Virgin, and the closing stanza, a prayer to St. Hugh of Lincoln, another child martyr. Moreover, several apostrophes break the narrative movement of the tale and sustain the tone of invocation and praise much like the apostrophes to the Virgin throughout *An ABC* [e.g.,] (line 579) . . . (line 607) . . . The repetition of the Latin "O Alma redemptoris mater," "Alma redemptoris," "Alma" rings through the tale like a chant. More than any of the other of the tales the Prioress's has a liturgical flavor, not only in echoes of the liturgy, but in the dialogue and description (155).

Kean draws a similar conclusion:

> The so-called 'sentimentality' of the *Prioress's Tale* arises from the fact that the miracle consists in the divine intervention in ordinary and insignificant events and persons; the commonplace and the uncomprehending are taken up into the world of the spirit. The tale is thus a perfect *exemplum* of the statement in its prologue that the Blessed Virgin sometimes anticipates men's prayers (209).

Kean's statement underscores the decorous, pastoral rhetoric of public prayer and preaching that weaves tale and prayer together into a compositional whole. He also recognizes that this rhetoric is "sentimental"—what we might elsewhere call "pathetic," and "affective." Carolyn P. Collette links this rhetoric's affective modality to the courtly tradition with which the Prioress's *persona* would have been familiar in the later part of the fourteenth century:

> The child's martyrdom and explanation are emblems of the sort of faith the Prioress espouses—ritualistic, rooted in phenomena perceptible in this world, intensely emotional. The child's suffering, martyrdom, and death, as well as the faith which originally prompted him to learn the song by rote, lead our souls to God. . . . Like fourteenth-century statues and illuminations, the child's martyrdom is not a static, intellectual ikon, a symbol to be understood, but a moving, temporal image which we contemplate with emotion and through which we come to understand in our hearts if not our heads the message of Christianity (148).

Collette's observations do much to contextualize the Prioress's *persona* within late-fourteenth-century England, concluding that "the Prioress's stress on love, emotion and pity are all consonant with what we might call a fashion in religious taste" (149).

As I have argued above, however, I feel that the archetypal image acting as the source of the Prioress's *Oratio ad Mariam* and tale is not to be limited to the child alone; rather, the image I feel to be at the core of this piece is *Madonna lactans*—the Virgin Mother seated with the Christ child at her breast. Late-medieval statuary provides many examples of small meditation objects that feature Madonna suckling the Christ child. One example that harmonizes extremely well with our discussion of the Prioress, the Virgin Mother, and the heuristics of *pura oratio* is the so-called *Vierge ouvrante* (ca. 1300, Cologne) of the Metropolitan Museum in New York City.[70] The small, wooden object stands 36.8 cm high, and has gold gilding as well as other ornamentation. It presents Madonna seated with the Christ child nursing in her lap, and was originally used by a nun in her cell in a convent near Cologne (van Os, 52). The piece earns its name because the Virgin's body opens at a large vertical joint running from the top of her chest to the statuette's base. On the inner sides of the two open wings are depictions of scenes from Christ's incarnation: the *Annunciation*, *Nativity*, and *Adoration of the Magi* on the left, and the *Visitation*, *Presentation*, and *Angel Appearing to the Shepherds* on the right (van Os, 55). The images depicted in the Virgin's opened wings are not arranged chronologically. We can assume that this is because they are heuristic devices that trigger different narratives related to Christ's Incarnation, a greater theme invoked by the image of *Madonna lactans.* This greater theme is also amplified by the central figure of the opened *Vierge ouvrant*: a *Mercy-seat Trinity* depicting the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost enthroned and understood to be "an image of salvation in a single motif of God" (van Os, 55). The owner would come to her *Vierge ouvrante* daily as part of the compositional practice of daily prayer. She would literally find within it the *materia* she would need to develop affective prayers of devotion to her Lord and Virgin Mother.

This prayer-object is a material fragment of the world in which the Prioress's *persona* was intended to be set; as such, it is evidence for the historical context in which her *Oratio ad Mariam* ought to be understood. Hers was a world of courtly leisure that used highly developed mnemonic technologies such as these mechanical statuettes that, as van Os explains, were "the silent witness of a nun's daily prayers" (52). But it was also a world with a highly developed sense of rhetoric, firmly rooted in a sense of decorum, and dedicated to the affective representation of Divine Love's spiritual truths through the verbal material of one's songs of prayer. We can imagine in her prologue the Prioress approaching the Virgin in her mind much as the anonymous nun would have approached her *Vierge ouvrante* in her own routine of daily prayer. When our

Prioress lists the attributes of the Blessed Virgin Mother in her *pura oratio*'s catalogue, she is verbally enacting what the *Vierge ouvrante*'s owner would have done when she unlatched the *Madonna lactans*'s small chest and revealed the tiny miniatures depicting Christ's arrival on earth: Both actions activated a list of commonplaces from which devotion would have begun through the heuristics of affective prayer in Northern Europe during the fourteenth century.

Notes

1. There is no self-titled *artes orandi* from this period. For an overview and definition of sources, see Barbara Jaye's *Artes orandi* (Typologie des sources du Moyen Age occidental; fasc. 61; Turnhout: Brepols, 1992); hereafter cited in the text as Jaye. Eckart Lutz's *Rhetorica divina: mittelhochdeutsche Prologgebete und die rhetorische Kultur des Mittelalters* (New York: de Gruyter Press, 1984) provides a more detailed analysis of the confluence of prayer and classical rhetoric in German-speaking regions of the High Middle Ages.
2. For an introduction to rhetorical pedagogy of the Late Middle Ages, see Marjorie C. Woods, "The Teaching of Writing in Medieval Europe," in *A Short History of Writing Instruction from Ancient Greece to Twentieth-Century America*, ed. James J. Murphy (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1990), 77–94; Marianne Briscoe, "How Was the *Ars praedicandi* Taught in England?" in *The Uses of Manuscripts in Literary Studies: Essays in Memory of Judson Boyce Allen*, ed. C. C. Morse, P. R. Doob, and M. C. Woods (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Press, 1992), 41–58—hereafter cited in the text as Woods 1992; Suzanne Reynold, *Medieval Reading: Grammar, Rhetoric and the Classical Text* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and Rita Copeland, *Pedagogy, Intellectuals, and Dissent in the Later Middle Ages: Lollardy and Ideas of Learning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
3. Cf. Alfred David: "More than any of the other tales the Prioress's has a liturgical flavor" ("An ABC to the Style of the Prioress," in *Acts of Interpretation: The Text in Its Contexts 700–1600: Essays on Medieval and Renaissance Literature in Honor of E. Tablot Donaldson*, ed. Mary J. Carruthers and Elizabeth D. Kirk [Norman, OK: Pilgrim Books, 1982], 147–157; hereafter cited in the text as David). For the tale's similarities to the Feast of the Holy Innocents, see Marie Padgett Hamilton, "Echoes of Childermas in the Tale of the Prioress," *Modern Language Review* 34 (1939), 1–8 (cited by David, 155 note 19). Cf. also Sigfried Wenzel's "Chaucer and the Language of Contemporary Preaching," *Studies in Philology* 73 (1976), 138–161.
4. P. M. Kean, "The Religious Poetry," in *Chaucer and the Making of English Poetry: The Art of Narrative*, vol. II (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), 209; hereafter cited in the text as Kean.
5. Florence Ridley (*The Prioress and the Critics* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965]; hereafter cited in the text as Ridley) gives a clear overview of the scholarship preceding its publication. Also helpful in developing my understanding of the Prioress and her tale have been Kean, 186–209; David,

147–157; Carolyn Collette, "Sense and Sensibility in the *Prioress's Tale*," *The Chaucer Review* 15 (1981), 138–150; Hardy Long Frank, "Seeing the Prioress Whole," *The Chaucer Review* 25 (1991), 229–237; Hardy Long Frank, "Chaucer's Prioress and the Blessed Virgin," *The Chaucer Review* 13 (1979), 346–362; and Sherman Hawkins, "Chaucer's Prioress and the Sacrifice of Praise," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 63 (1964), 599–624.

6. This present study stems from research on the rhetorical architectonics of institutional confession in fourteenth-century England.
7. On rhetorical practice in the Middle Ages, see James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from St. Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974); John O. Ward, *Ciceronian Rhetoric in Treatise, Scholion, and Commentary* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995); Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967)—hereafter cited in the text as Curtius; A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (London: Scolar Press, 1984); Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the 11th and 12th Centuries* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983); Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Traditions and Vernacular Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)—hereafter cited in the text as Copeland 1991; Judson B. Allen, *The Ethical Poetic of the Later Middle Ages: A Decorum of Convenient Distinction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982)—hereafter cited in the text as J. Allen; Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), and *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)—hereafter cited in the text as Carruthers 1998; and Martin Camargo, "Rhetoric," in *The Seven Liberal Arts in the Middle Ages*, ed. David L. Wagner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 96–124; see also Camargo and Murphy, "The Middle Ages," in *The Present State of Scholarship in Historical and Contemporary Rhetoric*, ed. Winifred Bryan Horner, foreword by Walter J. Ong (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990), 45–83.
8. For example, John A. Alford notes, concerning the division of Richard Rolle's literary corpus into contemporary genres, that "Rolle would have felt the modern division of his work into genres, such as commentaries, treatises, and epistles, to be artificial. His works are a whole, closely related by similarities of tone, purpose, and frequently of style" ("Biblical *Imitatio* in the Writings of Richard Rolle," *English Literary History* 40 [1973], 10–11). Though generic distinctions can be found between different works by the same author, the criteria used to make these distinctions must be derived from the theoretical context in which the works were composed, rather than from criteria derived from modern critical perspectives.
9. E.g., *Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century*, ed. Carleton Brown and Geoffrey Victor Smithers, 2nd. ed., rev. G. V. Smithers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), and *Secular Lyrics of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. Rossell Hope

Robbins, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968). For discussion of the limitation of this modern division of medieval texts, see, for example, David L. Jeffrey's *The Early English Lyric and Franciscan Spirituality* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), where he asserts: "To separate mechanically the two 'kingdoms' [i.e., secular and religious] in a medieval poem may obscure one of the most important premises of such a poem, which can be that there is no sharp discontinuity between secular and religious experience, or between the realm of God's created nature, including his highest creation, and God himself" (14).

10. Raymond Oliver, for example, explains: "I do not find it useful to speak as if style and meaning were separate entities, combined in particular poems with varying degrees of skill. The poet finds his meaning by finding his style, his words, which, after all, comprise his meaning" (*Poems without Names: The English Lyric 1200–1500* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970], 74). Rita Copeland and Stephen Melville provide a nice analysis of contemporary critical theory's recalcitrance to engage in modes of critical hermeneutics endemic to medieval literary theory, critical modes that reveal the relationship between form and content ("Allegory and Allegoresis, Rhetoric and Hermeneutics," *Exemplaria: A Journal of Theory in Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 3.1 [1991], 159–187). See also Marjorie C. Woods, "In a Nutshell: *Verba* and *Sententia* and Matter and Form in Medieval Composition Theory," in Woods 1992.
11. Cf. Curtius, 145–166, especially 154 and following.
12. J. Allen, for example, points out that distinctions between poetry and prose made in medieval commentaries were normally "formal and metrical," that is to say, "a matter of heightened language" (74). He continues by explaining: "This is a common sense distinction, which causes no trouble unless we take it for more than it is—that is, unless we fail to grant that it makes one category out of everything metred, from the grandest epic to the most utilitarian mnemonic doggerel" (74–75). For the development of a methodology that understands hymns as poems, see also Joseph Szövérffy's "L'hymnologie médiévale: recherches et méthode" (*Cahiers de civilization médiévale* 4 (1961), 389–422), cited by Allen (74 note 8).
13. Cf. Jaye's bibliography (79–83).
14. Book B2 of *Judica me Deus* describes a method of composing penitential prayers; Chapter 7 of *Emendatio vitae* describes a method of composing "pure prayers," or *pura oratio*. Both types of prayer are affective, a similarity that can be attributed to the prayers' structure. As I will demonstrate below, the Prioress's *Oratio ad Mariam* reveals many characteristics of *pura oratio*.
15. For a discussion of Hugh's concept of the verb "*vacare*," see Ivan Illich, *In the Vineyard of the Tex: A Commentary to Hugh's "Didascalicon"* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
16. PL 176.980; complete treatise in columns 977–988.
17. Cf. Rita Copeland, "Richard Rolle and the Rhetorical Theory of the Levels of Style," in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England: Papers Read at Dartington Hall, July 1984*, ed. Marion Glasscoe (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1984), 80; the article hereafter cited in the text as Copeland 1984; the volume hereafter cited in the text as Glasscoe.

18. E.g., *Melos Amoris*, ed. E. J. F. Arnould (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1971). Cf. also Rosamund Allen, "Introduction," in *Richard Rolle: The English Writings*, trans., ed., and with an introduction by Rosamund Allen, preface by Valerie M. Lagorio (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 45–46; hereafter cited in the text as R. Allen.
19. The most recent comprehensive study of Rolle's *corpus* is Nicholas Watson's *Richard Rolle and the Invention of Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). For a comprehensive bibliography of the most important studies on Rolle, see John A. Alford's "Richard Rolle and Related Works," in *Middle English Prose: A Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres*, ed. A. S. G. Edwards (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1984), 35–60, and Watson's introduction to *Richard Rolle: Emendatio vitae and Orationes ad honorem nominis Ihesu* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1992), 1–30; hereafter cited in the text as Watson. For studies that focus specifically on Rolle's compositional method and style, see Copeland 1984, 55–80; Rosamund Allen's "'Singular Lufe': Richard Rolle and the Grammar of Spiritual Ascent," in Glasscoe, 28–54; John A. Alford's "Biblical *Imitatio* in the Writings of Richard Rolle," *English Literary History* 40 (1973), 1–23.
20. Florence Ridley considers Bailey to be "a very discerning judge of character" (33), who "simply knows that the Prioress is worthy of courtesy and respect, and so treats her accordingly" (34).
21. Cf. Copeland 1991, 179–220, especially her discussion of *materia*. E.g., in discussing how *Confessio amantis* is a work of translation, Copeland explains: "It is comparable as well to earlier kinds of exegetical translation that engage the source *materia* according to fixed interpretive concerns or paradigms" (203). The Prioress is engaged in just such an act of translation at the onset of her prologue: She intends to reestablish the authority of her *Dominus* discursively; the interpretive concern of her translation/sermon is, as I develop above, to praise the Lord. That the Prioress's tale is a corrective response to the Shipman's tale, see Sherman Hawkins's "Chaucer's Prioress and the Sacrifice of Praise," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 63.4, 621—hereafter cited in the text as Hawkins—and Stephen Knight's *Geoffrey Chaucer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 163, including the bibliography found in note 14.
22. *Biblia Sacra: Iuxta Latinam Vulgatam Versionem ad Codicum Fidem*, vol. 10 (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1953), 57; the translation is my own.
23. J. Stephen Russell discusses the concept of performing laud to the Lord in "Song and the Ineffable in the *Prioress's Tale*," *The Chaucer Review* 33 (1998), 176–189.
24. Lines 457–459 are also a literal translation from the Mass of the Holy Innocents: "Ex ore infancium deus . . . perfecisti laudem" (Ridley, 914 notes 457–459 in Larry Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987); hereafter cited in the text as *The Riverside Chaucer*. For discussion of the Prioress's prayer, see Paul M. Clogan, "The Figural Style and Meaning of The Second Nun's Prologue and Tale," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 3 (1972), 213–240; hereafter cited in the text as Clogan.

25. The Man of Law and the Second Nun, who both use prayer and rhyme royal as significant elements in the composition of their tales, also invoke this image. Cf. also Geoffrey of Vinsauf's discussion of conversion in his *Poetria nova*: "Sic *candor* sumas a *candidus*, ut variatis / Casibus occurat melior modus. Aut nihil inde / Sume, sed a *niveus*, quod ei similatur" [Thus you might take up radiant from radiance, so that by varying cases a better method might present itself; or take up nothing therefrom, rather from snowy, since it is similar thereto (lines 1664–1666)]. Though conversion has been traditionally understood as a grammatical modification (e.g., from an adjective to a noun sharing the same root) to enhance stylistic variety, it is not difficult to imagine Chaucer's Prioress "converting" to the image of Virgin Mother with suckling Christ child from the image of the suckling child in the translated psalm, "quod ei similatur."
26. Cf. Stephen Spector's "Empathy and Enmity in the Prioress's Tale," in *The Olde Daunce: Love, Friendship, Sex and Marriage in the Medieval World*, ed. Robert R. Edwards and Stephen Spector (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 211–228, 289–300 (notes).
27. For a helpful introduction to the early history of inventional theory, see Michael C. Leff's "The Topics of Argumentative Invention in Latin Rhetorical Theory from Cicero to Boethius," *Rhetorica* 1 (1983), 23–44; hereafter cited in the text as Leff. Curtius has also proven invaluable in developing my understanding of the complex breadth of inventional topoi from late antiquity forward.
28. All Chaucer quotations are taken from *The Riverside Chaucer*; hereafter cited in the text parenthetically by fragment and line number.
29. The exact nature of each composition would, theoretically at least, be a reflection of a particular negotiation of the triad *ethos–logos–pathos* [cf. Copeland 1984, 76; e.g.: "Rolle's aims are similar to those of Augustine, in that, for both, the spiritual state of the audience determines the function or task of oratory (rhetoric)"]. The propinquity of *inventio* to *elocutio* and *dispositio* under the auspices of decorous speech in the Late Middle Ages is reflected in an early commentator's gloss of line 60 in the *Poetria nova*: "MENTIS IN ARCHANO: Huc usque egit de inuentione materie, hic autem de ornatu eius ut proferri posit in medium" [IN THE HIDDEN CHAMBER OF THE MIND: Up to this point he has treated the invention of the material, but here he treats its verbal adornment so that it may be put into the medium of words] (*An Early Commentary on the "Poetria Nova" of Geoffrey of Vinsauf*, ed. Marjorie Curry Woods [New York: Garland Publishing, 1985], 18–19).
30. J. Allen distinguishes between *forma tractatus* and *forma tractandi*, which are here linked with *dispositio* and *elocutio*, respectively, as follows: "[*Forma tractatus*] was universally defined in terms of the ordered books, chapters, divisions, paragraphs, or other parts which the work under consideration contained, and betrays a critical concern for that unity of a work which is achieved by the ordering of its parts." "[A]t a more general level than that which defines the disposition of parts, or the form, of any single work, we are concerned with the medieval sense of those mental and verbal procedures by which a text is made. These are discussed and defined by the medieval critics under the rubric of

forma tractandi" (72). Often, the *materia* of a work and the work's *forma tractatus* might have different structural requirements (Woods 1992, 32), a complexity that differentiates the latter from the work's *dispositio* (Woods 1992, 28). It is this difference, however, that creates the conceptual space for the commentator's hermeneutic activity. Cf. Copeland 1991, 72–79, and the bulk of Chapter 6.

31. Cf. Woods 1992, 25; A. J. Minnis and A. B. Scott's "General Introduction," in *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c.1100–c.1375: The Commentary Tradition*, ed. A. J. Minnis and A. B. Scott with the assistance of David Wallace (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 3; and Douglas Kelly's "Obscurity and Memory: Sources for Invention in Medieval French Literature," in *Vernacular Poetics in the Middle Ages*, ed. Lois Ebin (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Intitute Publications, 1983), 50, 55 note 52.
32. Cf. Copeland 1991, 166.
33. Cf. Jaye, where she includes Anselm's prayer collection in her list of *artes orandi* "because it carries an epistolary prologue declaring that the prayers are intended to inspire and shape the prayers of others" (84–85).
34. Cf. Copeland 1991, 4–5. Elsewhere in the same work, Copeland describes the rhetorical exegesis of academic commentary as follows: "This program of reading which refigures structural coherence by disclosing intention or significance may be seen in rhetorical terms as progressing from invention (*inventio* [sic] *scribentis* performs the same function as the inventional topic *cur* or *causa*) to the actualizing of that argument in a coherent discursive structure (*dispositio*)" (77–78). My effort is to enact a similar type of exegesis, using theories of decorum articulated in a variety of medieval compositional manuals to trace the connection between the structural artifacts of the *formae tractatus* and *tractandi*, through the activities of *dispositio* and *elocutio*, back into the process of *inventio*.
35. Watson, 18.
36. Cf. Watson's comment that, for Rolle, "a hermit's life and writing should do more than merely celebrate its own intimacy with God, but should also reach out and share that intimacy with others" (1992, 20).
37. The concept that the proper verbalization of prayer (indicated here by the adverb "pure") results in the fulfillment of said prayer is also articulated by Chaucer in his so-called *ABC* to the Virgin Mary: "Thou canst not warne him that with good entente / Axeth thin helpe, thin herte is ay so free" (lines 11–12). The *Cloud*-author conveys a similar concept in "A Pistle of Preier": "þou shalt þink stedfastliche þat if þou maist þorou þe grace of God distincteliche pronounce þe wordes of þat preier and winne to þe ende, or if þou die before þou come to þe ende, so þat þou do þat in þee is, þat þan it schal be accept of þee unto God as a ful seep of alle þi rechelesnes fro þe beginning of þi liif into þat moment." *Deonise Hid Divinite: And Other Treatises on Contemplative Prayer Related to "The Cloud of Unknowing,"* ed. Phyllis Hodgson (London: EETS, vol. 231, 1955), 49. *The Cloud of Unknowing* also expresses a similar notion.
38. Rolle's discussion of *pure orare* focuses only on that particular type of prayer. Compare to Hugh of St. Victor, who explains in his *De modo orandi* that, "Tria sunt genera supplicationum, captatio, exactio, pura oratio" (PL 176, 979.C).

39. Rolle's *de oratore* is Chapter 7 of twelve in a book organized according to stages, or steps, of spiritual development.
40. *Sume locum certum, ut arte domes animum* (*Poetria nova*, lines 1597–1598).
41. Hugh of St. Victor, for example, discusses which Psalms are appropriate for adaptation in the affective composition of prayers in Chapters 7 and 8 of his treatise *De modo orandi* (PL 176, 986.B–988.A).
42. Cf. J. A. Alford's "Biblical *Imitatio* in the Writings of Richard Rolle," *English Language History* 40 (1973), 1–23; and "The Biblical Identity of Richard Rolle," *Fourteenth Century English Mystics Newsletter* 2.4 (1976), 21–25.
43. Compare Copeland's comment on Rolle's style, that "Rolle's heightened rhetorical manner seems an embodiment of Augustine's dictum that the sublime style is the eloquence of conviction which gathers up ornament in its powerful wake rather than contriving its grand effects" (1984, 69), with Kean's comment that "fifteenth-century poets, when they are at their best, show that they have discovered the principle of thematic development in the short [religious] poem—*the form which comes from within, instead of the device imposed from without*" (198, emphasis added).
44. For the complex relationships among memory, rhetoric, and recollection, see Carruthers 1998, especially the first two chapters.
45. Cf. Copeland 1984 for a discussion of rhetorical style and Rolle's three degrees of love. The sublimity of God's Love demands the intensity of Rolle's most exuberant artifice. For example, Copeland explains: "Within Rolle's usage, then, one can teach in the grand style to a 'simple and unlearned' audience, in English as well as in Latin prose, if one is teaching of the highest degree of love" (74).
46. Rolle's indebtedness to the mystical traditions of his time is beyond the scope of this essay. Rosamund Allen, however, points out the commonality of the flamboyant, among other images, in the mystical lexicon of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: "As in secular love poetry, the states [of divine love / mystical experience] are described metaphorically in terms of burning, wounding and piercing, binding, taste and thirsting, sickness and strife" (R. Allen, 34).
47. Cf. Copeland 1984, 75. It should also be noted that Rolle seems to indicate that the style engendered by the discovery of God's love affects both the *forma tractandi* as well as the *forma tractatus* of any pure prayer. Here I invoke the effects on the *forma tractandi*, in that the exuberance of experiencing divine love is often captured with figures and tropes in the high, rapturous, or golden style (characterized in Rolle by alliteration, anaphora, similiter cadens, isocolon, adjunction, and adnominatio, among others [Copeland 1984, 71]). I will discuss later divine love's effect on the *forma tractatus* of pure prayer.
48. Leff describes two traditions of argumentative invention that developed simultaneously in antiquity. In the Aristotelian, or inferential system, he explains, "the topics arise not from the subjects discussed but from common beliefs and patterns of inference that audiences apply to these subjects" (42). In the Hermagorean, or material system developed in Cicero's sophomoric *De inventione*, the rhetor discovers "a material element, a discrete bit of argumentative content, which then must be integrated into a larger argumentative structure" (29). It is

the latter system that Vinsauf elucidates in his *Poetria nova* and that Chaucer appears to have used in the composition of the Prioress's *Oratio ad Mariam* and the tale that follows. For the art of memory and rhetorical invention, see Carruthers 1998.

49. Cf. Kean, 196. There is a very rich tradition of prayers to the Virgin Mary in medieval literature. Anselm wrote several, one of which Dante imitates through Saint Bernard in his *Paradiso*. Rolle also wrote at least one prayer to the Virgin (*Canticum amoris*; text and commentary found in G. M. Liegey's "The *Canticum amoris* of Richard Rolle," *Traditio* 12 [1956], 369–391). For a discussion of Chaucer's compositions to the Blessed Virgin Mary, see Clogan, 213–240.
50. Chaucer uses this same image, in a slightly expanded form, in his *ABC*: "Moises, that saugh the bush with flawmes rede / Brenninge, of which ther never a stikke brende, / Was signe of thin unwemmed maidenhead. / Thou art the bush on which ther gan descende / The Holi Gost, the which that Moyses wende / Had ben a-fyr, and this was in figure" (lines 89–94).
51. Though Payne calls the artifice of this tale "noticeably limited in range" (R. O. Payne, *The Key of Remembrance* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1963], 166), the Prioress here seems to be using the humility topos used by Chaucer in so many of his other works, especially by his narrators. I take Payne's comments to apply to the *forma tractatus* of the tale, which could be very simple and informal in its overall form, according to Hugh of St. Victor, yet still "supremum et excellentissimum" in its affective *forma tractandi* (PL 176, 980.B).
52. Ritamary Bradley, "The Speculum Image," in Glasscoe, 10.
53. *Pura oratio*, *captatio*, and *exactio* are three genres of *supplicatio*; *supplicatio*, *postulatio*, and *insinuatio* are the three species of prayer.
54. We know that Rolle was very familiar with the Victorines. Hugh of St. Victor, and his protégé, Richard, had an enormous influence on the development of English mysticism, and many of the latter's works were known to Rolle (J. Allen, 58). In fact, Rolle's *Emendatio vitae* borrows much from Richard of St. Victor without mentioning him by name (Watson, 19).
55. This prioritization of *pura oratio* above meditation also distinguishes Rolle from Hugh. Hugh, for example, states: "Sic ergo orationi sancta meditatio necessaria est, ut omnino perfecta esse oratio nequeat, si eam meditatio non comitetur aut praecedat. . . . Primum igitur necesse est, ut si prudenter et utiliter Dominum orare volumes, jugi meditatione animum nostrum exerceamus, et in consideratione miseriae nostrae dicamus, quid nobis necesse est petere, in consideratione autem misericordiae Dei nostri, quo desiderio debeamus postulare" (PL 176, 977.C–D).
56. The function of purgation alluded to here is very similar to that found in penitential prayers. According to Rolle, however, the need for a prefatory set of prayers (of confession and penance) to precede a more mature dialogue with God is transcended in *pura oratio* by the true intimacy of the divine love used as the heuristic source of inspiration within this genre. Rolle, in fact, felt that prayers of confession and penance were necessary only for the very beginning of an individual's spiritual ascent. Cf. Watson, 12.

57. Cf. Hugh's metaphor used as a definition of *pura oratio* cited above.
58. For critical discussions of the Prioress's tale that harmonize with the genre of *pura oratio*, though they don't explicitly identify this medieval genre, see Hawkins, 599–624 (especially his discussion of the little clergeoun's song sung "verraily," 620), and Edward H. Kelly, "By Mouth of Innocentz: The Prioress Vindicated," *Papers on Language and Literature: A Journal for Scholars and Critics of Language and Literature* 5 (1969), 362–374. Kelly's analysis is right on when he explains that the Prioress "relies on the Virgin to provide the very words with which she will praise her. And the words come. This is the real miracle of the tale, the miracle of its language, which communicates through emotional reaction what cannot be stated intellectually—in other words, *pure poetry*" (372–373, emphasis added).
59. This stanza not only is the second of three, but also most clearly articulates the prayer's central idea or image.
60. Cf. Kean, 194–198.
61. "Sed si contingerit materiam esse difficilem, debemus eligere ea que materiam leuem reddunt et enodem, que postea ponentur" (32); "But should difficult matter be unavoidable, we select things that will make it smooth, not knotty, as in the following letters" (33). All translations of *Parisiana poetria* are from Traugott Lawler's *The "Parisiana Poetria" of John of Garland* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974).
62. Cf. Kean, 209.
63. Kean, for example, suggests that a satiric *Oratio ad Mariam* would have never presented itself as an optional *forma tractatus* to a fourteenth-century *orator*: "The idea of giving expression to these characteristics through the manipulation of a prayer explicitly addressed to the Blessed Virgin does not seem to have occurred to Chaucer and would probably have been distasteful to him and to his age" (189–190).
64. Prayers of confession described in pastoral manuals of the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, for example, often have a much more particularized organizational scheme to the heuristic questions to be posed to the penitent than do their eleventh- and twelfth-century predecessors. The refinement of the questions demonstrated through the development of these manuals seems, in part, to reflect a growing familiarity with the process, or method, of this particular type of prayer by all parties involved.
65. Cf. the opening metaphor of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*, discussed above.
66. This is not to say that institutionalized prayer did not exist before the twelfth century; rather, that the developments of prayer theory after the twelfth century reflect a heightened awareness of Cicerornian and Pseudo-Ciceronian rhetorical theory.
67. For example, Anselm's collected prayers (cf. Jaye, 84–85), Rolle's *Orationes ad honorem nominis* Ihesu (cf. Watson 1992, 22–25), as well as *Aelfwine's Prayerbook*, ed. Beate Günzel (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1993).
68. The practice of *Sacra lectio*, for example, is a type of literary discourse that cannot even be captured by any contemporary generic schema. Cf. Ivan Illich's

"*Lectio divina,*" where he explains, in part, how, until the crystallization of the *ordinatio paginarum* in the thirteenth century, there was a "semiotic and symbolic primacy of *lectio divina* over the semantic field of *lectio*, or reading" (20). That is to say, the material shape of the physical marks on the page contributed as much, if not more, to the generation of meaning of any given text—i.e., the text's *sententia*—than that intimated, ephemeral significance that might possess this physical space at any given reading. The Surrealist poets of the middle twentieth century seem to approximate this type of merger between the physical and significant realms—though I would argue that their intention was to transgress the limitations of genre, whereas the medieval phenomenon seems to have been an attempt to harness an awareness of generic structure at a more complicated level and within a more comprehensive system of meaning than is commonly assumed by modern scholarship.

69. Cf. Kean, especially 186–187.
70. This piece is featured, both open and closed, on pages 50 and 51 as the opening image to "The Culture of Prayer" section in *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe: 1300–1500*, Henk van Os, with Eugène Honée, Hans Nieuwdorp, and Bernhard Ridderbos, trans. by Michael Hoyle (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 50–85; hereafter cited in the text as van Os.

5

Time as Rhetorical Topos in Chaucer's Poetry

Martin Camargo

Chaucer scholars have long recognized that the experience, measurement, and understanding of time have changed since the Middle Ages and that modern readers must be educated in the conceptions of time that Chaucer would have shared with members of his original audience if they are to appreciate the full extent of Chaucer's artistry. Chaucerian time has been studied from many perspectives, in particular those of medieval theology and natural philosophy.[1] Despite the deep learning and broad scope of such studies, extending from theoretical speculations about the nature of time, to moral implications of time, to astrological and even mechanical methods for calculating time, they do not begin to exhaust the range of meanings that time would have had for a fourteenth-century intellectual. Less studied by Chaucerians but no less familiar to Chaucer is time as a component of rhetoric.

The meaning of time as an element of Chaucer's poetry, viewed from the perspective of rhetoric, varies a good deal, depending on which of the five canons of rhetoric—invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery—is being considered. Perhaps Chaucer's most obvious invocation of time as a rhetorical concern is in connection with effective oral delivery. The Host, who serves among other things as self-appointed rhetorical critic, frequently admonishes the speakers in his charge to be not only clear, profitable, and entertaining, but also concise. Anticipating the Parson's long-windedness, for example, the Host exhorts him to be pithy and brief, in order to make best use of the little time remaining before sunset:

> But hasteth yow; the sonne wole adoun;
> Beth fructuous, and that in litel space. (X.70–71)[2]

As narrator of the "Tale of Sir Thopas," Chaucer the pilgrim had been neither and so had brought down upon himself Harry Bailey's emphatic censure:

> Thy drasty rymyng is nat worth a toord!
> Thou doost noght elles but despendest tyme. (VII.930–931)

Although just barely under way, his performance shows no signs of using time effectively either by entertaining or edifying the company, and the Host justifies his cutting it short on those grounds.

While the Host, as master of ceremonies for the tale-telling contest, strives to keep the audience engaged and thus upholds brevity chiefly as a virtue of performance, just as often brevity is invoked as a virtue of style.[3] The Friar's comment on the Wife of Bath's lengthy autobiographical account of "the wo that is in mariage" (III.3), for example, is directed more at her violation of stylistic decorum than at her failure to entertain:

> The Frere lough, whan he hadde herd al this;
> "Now dame," quod he, "so have I joye or blis,
> This is a long preamble of a tale!" (III.829–831)

Abbreviation and amplification each has its proper place in the medieval stylist's repertoire, and the Friar, perhaps trying to score points off the Wife's stereotypical female garrulousness, playfully suggests that she has neglected one of the most basic rules for their use. Chaucer, like the members of his audience, would have been familiar with rhetorical teaching on effective style that stressed the importance of knowing when to be copious and when to be concise. Geoffrey of Vinsauf, the one medieval rhetorician whom Chaucer mentions by name (VII.3347), assigns the techniques of amplification and abbreviation a position of prominence at the beginning of his treatment of style, and Chaucer's own style is most self-consciously "rhetorical" when he draws attention to his own use of those techniques, as in the apostrophe near the end of the "Nun's Priest's Tale" (VII.3338–3374).[4]

As it figures both in style and delivery, time is understood as duration. The difference is that performative time is focused on the audience and its reaction—a lengthy performance, especially one lacking pleasure and/or profit, will exhaust the listeners' attention, while stylistic time is focused on the text and its production—depending on the larger purpose of the text, some topics will merit copious treatment and others concise treatment. If that distinction seems tenuous, the contrast between both conceptions of time and the one underlying arrangement is sharper. For those medieval rhetoricians who concerned themselves with narrative forms, as opposed to more fixed genres such as letters and sermons, the doctrine of arrangement often centered on time as sequence, that is, on the choice between natural order and artificial order. Given any sequence of events, one could begin their narration either with the event that initiated the

sequence or, more artfully, with an event from the middle or the end of the sequence.[5] Though Chaucer frequently disrupts the temporal sequence of events within a narrative—Book V of *Troilus and Criseyde* is an especially complex instance—he is not as prone to use artificial order in the sense in which the medieval rhetoricians defined it, and when he does, as perhaps at the beginning of the "Knight's Tale," he does not draw attention to the fact.

Much more could be said about time as a component of delivery, style, and arrangement, as well as memory, in Chaucer's poetry, but no less worthy of close attention is time in the context of the first canon of rhetoric: invention or discovery. Time as a source of argument was an important part of the medieval poet's inheritance from classical rhetoric. Within the framework of Ciceronian topical invention, time is defined most explicitly and treated in greatest detail under the attributes of actions. In his *De inventione* (1.26.37), Cicero distinguishes four categories of such attributes: "The attributes of actions are partly coherent with the action itself, partly considered in connexion with the performance of it, partly adjunct to it and partly consequent upon its performance."[6] The second category is further subdivided into five factors to be considered in connection with the performance of any act (1.26.38): place, time, occasion, manner, and facilities. As Cicero goes on to explain (1.26.39–40), time (*tempus*) and occasion (*occasio*) are distinct species of the same genus. Arguments from "time" in connection with performing an act may be based on (1) past, present, or future acts that have a bearing on the act in question, (2) the length of time necessary for the performance of the act in question, or (3) the time of year or time of day when the act in question occurred. Arguments from "occasion," by contrast, are based on showing how certain temporary circumstances, whether "public" (*publicum*), "general" (*commune*), or "particular" (*singulare*), provided the opportunity to perform the act in question. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s much briefer discussion of arguments from time in connection with acts (2.4.7) is clearly related to Cicero's. Under "Sign," one of the six divisions of the "Conjectural Issue," the anonymous *auctor ad Herennium* posits six divisions, among them the "Point of Time" (*tempus*) at which the act took place, the "Duration of Time" (*spatium*) required for the act to be accomplished, and the favorability of the "Occasion" (*occasio*) for the performance of the act.[7]

The Ciceronian account of time as an attribute of acts was known in the Middle Ages not only through the original treatises and commentaries on them but also and especially through the so-called rhetorical circumstances—who, what, why, how, where, when, with what means?—which frequently appeared in medieval rhetorical textbooks[8] and which provided one of the main organizational schemes for medieval *accessus* to the works of the *auctores*.[9] Within this schema, time as the circumstance "when?" undergoes a further narrowing of reference. Though still paired with "occasion," "time" as a source of argument comes to be restricted to the third of Cicero's categories—time of year or

day, which corresponds to the *auctor ad Herennium*'s "Point of Time." Boethius expresses this narrower sense of time when discussing the rhetorical circumstances, in his influential *De topicis differentiis* (4.1213.B): "The circumstance 'when'[Cicero] divides into time, for example, he carried it out by night, and opportunity, for example, when everyone was sleeping."[10] In practice, for medieval rhetoricians time as cause came to be understood above all as time of year and time of day. Matthew of Vendôme's *Ars versificatoria* (1.106–108) is typical in supplying only descriptions of the seasons to illustrate arguments based on the time of the action.

Time figures in a less direct but equally important way among the attributes of persons subsumed under the first of the rhetorical circumstances. Both Matthew of Vendôme (*Ars versificatoria*, 1.116) and Boethius (*De topicis differentiis*, 4.1212C–1215A) also note that while six of the seven circumstances derive from Cicero's attributes of actions, the first circumstance—"who?"—is identical to Cicero's attributes of persons. As formulated in *De inventione* (1.24.34–25.36), the eleven attributes of persons are "name, nature, manner of life, fortune, habit, feeling, interests, purposes, achievements, accidents, [and] speeches made" (*nomen, naturam, victum, fortunam, habitum, affectionem, studia, consilia, facta, casus, orationes*, 1.24.34). "Nature," the second of these, is further subdivided into "sex, . . . race, place of birth, family, and age" (*sexu, . . . natione, patria, cognatione, aetate*, 1.24.35); and "age" is in turn divided into several times of life, each with its own characteristic behavior. A fuller account of the various "times of life" (childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age) is found in another classical text familiar to every medieval poet with a modicum of learning, Horace's *Ars poetica* (153–178):

> Now hear what I, and with me the public, expect. If you want an approving hearer, one who waits for the curtain, and will stay in his seat till the singer cries "Give your applause," you must note the manners of each age, and give a befitting tone to the shifting natures and their years. The child, who by now can utter words and set firm step upon the ground, delights to play with his mates, flies into a passion and as lightly puts it aside, and changes every hour. The beardless youth, freed at last from his tutor, finds joy in horses and hounds and the grass of the sunny Campus, soft as wax for moulding to evil, peevish with his counsellors, slow to make needful provision, lavish of money, spirited, of strong desires, but swift to change his fancies. With altered aims, the age and spirit of the man seeks wealth and friends, becomes a slave to ambition, and is fearful of having done what soon it will be eager to change. Many ills encompass an old man, whether because he seeks gain, and then miserably holds aloof from his store and fears to use it, or because, in all that he does, he lacks fire and courage, is dilatory and slow to form hopes, is sluggish and greedy of a longer life, peevish, surly, given to praising the days he spent as a boy, and to reproving and condemning the young. Many blessings do the advancing years bring with them; many, as they retire, they take away. So,

> lest haply we assign a youth the part of age, or a boy that of manhood, we shall ever linger over traits that are joined and fitted to the age.[11]

The discussion of age from Cicero and especially the passage from Horace were the chief sources of what the medieval rhetoricians called the "proprietates" of persons, which served at once as standards for judging the verisimilitude of literary representations of persons, as in Horace, and as guides for predicting and/or explaining the behavior of particular persons, as in Cicero.

It is very likely that Chaucer was familiar with the attributes of persons and actions, at least in the compressed form of the rhetorical circumstances, and there is no doubt that his use of arguments from time is both frequent and sophisticated.[12] Whether that familiarity came from formal study of textbooks on rhetoric or from reading and imitating ancient and medieval poetry is not particularly important. Because Chaucer used the rhetorical techniques in ways that are consistent with the sources I have just discussed, those sources provide a context and vocabulary for describing his practice that would have been readily understood by Chaucer's contemporaries.

Arguments from time based on the attributes of persons and actions are especially common in Chaucer's greatest works, *Troilus and Criseyde* and the *Canterbury Tales*. Indeed, the long, periodic sentence that opens the "General Prologue" to the *Canterbury Tales* is among the most famous examples of such an argument in all of English literature. Chauncey Wood acknowledged the rhetorical quality of these eighteen lines when he characterized them as an instance of "the astronomical periphrasis, sometimes called *chronographia*, . . . in which the time of day, or time of year, is indicated by a circumlocution involving some reference to the motions of the heavens."[13] The astronomical periphrasis was recognized as a feature of poetry by rhetoricians both ancient and medieval. In describing the qualifications of a teacher of literature (*grammaticus*), for example, Quintilian observes: "nec, si rationem siderum ignoret, poetas intelligat, qui (ut alia omittam) totiens ortu occasuque signorum in declarandis temporibus utantur" ["nor again if he be ignorant of astronomy can he understand the poets; for they, to mention no further points, frequently give their indications of time by reference to the rising and setting of the stars" (*Institutio oratoria* 1.4.4)].[14] Likewise, the thirteenth-century English rhetorician Gervase of Melkley includes the device in his art of poetry and prose, in an appendix devoted to "rules specific to verse composition" (*regulae versibus speciales*):

> Perfection in a versifier does not write about winter, about summer, about night, about day without astronomy. In place of these words "dawn" or "a little before dawn," Juvenal says:
>
> At that time when the stars are fading
> And when the wagon of lazy Boetes drives slowly around.

> For it is proved by means of the astronomical movements that "the time when the wagon has been driven around" is a short time before daybreak.[15]

The reference to the sun's passage through the sign of Aries is a clear indication that Chaucer is working from the same tradition: "and the yonge sonne / Hath in the Ram his half cours yronne" (I.7–8).

However, the passage as a whole is much more than a simple *chronographia* whose chief, if not sole, purpose is to mark poetically the time of year when the action took place. Rhetorically speaking, Chaucer's invocation of the season is structured as a compressed argument or what could be called a "temporal enthymeme": eleven lines of seasonal cause ("Whan that Aprill": I.1; "Whan Zephirus eek": I.5) generate seven lines of volitional effect ("Thanne longen folk": I.12). It may be that Chaucer took much of the language and even the repetition of "when" from the opening of Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis Troiae*,[16] but the comparison only underscores the crucial difference, since Guido's text lacks the cause-and-effect argument that distinguishes Chaucer's. The time of year, the springtime renewal of life, Chaucer seems to argue, by a complex causality brings about the urge to go on pilgrimages. The effect of this famous temporal enthymeme is all the greater because it depends on a reversal of expectation. Chaucer's audience was familiar with a causal connection between the coming of spring and human desire; but the traditional object of that desire was a sexual partner, recalled when Chaucer describes the libidinous "smale foweles" (I.9–11) just before he takes his argument in a surprising direction.[17] As Wood points out, the complex *chronographia* that opens the "General Prologue" is echoed by the equally complex *chronographia* that introduces the "Parson's Prologue" (X.1–12).[18] Time as beginning is balanced by time as ending at the two extremes of the frame narrative, so that the *Canterbury Tales* as a whole is enclosed within and perhaps even constituted as an argument from time.

Less complex examples of time as attribute of an action are not difficult to find. In the "Reeve's Tale," for example, the Cambridge clerk John is able to "swyve" miller Symkyn's daughter Malyne because it is after midnight and because the drunken sleep of her parents provides an opportunity to escape detection (I.4148–4187). It is probably coincidental but nonetheless interesting that "night" and "sleep" are the very examples that Boethius used to illustrate arguments from "time" and "opportunity," respectively. One reading of the "Franklin's Tale" sees the "yong clerk" of "Orliens" profiting from a different type of "opportunity" by exploiting his knowledge of seasonal high tides to convince Aurelius and Dorigen that he has caused the rocks to disappear from the coast of Brittany.[19] Chaucer's fabliaux provide examples of actions that depend on opportunities supplied by temporary absences, such as carpenter John's trip to "Oseneye," which allows "hende Nicholas" to make his intentions clear to

Alisoun, in the "Miller's Tale" (I.3271–3306), or the Paris merchant's business trip to "Brugges," during which "daun John" the monk conducts his own business with the merchant's wife, in the "Shipman's Tale" (VII.299–324). In neither case are the "opportunities" incorporated into a true argument, however, unless it be the implicit argument that one ought not leave an attractive wife alone with a young man, no matter what the circumstances.

Because fabliau characters generally fit into well-defined categories, those same tales frequently draw on attributes of persons as well as those of actions and are thus especially rich sources of temporal causality in the sense of "age" or "time of life." Robin the Miller's account of the jealous old carpenter John (I.3221–3232) and Osewold the Reeve's self-depiction as the personification of old age (I.3867–3898) both explicitly invoke the "argumentum ab aetate." At the opposite end of the age spectrum, the portrait of the "yong Squier" in the "General Prologue" (I.79–100) is an exceptionally pure example of the argument from youth. A more extended example of the same argument comes from *The Book of the Duchess* (758–804). To account for his earlier propensity toward love, the Black Knight invokes the attribute "nature"—"I trowe hit cam me kyndely" (778)—and more specifically its subspecies "age": "For that tyme Yowthe, my maistresse, / Governed me" (797). A more ambiguous argument from age is the Prioress's comparison of herself to "a child of twelf month oold, or lesse, / That kan unnethes any word expresse" (VII.484–485), a move that aligns her with the "litel clergeon" of her tale, whose devotion is likewise expressed in a manner dictated by his youth (VII.505–515).

Like all good rhetorical techniques, such arguments from age are overdetermined, drawing on familiar, culturally potent beliefs to provide an immediate and therefore effective source of conflict in many Chaucerian narratives. For example, John the carpenter's old age is dramatically significant because his typical desire for control is at odds with his youthful wife Alisoun's equally typical desire for freedom:

> Jalous he was, and heeld hire narwe in cage,
> For she was wylde and yong, and he was old
> And demed hymself been lik a cokewold. (I.3224–3226)

In the "Knight's Tale," the perspectives of the youthful Palamon and Arcite and the mature Theseus are opposed in more complicated fashion, though just as explicitly. Theseus himself draws attention to the opposition, even as he defuses the tension that only moments earlier had attended it:

> But all moot ben assayed, hoot and coold;
> A man moot ben a fool, or yong or oold—
> I woot it by myself ful yore agon,
> For in my tyme a servant was I oon. (I.1811–1814)

The added perspective of the elderly Egeus (I.2837–2852) turns the tale into what might be called an "argument from the 'ages of man.'" The importance of age as a determinant of behavior and potential source of conflict in the "Knight's Tale" is further reinforced by the correspondence between the chief human characters and their divine counterparts—Palamon/Venus, Emelye/Diana, Arcite/Mars, Theseus/Jupiter, and Egeus/Saturn—and the decisive role played by the older characters at both levels (see especially I.2438–2478).

Susanna Greer Fein makes a similar point about the Reeve, whose prologue describes old age in metaphors that prepare the reader for the subsequent tale's representation of life as a cycle extending from infancy (the baby in the cradle) to decrepitude (the college manciple on his deathbed). Even though the Reeve himself is old, however, in his tale it is not the voice of maturity that has the last word. Rather, says Fein, the cycle of life depicted by the Reeve is dominated by the conflict between adolescents, whose vigor is approaching its peak, and adults, who have passed their prime but strive to maintain their position of power with the aid of cunning acquired through experience.[20] The white-haired Franklin's words to the Squire (V.673–694) likewise underscore the gap between youthful aspiration and adult fulfillment. However, in place of the embittered Reeve's vision of inevitable strife, in which youth is destined to prevail, or the sterile dissipation that his own son prefers, the sanguine Franklin imagines the possibility of productive growth through cooperation between the wise benevolence of the older generation and the "gentil" enthusiasm of the younger generation, as embodied in the Squire. Accordingly, in the "Franklin's Tale," the young men "act like adults," resolving their conflicts in mutually beneficial fashion, whereas in the "Reeve's Tale," each of the principal male characters—the adolescents John and Aleyn, the adult Symkyn, and the elderly narrator Osewold—acts like a child, putting his own selfish interest above all else.

Along with "time of day or year" and "time of life," a third category of time as cause is important in Chaucer's works: "cosmic time." Although not identified as such in the standard teaching on the rhetorical attributes and circumstances, cosmic time, which includes but is not limited to astrological time, fits easily into the categories defined in the Ciceronian rhetorics and works derived from them. As an attribute of actions, cosmic time adds one more dimension to the usual significance of time of day or time of year. An especially famous Chaucerian example is the "fall" of Chauntecleer, which significantly occurs on Friday, May 3 (VII.3338–3354). In his rhetorical lament, which parodies the famous apostrophe on the death of Richard I (*Poetria nova*, 368–430) by the celebrated medieval rhetorician "Gaufred [of Vinsauf], deere maister soverayn" (VII.3347), the Nun's Priest underscores Friday's association both with Venus, who should have protected the amorous rooster, and with the equally lamentable death of King Richard. Chaucer's other references to May 3—if that is indeed

the date indicated by the Nun's Priest's convoluted mode of reckoning (VII.3187–3197)—suggest that he considered it an unlucky day.[21] A second example from the *Canterbury Tales*, also in the form of an apostrophe, is the Man of Law's lament that the Emperor of Rome failed to engage the services of a "philosophre" who could have warned him that the heavens were unfavorably disposed for a voyage by his daughter Custance (II.295–315). Whether or not the Man of Law's astrology is suspect on technical grounds, his causal argument is contradicted by the much greater power exerted by divine providence.[22] In both examples, the causal power of cosmic time is represented as more rhetorical than real, a fact that is underscored by its embodiment in a figure (apostrophe) that is among those most highly marked as rhetorical.

As an attribute of persons, cosmic time belongs together with "age" among the aspects of the attribute "nature." Cicero recognizes "place of birth" as a determiner of one's "nature," but for Chaucer, "time of birth" is even more important. In the *Canterbury Tales*, the argument from time of birth is employed to greatest rhetorical effect when the Wife of Bath blames her temperament and her life history on her horoscope:

> For certes, I am al Venerien
> In feelynge, and myn herte is Marcien.
> Venus me yaf my lust, my likerousnesse,
> And Mars yaf me my sturdy hardynesse;
> Myn ascendent was Taur, and Mars therinne.
> Allas, allas! That evere love was synne!
> I folwed ay myn inclinacioun
> By vertu of my constellacioun;
> That made me I koude noght withdrawe
> My chambre of Venus from a good felawe.
> Yet have I Martes mark upon my face,
> And also in another privee place. (III.609–620)

Whether we regard cosmic time as a separate category or as an aspect of the two standard categories is less important than recognizing that it functions exactly as the attributes of persons and of actions to provide Chaucer with arguments from time.

Chaucer's use of arguments from time, like his use of other rhetorical techniques, is rarely as straightforward as the examples found in textbooks. As even the brief examples offered so far reveal, he is self-conscious and often ironic when employing such strategies. Perhaps for this reason, the tale in which arguments from time figure most prominently, that of the Merchant, is also one of the most deeply ironic of all the *Canterbury Tales*. Before concluding with an analysis of the arguments from time in the "Merchant's Tale," however, it will be useful to examine a counterexample, in which Chaucer's use of such arguments is more straightforward, at least on the surface.

Every variety of the argument from time discussed so far can be found in *Troilus and Criseyde*, with the greatest concentration of such arguments occurring in Book II, where Pandarus displays his repertoire of argumentative strategies to the fullest. Arguments from opportunity are invoked with special frequency, both implicitly and explicitly. The *chronographia* that opens Book II proper (II.50–56), for example, establishes the time of year as propitious to Pandarus's mission, and Pandarus makes that connection explicit when he urges Criseyde to put aside her mourning in favor of activities more suited to the season:

> Do wey youre barbe, and shew youre face bare;
> Do wey youre book, rys up, and lat us daunce,
> And lat us don to May som observaunce. (II.110–112)

The generally favorable quality of the month may be countermanded by the inauspiciousness of the specific day on which the visit occurs, but if May 3 is an unlucky day for love, Pandarus failed to discover that fact in his astrological calculations, since he "caste and knew in good plit was the moone / To doone viage" (II.74–75).

In the short term, Pandarus seems to have gauged his opportunity correctly, as confirmed by his finding Criseyde at leisure in a garden and learning from her that she had dreamed of him thrice during the previous night (II.89–90). Accordingly, he wastes no time in commencing the "paynted proces" (II.424) of rhetorical argument by means of which he hopes to persuade his niece to regard Troilus favorably. Among his specific arguments are several from time, including the argument that Troilus's infatuation itself represents a priceless opportunity that should be seized before its time passes:

> For to every wight som goodly aventure
> Som tyme is shape, if he it kan receyven;
> But if he wol take of it no cure,
> Whan that it commeth, but wilfully it weyven,
> Lo, neyther cas ne fortune hym deceyven,
> But ryght his verray slouthe and wrecchednesse;
> And swich a wight is for to blame, I gesse.
> Good aventure, O beele nece, have ye
> Ful lightly founden, and ye konne it take;
> And for the love of God, and ek of me,
> Cache it anon, lest aventure slake! (II.281–291)

Later Pandarus emphasizes time's passage once again, this time in the equally conventional argument that since youth will not last, Criseyde should seize the day and give herself to love now, at the time of her life when it is still possible to do so:

> Thenk ek how elde wasteth every houre
> In ech of yow a partie of beautee;

And therfore er that age the devoure,
Go love; for old, ther wol no wight of the.
Lat this proverbe a loore unto yow be:
To late ywar, quod Beaute, whan it paste;
And Elde daunteth Daunger at the laste.
The kynges fool is wont to crien loude,
Whan that hym thinketh a womman berth hire hye,
'So longe mote ye lyve, and alle proude,
Til crowes feet be growe under youre ye,
And sende yow than a myrour in to prye,
In which that ye may se youre face a morwe!'
I bidde wisshe yow namore sorwe. (II.393–406)

Thanks to such arguments, Criseyde is highly susceptible when other favorable opportunities present themselves. After Pandarus has departed, timely occurrences such as Troilus's return from battle along a route that leads past Criseyde's window (II.610–686), Antigone's love song (II.824–903), and the dream-inducing song of the nightingale (II.918–931) help accomplish what rhetoric alone could not.

Pandarus is not the only character in *Troilus and Criseyde* who makes effective use of arguments from time. Another skilled rhetorician, Diomede, shows himself to be an even subtler appraiser of opportunity than Pandarus, though his remarks on the subject are addressed only to himself (V.88–175). Criseyde relies primarily on the argument from time of life in her attempt to persuade Troilus that she will be able to return quickly from the Greek camp. Like Horace, she defines old age in terms of blind avarice, an attribute that she is confident will enable her to manipulate her elderly father, Calchas (IV.1366–1400). If these and other arguments from time are undercut ironically, it is mainly through the cumulative impression of rhetoric's amorality conveyed by the poem as a whole. Every major character, with the crucial exception of Troilus, employs rhetorical arguments with equal effectiveness on opposite sides of the same issue. Only Troilus remains consistent, in the end fatally so. His arguments from time, as in the aubades of Book III (lines 1450–1470, 1702–1708) and his rebuttal of Criseyde, in which he defines old age in terms of worldly wisdom (IV.1455–1463), always support the same end, satisfaction of his desire to be with Criseyde. Chaucer leaves open the question which use of rhetoric is less appropriate. Viewed from the larger perspective offered at the poem's conclusion (V.1814–1869), the ends served by all of the rhetoric employed to varying degrees of effectiveness by Pandarus, Criseyde, Troilus, and Diomede are fundamentally flawed.

The arguments from time in the "Merchant's Tale," by contrast, are clearly and deliberately specious from a rhetorical (as well as a moral) standpoint. The Merchant is obsessed with time. Like Januarie, the protagonist of his tale, he is

"hastif": He prefaces the tale by lamenting his imprudent marriage to a wife whom he already knows by experience to be "the worste that may be" (IV.1218), even though he has "ywedded bee / Thise monthes two, and moore nat, pardee" (IV.1233–1234). The Merchant's conviction that his two months as a husband have earned him the same authority to speak of woe in marriage as Alisoun of Bath's thirty years as a wife is the first sign that in his tale arguments based on time will follow a logic all their own.

Scarcely has the tale begun when Januarie's surprising decision to abandon his lifelong pursuit of "bodily delyt" (IV.1249) and take a wife "whan that he was passed sixty yeer" (IV.1252) is explained by a specious argument from time of life:

> And certeinly, as sooth as God is kyng,
> To take a wyf it is a glorious thyng,
> And namely whan a man is oold and hoor;
> Thanne is a wyf the fruyt of his tresor.
> Thanne sholde he take a yong wyf and a feir,
> On which he myghte engendren hym an heir,
> And lede his lyf in joye and in solas,
> Where as thise bacheleris synge "allas,"
> Whan that they fynden any adversitee
> In love, which nys but childyssh vanytee. (IV.1267–1276)

The valid premise that young men who love beautiful young women are frequently unhappy does not support the conclusion that old husbands of such women will therefore be happy.

In a second, equally specious argument from time of life, Januarie draws on religious rather than literary conventions to explain "th'effect of his entente" to his assembled friends:

> With face sad his tale he hath hem toold.
> He seyde, "Freendes, I am hoor and oold,
> And almoost, God woot, on my pittes brynke;
> Upon my soule somwhat moste I thynke.
> I have my body folily despended;
> Blessed be God that it shal been amended!
> For I wol be, certeyn, a wedded man,
> And that anoon in al the haste I kan. (IV.1398–1406)

Chaucer's strategy here is the same as in the argument from time of year that opens the "General Prologue." Just as there the accumulated references to the fecundity of spring created the expectation of encountering a solitary lover rather than a host of pilgrims, so here the expected conclusion to be drawn from Januarie's carefully stated premises is that he should retire to a life of prayer and penance rather than an earthly paradise of sexual pleasure.

While the first two arguments from time of life are undercut by logic and tradition, the third example is contradicted by the surrounding narrative and for that reason is the most bitterly ironic of all. The Merchant interrupts his description of Januarie and May's nuptials to exclaim:

> Whan tendre youthe hath wedded stoupyng age,
> Ther is swich myrthe that it may nat be writen.
> Assayeth it youreself; thanne may ye witen
> If that I lye or noon in this matiere. (IV.1738–1741)

What may be written—Januarie's lustful fantasies and their disgusting fulfillment—turns out to be anything but mirthful, especially for May (IV.1750–1854). As demonstrated by the argument implicit in their seasonally opposed names, the union of Januarie and May goes against nature.

Besides the arguments from time of life, arguments based on time of year and cosmic time are similarly advanced only to be undercut ironically. Thus, the Merchant credits cosmic forces for May's quick decision to reciprocate the passion Damyan had declared for her in his opportune love note:

> Were it by destynee or by aventure,
> Were it by influence or by nature,
> Or constellacion, that in swich estaat
> The hevene stood that tyme fortunaat
> Was for to putte a bille of Venus werkes—
> For alle thyng hath tyme, as seyn thise clerkes—
> To any womman for to gete hire love,
> I kan nat seye; but grete God above,
> That knoweth that noon act is causelees,
> He deme of al, for I wole holde my pees. (IV.1967–1976)

Here the irony is that no explanation is needed: The contrast between May's visit to Damyan's bedside and the ensuing session in Januarie's bed is sufficient cause for her decision (IV.1932–1966). Likewise, the effect of springtime on Januarie's desire to bring May to his custom-built garden, where they will perform "thynges whiche that were nat doon abedde" (IV.2051), only serves to underscore the systematic way in which the tale defies Horatian propriety by assigning youth's parts to an old man. Not only Januarie's name but also the explicit association of his garden with the garden in the *Roman de la rose*, from which Old Age is pointedly excluded,[23] combine to negate the argument from time of year, even though it is couched in the "olde lewed wordes" of Canticles (IV.2138–2149).

Behind the Merchant's and Januarie's ironic misuse of arguments from time, however, stands a deterministic view of time that is implicit in the rhetorical

arguments discussed in this essay, in particular those based on time of life. Employed rhetorically, age becomes essence, inflexibly dictating behavior: The aging Januarie is doomed to foolish senility, moving from figural to literal blindness, while the youthful May and Damyan are equally driven to animal lust. Perhaps the Franklin's seemingly gratuitous yet pointed distancing of himself from rhetoric (V.716–720) is part of his strategy for replacing the Merchant's temporally determined essentialism with a vision that emphasizes responsibility and the human potential for change. Time, in itself, causes neither good nor bad actions. Like rhetoric, time can be used well or ill: Old age can bring folly, whether in the form of avarice, impotent lust, or intolerance of youth, but it can also bring wisdom. Paradoxically, this truth is recognized in rhetorical theory, which enumerates a range of attributes for each time of life, but tends to be suppressed in rhetorical practice, where reality is narrowed to facilitate the achievement of immediate ends. That paradox is never far from the surface when Chaucer uses time as a rhetorical commonplace.

Notes

1. On the practical and scientific dimensions of time in Chaucer, see, for example, Linne R. Mooney, "The Cock and the Clock: Telling Time in Chaucer's Day," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 15 (1993), 91–109; John D. North, *Chaucer's Universe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988, reprinted 1991); F. J. J. Peters, "Chaucer's Time in the *Nun's Priest's Tale*," *Studia Neophilologica* 60 (1988), 167–170—hereafter cited in the text as Peters; Peter W. Travis, "Chaucer's *Chronographiae*, the Confounded Reader, and Fourteenth-Century Measurements of Time," *Disputatio* 2 (1997), 1–34; and Chauncey Wood, *Chaucer and the Country of the Stars: Poetic Uses of Astrological Imagery* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970)—hereafter cited in the text as Wood 1970. The literature on the moral and theological dimension of time in Chaucer is even more extensive. Among the many studies that could be cited in this category are E. D. Blodgett, "Chaucerian Pryvetee and the Opposition to Time," *Speculum* 51 (1976), 477–493; Morton W. Bloomfield, "Distance and Predestination in *Troilus and Criseyde*," *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 72 (1957), 14–26; James Dean, "Time Past and Time Present in Chaucer's *Clerk's Tale* and Gower's *Confessio Amantis*," *English Literary History* 44 (1977), 401–418; Robert L. Entzminger, "The Pattern of Time in *The Parlement of Foules*," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 5 (1975), 1–11; Donald R. Howard, "The Philosophies in Chaucer's *Troilus*," in *The Wisdom of Poetry: Essays in Early English Literature in Honor of Morton W. Bloomfield*, ed. Larry D. Benson and Siegfried Wenzel (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1982), 151–175, 288–290; Thomas L. Martin, "Time and Eternity in *Troilus and Criseyde*," *Renascence* 51 (1999), 167–179; and Paul Beekman Taylor, "Time in the Canterbury Tales," *Exemplaria* 7 (1995), 371–393. Jörg O. Fichte argues that a thematically significant tension between literary and extraliterary conceptions of time pervades the *Canterbury Tales*: "Konkurrierende

und kontrastierende Zeitmuster in Chaucers *Canterbury Tales*," in *Zeitkonzeptionen, Zeiterfahrung, Zeitmessung. Stationen ihres Wandels vom Mittelalter bis zur Moderne*, ed. Trude Ehlert (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1997), 223–241. On the multiple and competing layers of time in Chaucer's works, see also two chapters from Paul Strohm, *Theory and the Premodern Text* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000): "Fictions of Time and Origin: Friar Huberd and the Lepers" (pp. 65–79) and "Chaucer's *Troilus* as Temporal Archive" (pp. 80–96). For a wide range of perspectives on medieval conceptions of time and for additional bibliography on the subject, see the recent collection of essays edited by Chris Humphrey and W. M. Ormrod: *Time in the Medieval World* (Woodbridge/Suffolk: York Medieval Press/Boydell and Brewer, 2001).

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2. Larry D. Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 288; hereafter cited in the text parenthetically by fragment and line number.
3. On this tradition in general, see Ernst Robert Curtius's excursus "Brevity as an Ideal of Style," in *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953), 487–494; hereafter cited in the text as Curtius.
4. See Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria nova*, 203–736—hereafter cited in the text as *Poetria nova*—and *Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi* II.2, ed. Edmond Faral, *Les arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1924), 203–220, 271–284; hereafter cited in the text as *Documentum*.
5. See *Poetria nova* 87–202, and *Documentum* I, and the anonymous *Tria sunt*, Chapter 1. On the latter work, which is not yet available in a printed edition, see Martin Camargo, "*Tria sunt*: The Long and the Short of Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi,*" *Speculum* 74 (1999), 935–955.
6. Negotiis autem quae sunt attributa, partim sunt continentia cum ipso negotio, partim in gestione negoti considerantur, partim adiuncta negotio sunt, partim gestum negotium consequuntur. Cicero, *De inventione, De optimo genere oratorum, Topica*, ed. and trans. H. M. Hubbell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949), 74 (text), 75 (translation). All quotations from *De inventione* are taken from this edition.
7. [Cicero], *Ad C. Herennium de ratione dicendi*, ed. and trans. Harry Caplan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), 68 (text), 69 (translation). All quotations from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* are taken from this edition.
8. See, for example, Douglas Kelly, *The Arts of Poetry and Prose*, Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental 59 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991), 71–76.
9. A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 16–17.
10. et eam quidem circumstantiam, quae est quando, dividit in tempus, ut nocte fecit, et in occasionem, ut cunctis dormientibus. J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus*, Series latina, 64 (Paris, 1891), col. 1213B; English translation

by Eleonore Stump, *Boethius's De topicis differentiis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 90.

11. Tu quid ego et populus mecum desideret audi,
si plosoris eges aulaea manentis et usque
sessuri, donec cantor "vos plaudite" dicat,
aetatis cuiusque notandi sunt tibi mores,
mobilibusque decor naturis dandus et annis.
reddere qui voces iam scit puer et pede certo
signat humum, gestit paribus colludere, et iram
colligit ac ponit temere et mutatur in horas.
imberbis iuvenis, tandem custode remoto,
gaudet equis canibusque et aprici gramine Campi,
cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper,
utilium tardus provisor, prodigus aeris,
sublimis cupidusque et amata relinquere pernix.
conversis studiis aetas animusque virilis
quaerit opes et amicitias, inservit honori,
commisisse cavet quod mox mutare laboret.
multa senem circumveniunt incommoda, vel quod
quaerit et inventis miser abstinet ac timet uti,
vel quod res omnis timide gelideque ministrat,
dilator spe longus, iners avidusque futuri,
difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti
se puero, castigator censorque minorum.
multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum,
multa recedentes adimunt. ne forte seniles
mandentur iuveni partes pueroque viriles,
semper in adiunctis aevoque morabimur aptis.
Horace, *Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, rev. ed., ed. and trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1929), 462/464 (text), 463/465 (translation).
12. Even scholarship that deals specifically with Chaucer and rhetoric typically does not concern itself with the attributes as sources of argument as much as with issues of style (including style as source of argument). An exception is Marjorie Curry Woods, "Chaucer the Rhetorician: Criseyde and Her Family," *The Chaucer Review* 20 (1985), 28–39. The attributes that are the focus of Woods's article, however, are not those involving time.
13. Wood 1970, 78. On 78–102, Wood traces the variations in Chaucer's use of this rhetorical device, especially in *Troilus and Criseyde* and the *Canterbury Tales*, where it is employed "for both elegance and parody" (83).
14. *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. H. E. Butler (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920), 62 (text), 63 (translation).
15. Perfectio versificatori non hyemet, non estivet, non noctescat, non diescat sine astronomia. Iuvenalis loco istorum verborum mane vel paulo ante mane ait:
Sideribus dubiis aut illo tempore quo se
Frigida circumagunt pigri sarrata Boete

Per motus enim astronomicos probatur sarrata circumacta esse modico ante diem.

Gervais von Melkley: Ars Poetica, Forschungen zur romanischen Philologie 17, ed. Hans-Jürgen Gräbener (Münster: Aschendorff, 1965), 214 (text); English translation by Catherine Yodice Giles, "Gervais of Melkley's Treatise on the Art of Versifying and the Method of Composing in Prose: Translation and Commentary" (Diss., Rutgers, 1973), 213, 215 note 6. For additional examples, see Curtius, 275–276.

16. See, for example, Muriel Bowden, *A Commentary on the General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales*, rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 20, and Wood 1970, 165–166.
17. A literary example of this convention that Chaucer certainly knew well is Guillaume de Lorris's evocation of May as the month of love and the time of year when his amorous vision appropriately occurred: *Le Roman de la rose*, 3 vols., ed. Félix Lecoy (Paris: Champion, 1965–1970), vol. 1, 45–86; hereafter cited in the text as *Roman de la rose*.
18. Wood 1970, 78, 92, 295–296.
19. See Chauncey Wood, "Of Time and Tide in the *Franklin's Tale*," *Philological Quarterly* 45 (1966), 688–711; revised as Chapter 6 (245–271) of Wood 1970.
20. Susanna Greer Fein, "'Lat the Children Pleye': The Game Betwixt the Ages in The Reeve's Tale," in *Rebels and Rivals: The Contestive Spirit in The Canterbury Tales*, Studies in Medieval Culture, 29, ed. Susanna Greer Fein, David Raybin, and Peter C. Braeger (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1991), 73–104.
21. See, for example, Wood 1970, 87 note 60, 162 note 2. Peters argues that line 3190 refers to the day on which the Nun's Priest recites his tale, April 19, but that the passage as a whole simultaneously invokes the day on which the events described took place, May 3.
22. See the Explanatory Notes in the *Riverside Chaucer* (pp. 858–60) for helpful commentary on the technical aspects of this passage and a concise summary of the critical debate, with bibliographical references. I am grateful to Joerg O. Fichte for reminding me of the Man of Law's apostrophe and its relevance to my argument.
23. *Roman de la rose*, 339–404, which includes an excursus on time and its ravages (361–392). See also the passage in which Reason contrasts Youth and Age: lines 4400–4514.

6

Argument and Emotion in *Troilus and Criseyde*

Peter Mack

The skillful orator must be an expert in the discovery and formulation of persuasive arguments. Even more, as Plato says,[1] he (or she) must be an expert in arousing appropriate emotions in an audience. Still more important is the instinct for timing, the knowledge of when to make which argument, when to appeal to the emotions. Narrative poets also need such skills and understandings if they are to portray the way people interact with each other at the same time as instructing, pleasing, and moving their audience. When Martin Camargo and Rita Copeland proposed the topic of Chaucer and Rhetoric,[2] I decided to examine the way in which such a self-conscious and experimental verbal artist as Chaucer conceived the poetic and rhetorical question of the relationship between argument and emotion. This idea led me immediately to the fourth book of *Troilus and Criseyde*, which is dominated by arguments among the three main characters and by expressions of Troilus and Criseyde's grief at having to part. In fact, almost every scene of this book comprises grief and argument. It interested me that Chaucer should devote a book to something that is also a key issue in rhetorical theory.

But everyone knows that book IV is the book where Chaucer most closely follows his source, Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*. So I want to begin with Chaucer and Boccaccio and to think about ways in which Chaucer's knowledge of rhetoric contributes to his adaptation (and I would say also to his understanding) of Boccaccio. Then I want to look at the question of the relationship between emotion and argument in rhetorical theory; and finally to consider the different ways in which Chaucer inflects that relationship, not just in book IV, but in the whole poem as well.

An obvious place to start, because it's a public speech and because it isn't as long as most of the speeches in book IV, is Calchas's speech to the leaders

of the Greeks in which he asks that one of the Trojan prisoners should be assigned to him to be exchanged for his daughter Criseyde. The original of this speech appears in Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*, part 4, stanzas 5–12:

Orazion di Calcàs a' Greci . . .

"Signor miei," cominciò Calcàs "io fui 5
troian, sì come voi tutti sapete,
e se ben vi ricorda, io son colui
il qual primiero a quel per che ci sete
recai speranza, e dissivi che vui
a termine dovuto l'otterrete,
cioè vittoria della vostra impresa,
e Troia fia per voi disfatta e'ncesa.

L'ordine e'l modo ancora da tenere 6
in ciò sapete, ch'io v'ho dimostrato;
e perché tutte venissero intere
le voglie vostro nel tempo spiegato,
sanza fidarmi in alcun messaggiere,
o in libello aperto o suggellato,
a voi, com'egli appar, ne son venuto
per darvi in ciò e consiglio ed aiuto.

Il che volendo far, fu opportuno 7
che con ingegno e molto occultamente,
sanza ciò fare assentire a nessuno,
io mi partissi, e fello, di presente
che'l chiaro giorno fu tornato bruno,
me n'uscii fuori, e qui tacitamente
ne venni, e nulla meco ne recai,
ma ciò ch'aveva tutto vi lasciai.

Di ciò nel ver poco o nulla mi curo, 8
fuor d'una mia figliuola giovinetta
ch'io vi lasciai; oh me, padre duro
e rigido ch'io fui, costei soletta
menata n'avess'io qui nel sicuro!
Ma nol sofferse la tema e la fretta:
questo mi duol di ciò ch'io lasciai'n Troia,
questo mi toglie ed allegrezza e gioia.

Né tempo ancor di richieder poterla 9
veduto ci ho, però taciuto sono;
ma ora è tempo di potere averla,

se da voi posso impetrar questo dono;
e s'or non s'ha, giammai di rivederla
più non ispererò, e'n abbandono
la vita mia omai lascerò gire,
sanza curar più'l viver che'l morire.

Qui son con voi di nobili baroni 10
troiani, ed altri assai, cui voi cambiate
con gli avversarii pe' vostri prigioni;
un sol de' molti a me me ne donate,
in luogo delle cui redenzioni
io riabbia mia figlia: consolate,
per Dio, signor, questo vecchio cattivo,
che d'ogni altro solazzo è voto e privo.

Né d'aver or per li prigion vaghezza 11
vi tragga, ch'io vi giuro per Iddio,
ch'ogni troiana forza, ogni richezza
è nelle vostre man per certo; e s'io
non me ne inganno, tosto la prodezza
fallerà di colui che al disio
di tutti voi tien serrate le porte,
come apparrà per violenta morte."

Questo dicendo il vecchio sacerdote, 12
umile nel parlare e nell'aspetto,
sempre rigava di pianto le gote,
e la canuta barba e'l duro petto
tutto bagnato avea; né furon vote
le sue preghiere di pietoso effetto;
ché, lui tacendo, i Greci con romore
tutti gridaron: "Diaglisi Antenore."[3]

Calcas first reminds the audience of who he is and of his past services (stanzas 5–6). Then he explains what his benevolence to the Greeks has cost him, in particular the emotional cost of the separation from his daughter (7–8). He amplifies the emotion of this passage with an apostrophe expressing what he ought to have done (oh me, padre duro/e rigido ch'io fui, costei soletta menata/n'avess'io qui nel sicuro).

Third, he provides an explanation of his previous silence and a transition to his request. The Greeks are now in a position to help him, and if they do not he will abandon life along with the hope of seeing his daughter (9). Fourth, he explains his request: Since the Greeks have taken so many prisoners, he asks them to give him one to exchange for Criseyde (10). Finally he reassures them

that they will lose nothing by this act of generosity since Troy will shortly be in their hands because of the imminent death of Hector (11). Nor does Boccaccio neglect *pronuntiatio*. Stanza 12 is devoted to a description of Calcas's tearful appearance and his posture of prayer, which are effective in achieving his aim.

The underlying argumentative structure of the speech is a justification of his request. Calcas emphasizes his close connection to the Greeks, hints that they may be thought to owe him something, shows that they are now in a position to grant his request without harming their own interests, begs them to console this poor old man who is deprived of all other solace, and amplifies the effect on him if they refuse to help. Boccaccio calls this speech an "orazion" but I think the model (and there's no real contradiction here) comes from the letters of petition in the *ars dictaminis*. Letters of petition are meant to begin from the connection between supplicant and addressee, to explain that the request is just, to show that it is in the addressee's power to grant, and to promise that the recipient of the favor will show gratitude.[4]

In his version, delivered to the "consistorie" of Greek leaders (book IV, 71–126), Chaucer's Calchas copies the structure of this speech exactly, reminding the Greeks of what he has done for them (lines 71–84), of what it has cost him (85–98), why he has kept silent before (99–105), what he now requests (106–112), and why granting his request will cost them nothing (113–126):

Than seeyde he thus: "Lo, lordes myn, ich was
Troian, as it is knowen out of drede;
And, if that yow remembre, I am Calkas,
That alderfirst yaf comfort to youre nede,
And tolde wel how that ye shulden spede.
For dredeles, thorugh yow shal in a stownde
Ben Troie ybrend and beten down to grownde.

"And in what forme, or in what manere wise,
This town to shende, and al your lust t'acheve,
Ye han er this wel herd me yow devyse;
This knowe ye, my lordes, as I leve.
And for the Grekis weren me so leeve,
I com myself, in my propre persone,
To teche in this how yow was best to doone.

"Havyng unto my tresor ne my rente
Right noe resport, to respect of youre ese,
Thus al my good I lefte and to yow wente,
Wenyng in this yow lordes for to plese.
But al that los ne doth me no disese.
I vouchesauf, as wisly have I joie,
For yow to lese al that I have in Troie.

"Save of a doughter that I lefte, allas,
Slepyng at hom, whan out of Troie I sterte.
O sterne, O cruel fader that I was!
How myghte I have in that so hard an herte?
Allas, I ne hadde ibrought hire in hire sherte!
For sorwe of which I wol nought lyve tomorwe,
But if ye lordes rewe upon my sorwe.

"For by that cause I say no tyme er now
Hire to delivere, ich holden have my pees;
But now or nevere, if that it like yow,
I may hire have right soone, douteles.
O help and grace amonges al this prees!
Rewe on this olde caytif in destresse,
Syn I thorugh yow have al this hevynesse.

"Ye have now kaught and fetered in prisoun
Troians ynowe, and if youre willes be,
My child with oon may han redempcioun;
Now for the love of God and of bounte,
Oon of so fele, allas, so yive hym me!
What nede were it this preiere for to werne,
Syn ye shul bothe han folk and town as yerne?

"On peril of my lif, I shal nat lye;
Appollo hath me told it feithfully;
I have ek founde it be astronomye,
By sort, and by augurye ek, trewely,
And dar wel say, the tyme is faste by
That fire and flaumbe on al the town shal sprede,
And thus shal Troie torne to asshen dede.

"For certein, Phebus and Neptunus bothe,
That makeden the walles of the town
Ben with the folk of Troie alwey so wrothe
That they wol brynge it to confusioun,
Right in despit of kyng Lameadoun;
Bycause he nolde payen hem here hire,
The town of Troie shal ben set on-fire." (IV.71–126)[5]

Chaucer copies the structure of Boccaccio's speech but adds to the emotional force of each of the arguments (Chaucer's additions are underlined in the quotation above). In lines 82, 86, and 88, Calchas emphasizes his love of the Greeks and his intention of comforting them, adding to the implication of their

obligation to him. In lines 92–98, he adds pathos by depicting the daughter left behind sleeping in her shirt and by adding to Boccaccio's apostrophe (How myghte I have in that so hard an herte?), increasing the self-accusation of his model. He explains that his sorrow arises from his support for the Greeks (105). At the end of the speech (lines 113–126), omitting the reference to Hector, Chaucer adds logical confirmations of the ultimate destruction of Troy, drawn from the topics of authority, effects, and causes. Apollo has told him what will happen, but he has confirmed the prediction by the use of astrology, sortilege, and auguries (114–116). Troy will be given over to fire and ashes (118–119). The anger of the Gods is explained (and guaranteed) by Lamedon's failure to pay Phoebus and Neptune for building the walls of Troy (120–126). Chaucer follows the shape of Boccaccio's speech but amplifies, intensifying the emotion through description and adding to the arguments. Chaucer enhances the rhetoric of Boccaccio's speech but in order to do this, in my view, he needs to understand the rhetorical structure of the speech. Rhetorical categories underlie the reading of Boccaccio that is the necessary preliminary to rewriting him. Rhetoric helps Chaucer read Boccaccio; Chaucer in turn then uses rhetorical techniques to amplify Boccaccio's text.

Immediately after Calchas's speech, Chaucer makes a more substantial addition to *Il Filostrato*. In stanzas 13–16, Boccaccio reports that Troilus was present when the ambassadors proposed the exchange of Criseyde. He outlines how Troilus's wish to intervene is overcome by his fear of compromising Criseyde's reputation, which Chaucer somewhat expands in lines 148–175. But where Boccaccio in stanza 17 reports that the leaders agreed that Criseyde should be exchanged, Chaucer adds an account of the deliberation of the Trojan "perlement." He provides a brief summary of Hector's attempt to refuse the exchange and of the people's response to Hector's arguments. In effect, he adds a short account of Hector's speech (which fails to persuade the people) as a contrast with Calchas's successful speech. This type of addition, providing a speech or scene that parallels and contrasts with a previous one, is quite characteristic of Chaucer's more important additions to Boccaccio's poem.[6] This technique of adding a point of comparison reflects both medieval ideas about amplification[7] and one of Chaucer's themes in the poem, that knowledge and meaning arise from experience of opposites.[8]

Chaucer reports Hector's argument against the exchange of Criseyde:

> "Syres, she nys no prisonere," he seyde;
> "I not on yow who that this charge leyde,
> But, on my part, ye may eftsoone hem telle,
> We usen here no wommen for to selle." (IV, 179–182)

This argument is rejected by the people, who attack Hector's protection of Criseyde, insist on the importance of Antenor, and assert the city's need of men

to defend her (187–195). Chaucer condemns the people's intervention with a comparison to setting straw on fire (183) and by applying a quotation from Juvenal (197–203).[9]

In comparison with Calchas's speech, Hector's is more principled but less emotional and less effective. Hector is right to imply that the whole Trojan position rests on their unwillingness to return a woman in order to achieve peace, but he fails to elaborate his argument, to flatter his audience, or to appeal to their self-interest. The narrator takes the opportunity to elaborate the theme of the shortsightedness of the populace, but Hector's failure to make the best of his case is equally evident. Calchas is a less powerful and less admirable figure than Hector, but he takes more trouble to make the arguments and emotional appeals that enable him to persuade his audience.

In contrast to the public oratory of the speeches of Hector and Calchas, most of the argument in book IV takes place in private. Both Troilus and Criseyde have scenes of individual grief followed by discussions with Pandarus. The book culminates in the long debate between Troilus and Criseyde (lines 1254–1687), which is in part a reprise of the earlier debate between Pandarus and Troilus on the question of whether or not the lovers should run away together before they are forced to part (521–637).

These speeches are long and intricate and well worth the attention of any student of argument, but I can use them here to make only three short points.

First, the argument is conducted in a rather formal way. Criseyde makes a long speech outlining a series of reasons first that she is obliged to go to the Greek camp and second that she will be able to convince her father to let her return and resume her life in Troy. Troilus then answers each of these arguments in turn. The formal model for these debates is the disputation, in which the respondent was supposed to outline the opponent's arguments at each stage before replying to each in turn.

In the second place, Chaucer uses dialectic and rhetoric to elaborate the speeches in Boccaccio. Where Troilo answers Criseida's points in a general way, Chaucer gives Troilus a full reply to each of Criseyde's arguments. Chaucer gives Criseyde additional arguments drawn from the topics of causes and circumstances. She includes many details of descriptions and adds proverbs (e.g., 1373–1377, 1408). In Chaucer's version, Troilus uses proverbs to explain why she will fail to deceive her father (1453–1454, 1457–1458), gives reasons why her father will detain her, and describes the manner in which a Greek will approach her (1471–1498). Troilus's version of the counterproposal, that the lovers should leave Troy together before they are forced to part, is more desperate (1492–1503), justified with topical maxims (1504–1510), and elaborated with an explanation of how they will obtain the means to live (1513–1524). In amplifying both lovers' speeches, Chaucer employs proverbs, descriptions, and arguments drawn from the topics of causes and circumstances.

Third, in the most important of these arguments Chaucer shows that a rhetorical device can be more effective in winning a debate than a sequence of arguments. To Troilo's proposal that the lovers should elope, Criseida replies with an oath of fidelity and a three-part argument (stanzas 146–147), first about the consequences of his betrayal of Troy (147–150), second about the damage to her reputation (151), and third that through familiarity and without the spice of secrecy and danger their love will die (152–153). In conclusion, she urges him to overcome fortune by ignoring her since she can never subjugate anyone who shows boldness of spirit (154). Chaucer introduces Criseyde's reply with a devastating example of irony.

"Ywys, my deere herte trewe,
We may wel stele awey, as ye devyse,
And fynden swich unthrifty weyes newe,
But afterward ful soore it wol us rewe." (IV, 1528–1531)

Criseyde's rejection of his proposal could hardly be more dismissive, and Troilus is forced to submit to her decision, as he always knew he would. By sneering at the careless ways of newfangled lovers, Criseyde sets aside the dialectical obligation to answer Troilus's objections.

We have observed Chaucer comparing Calchas's use of emotion with Hector's reason and enhancing both the argument and the emotion of the speeches of Troilus and Criseyde. Now I want to look at how rhetorical theory poses the question of the relationship between argument and emotion.

Near the beginning of his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle warns the orator against the use of emotion to influence the judges. In George Kennedy's translation, he says, "it is wrong to warp the jury by leading them into anger or envy or pity."[10] This observation forms part of an opening section intended to disparage previous accounts of rhetoric in order to make room for his own, but it nevertheless reflects a well-established, ultimately Platonic, view that exploiting emotion is immoral and that an honest man will attempt to persuade his fellows only through reason. Reasoning is necessary to the establishment of truth; appeals to the emotions are a form of deception.

In book II, Aristotle takes a more inclusive view, showing how arguments can be constructed to bring about particular emotions in the audience.[11] Here Aristotle seems to elaborate the idea of Plato's *Phaedrus* that the true orator would be the person who understands the operation of the soul and can use that knowledge to lead people. By thinking about the case he has to present in the context of his knowledge of human emotions, Aristotle's orator can work out a logical basis for persuasion through the emotions. By this stage of the rhetoric, in other words, rather than reason and emotion being opposed, reason can be applied to determine how to move the emotions.

Although they are both Aristotle's heirs, Cicero and Quintilian generally treat emotion and reason as opposite poles within rhetoric. They agree that the orator needs to study dialectic in order to discover and formulate arguments, but they do not want this part of the training to be overemphasized lest it result in excessive technicality and an unappealing display of skill.[12] Emotional manipulation in oratory, by contrast, is a matter of sympathetic suffering, of a natural talent for feeling and expressing emotion, such as a great actor might possess.[13] Or if it is connected with technique, emotion resides primarily in the skillful use of certain figures of rhetoric, in *elocutio* rather than *inventio*.

The doctrine of amplification is the important exception to this rule. In Cicero, the amplification is a part of the peroration, the final section of the speech, in which the prosecuting counsel elaborates the seriousness of the offense in order to urge a guilty verdict and the defense counsel expands on the regret and suffering of the accused in order to arouse pity. For each side there is a list of possible topics. Under amplification, Cicero provides a list of arguments and techniques that will enable the orator to arouse anger or pity.[14]

Quintilian extends the range of amplification by removing it from the peroration and allowing that amplification can take place at any point in a speech. He treats amplification as part of style, intended to increase the impact of a passage within a speech. Amplification may be achieved by choosing more striking words, by comparison of words, by augmentation (step-by-step movement to words that convey greater importance), by comparison of things, by adding additional arguments from causes and circumstances, and by adding extra parallel words and phrases.[15] Closely related to amplification is *enargeia*, vivid representation of an event, intended to make the auditors feel that they witness the events. This can be achieved through detailed description, comparison, and metaphor.[16]

In spite of the fact that Saint Augustine thought the distinctive virtue of rhetoric was the ability to inspire people to carry out good actions,[17] medieval textbooks of rhetoric say very little about the arousing of emotions. But amplification is a large topic in preaching manuals and in Geoffrey de Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*. Amplification takes up the greater part of Geoffrey's whole treatment of invention. He describes eight methods of amplifying: rephrasing and doubling; going into details; comparison; apostrophe; speech invented for a character or object (prosopopeia); digression; description; and restatement by denying the contrary.[18] Geoffrey generally treats these techniques as means to enhance the poem's teaching and to delight the audience by varying the expression, but two of the examples of apostrophe emphasize the emotional impact of this form of amplification. In particular, the lament for King Richard is a model example of the rhetorical means of enhancing the emotional impact of an event.[19]

> Anglia, sub clypeo regis defensa Ricardi,
> Indefensa modo, planctu testare dolorem;
> Exudent oculi lacrimas; exterminet ora
> Pallor; connodet digitos tortura; cruentet
> Interiora dolor; et verberet aethera clamor.
> Tota peris in morte sua: mors non fuit eius,
> Sed tua. Non una, sed publica mortis origo.
> O Veneris lacrimosa dies! O sidus amarum!
> Illa dies tua nox fuit et Venus illa venenum.[20]

The lament for Richard works from consequences, from a metaphorical description of England's reaction, from antithesis, and from apostrophes to Venus, the murderer, death, and nature. In the summary that follows his examples, Geoffrey emphasizes the different uses of apostrophe:

> So it may change its face: either it pounces on a wicked error like a teacher; or in tears and with a lament, it grieves for all trying occurrences; or it rises in anger because of a great crime; or it carries on with laughter against foolish men.[21]

Geoffrey recognizes the emotional possibilities of apostrophe, but his main focus here and throughout his treatment of amplification is on enabling variation of expression.

In principle, the orator ought to be skillful both in argument and in emotional manipulation. But many rhetoric textbooks neglect either or both of them. Quintilian and Cicero celebrate the orator's power over the audience's emotions while urging that logical skill should be concealed. Aristotle fears the destabilizing force of emotional persuasion and seeks to subject it to the disciplines of argument. How does Chaucer present the conflict and collaboration between argument and emotion?

I shall suggest that he presents seven views of their relationship, encompassing both antipathy and collaboration between them. As a poet constructing a long argument about love and grief, he needs to express both and is aware of the tensions between them. As a Christian, he attempts a higher form of resolution in which reason rejects human emotion in favor of the love of God.

The first position that I have found expressed in *Troilus and Criseyde* is that a skillful persuader can rationally devise the means to evoke a series of emotions that will lead to the attainment of his goal. This implies that emotional manipulation is subordinate to and organized by reason. This is what I described earlier as the position taken in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, book II.

In *Troilus and Criseyde* book I, when Pandarus finds Troilus groaning on his bed, overcome with hopeless desire, he accuses him of cowardice or of having been driven to remorse of conscience and religious devotion (lines 551–560). We are told that Pandarus makes these unlikely claims as part of a scheme to evoke a reaction from Troilus.

Thise wordes seyde he for the nones alle,
That with swich thing he myght hym angry maken,
And with angre don his wo to falle,
As for the tyme, and his corage awaken. (I, 561–564)

Pandarus aims to rouse anger in Troilus. This will thrust aside his self-pity and cause his courage to reawaken. Pandarus uses his intelligence to provoke in Troilus a series of emotions that will eventually achieve his goal of rousing Troilus to action. A few lines later, Pandarus persuades Troilus to reveal that he is in love by appealing to the privileges and duties of friendship and making Troilus feel guilty that he has failed in his obligations (lines 582–609). Later, between argument, shaming, and shaking and shouting at him, he forces Troilus to name his beloved. The poet describes the effect of Pandarus's words and actions on Troilus.

Of that word took hede Troilus,
And thoughte anon what folie he was inne (820–1)
Tho gan the veyne of Troilus to blede,
For he was hit, and wax al reed for shame. (866–7)
But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake
As though men sholde han led hym unto helle, (871–2)
(and then Troilus tells Pandarus).

Pandarus stimulates a sequence of emotional reactions from Troilus, which culminate in his revelation of the name of his beloved. He apparently plans a similar campaign against Criseyde. Chaucer borrows a metaphor from Geoffrey de Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*[22] to describe Pandarus's contemplation of the best way to approach Criseyde.

For everi wight that hath an hous to founde
Ne renneth naught the werk for to begynne
With rakel hond, but he wol bide a stounde,
And sende his hertes line out fro withinne
Aldirfirst his purpos for to wynne.
Al this Pandare in his herte thoughte,
And caste his werk ful wisely or he wroughte. (I, 1065–1071)

At the beginning of book II, when he goes to Criseyde's house Pandarus sets in motion a series of destabilizing measures, inviting her to dance, tantalizing her with promises of good fortune about to befall her, which he then refuses to explain, before setting out on a long persuasive speech. In this case, the elaborate preparation and sequencing fails as Criseyde suspects subterfuge and responds with a trap of her own.

Criseyde, which that herde hym in this wise,
Thoughte, "I shal felen what he meneth ywis."

"Now em," quod she, "what wolde ye devise?
What is youre reed I sholde don of this?" (II, 386–389)

If these examples show reason organizing a sequence of emotions to achieve a result, then the second position is the reverse of this. An emotional situation is expressed in the form of a logical argument. In the famous predestination soliloquy from book IV, a long philosophical argument from Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* is reformulated in rhyme royal stanzas in order to show Troilus's passive and fatalistic approach to events. The point of the predestination soliloquy is that anyone who recognizes the passage will know that in Boethius the argument is immediately refuted by Dame Philosophy. Giving to Troilus the first part of argument, which is ultimately shown to be misconceived, confirms something about his personality and emotional state. The speech is introduced by a description of its significance.

He was so fallen in despeir that day,
That outrely he shop hym for to deye.
For right thus was his argument always:
He seyd he nas but lorn, weylaway! (IV, 954–957)

The argument is an expression of his despair.

The third position involves a more equal collaboration. In amplification, as described by Quintilian and Geoffrey de Vinsauf, logical and argumentative methods enable the writer to express emotion more intensely. Chaucer alludes to the doctrine of amplification in book III (lines 1324–1337) when in describing the happiness of the lovers he claims to speak under the correction of his audience, asking them "to encresse or maken dymynucioun" where his words are in need of improvement. Amplification is the focus of Robert Payne's famous study *The Key of Remembrance*, in which he shows how Chaucer used ideas of amplification such as those described in the *Poetria nova* to intensify the emotion of *Il Filostrato* as he retells the story. He shows that Troilus's lyrics elaborate the emotional significance of particular moments of the story in the way that Geoffrey envisaged in his discussion of apostrophe.[23]

Than seide he thus: "O paleys desolat,
O hous of houses whilom best ihight,
O paleys empty and diconsolat,
O thow lanterne of which queynt is the light,
O paleys, whilom day, that now art nyght,
Wel oughtestow to falle, and I to dye,
Syn she is went that wont was us to gye

O paleys, whilom crowne of houses alle,
Enlumyned with sonne of alle blisse!
O ryng, fro which the ruby is out falle,
O cause of wo, that cause has been of lisse! (V, 540–550)

Chaucer constructs this lyric through repetition, description (desolat, empty, disconsolat), through contrast with the past (expressed by "whilom"), through causes and effects, and especially through comparisons with objects (the lantern, the crown, the day, and the ring). Topical invention provides the subject matter; metaphor, apostrophe, anaphora, and antithesis give the figurative elaboration. Logic and rhetoric combine to amplify Troilus's feeling of desolation.

In the fourth position, argument is presented as the antidote to emotion. When Love urges Troilus to intervene in the debate in the Trojan Parliament, Reason tells him not to do so without Criseyde's permission (lines 162–168). After the wailing, the tears, and the death speeches of their emotional meeting in book IV, Criseyde opens her speech with an assertion of the folly of giving way to emotion.

> if a wight alwey his wo compleyne
> And seketh nought how holpen for to be,
> It nys but folie and encrees of peyne; (IV, 1255–1257)

Lamenting one's fate without seeking a solution merely adds to one's suffering. Instead of giving way to emotion, they should investigate what can be done.

> Me thynketh thus: that nouther ye nor I
> Ought half this wo to maken, skilfully;
> For ther is art ynough for to redresse
> That yet is mys, and slen this hevynesse. (IV, 1264–1267)

Rather than indulging their sorrow, they should devise a way to solve their problem and so put an end to their sadness. I presume that the "art" that will put right what has gone wrong is reason, and I note that both these passages are Chaucer's additions to Boccaccio. I think we can see reason overcoming emotion in Pandarus's speeches to Troilus in book I, and in Criseyde's discovery of a way out of her quarrel with Pandarus (II, 449–497). It is elevated into a philosophical principle at the end of book IV, when Criseyde concludes the argument between the lovers.

> And forthi sle with resoun al this hete!
> Men sen, 'The suffrant overcomith,' parde;
> Ek 'whoso wol han lief, he lief moot lete.'
> Thus maketh vertu of necessite
> By pacience, and thynk that lord is he
> Of Fortune ay that naught wole of hire recche,
> And she ne daunteth no wight but a wrecche. (IV, 1583–1589)

That reason overcomes emotion is here equated with other forms of Stoic and Boethian philosophical wisdom: the contempt of fortune, patience, and overcoming through suffering. To move beyond emotion to reason is to build civilization, to make peace, to achieve philosophical detachment.

But at other times (and this is the fifth position), the poem suggests that emotion takes you farther than logic. One example of this is the section of book II after Pandarus has left Criseyde's house and we watch her looking at Troilus, comparing the costs and benefits of a love affair, listening to her niece's song and dreaming. It is a very rich and persuasive picture of a woman experiencing a range of moods and ideas. Her internal debate on the advantages and disadvantages of a love affair with Troilus cannot reach a decisive conclusion because she can find equally good arguments on both sides. A skillful arguer can always find things to say on both sides. By contrast, Criseyde's spontaneous response to the sight of Troilus (Who yaf me drink?), her niece's words about love, and her dream of the eagle promise a more definite commitment. In book IV, Troilus at first agrees with Criseyde's solution to their problem, but then "His herte mysforyaf hym" (1426); his emotion forces him to argue against her.

Troilus's behavior in book V is a more important example of the superiority of emotion to reason. In spite of Cassandra's interpretation of his dream, in spite of the evidence that Criseyde has given his brooch to Diomede, in spite of Pandarus's condemnation of Criseyde's treachery, in spite of his own certainty about what has happened, Troilus declares (addressing Criseyde in his imagination)

> Thorugh which I se that clene out of your mynde
> Ye han me cast—and I ne can nor may,
> For al this world, withinne myn herte fynde
> To unloven yow a quarter of a day. (V, 1695–1698)

Troilus's resolution (which may be the decisive move of the poem) comes from the heart, against the dictates of reason. His conduct here is the opposite of that of the Boethian hero. In Boethius, Fortune's removal of worldly joys is supposed to make plain the nature of the world and to lead Fortune's victim (or rather her beneficiary) to turn away from the world to his or her inner resources and focus on the true good (that is to say, virtue and ultimately God).[24] In contrast to this, Troilus fixes all his love and commitment on the worldly good he has lost. This is irrational and, as far as Boethius is concerned, ought to be considered foolish; but to the reader of Chaucer, Troilus's selfless devotion seems entirely admirable, even though it is a devotion to something flawed. Chaucer admires this emotional commitment so much that he rewards Troilus with a place in heaven from which he can observe the misdirection of human life.[25]

The sixth position that I find expressed in *Troilus and Criseyde* depends on the perspective of the audience. From the audience's point of view, the whole of book IV is an attempt to avoid the disaster announced both at the beginning of that book and at the start of the whole poem. The lovers try to work out a method of escaping from their fate; they tantalize us with the illusion that by making a particular decision, they could remain together and remain alive.

Book IV is intended to worsen the audience's feeling of waste and desolation by offering us the possibility of an alternative outcome. The arguments intensify this feeling. In part they suggest that reason and partial freedom of action may resolve the lovers' difficulties. In part they restate the problem in a more uncompromising form. Criseyde proves that the lovers are obliged to part because Priam has given his word and because they are essentially honorable people (lines 1296–1302, 1555–1582). Troilus proves that if Criseyde once goes to the Greek camp, she will never be able to return (1450–1484). Together their arguments make up a hypothetical syllogism that predicts the catastrophe confirmed in book V. If Criseyde leaves, she will never return; but she must leave; therefore (and this conclusion is required, although it is not stated) she will never return. Troilus and Criseyde's arguments serve to amplify the audience's emotional reaction.

But everything looks different when Troilus looks down from the eighth sphere. (This is my seventh position; I really should have found eight.) When he looks down at the people on earth mourning his death, Troilus laughs. Now that he is aware of divine certainty, Troilus can see the great storms of human emotions as passing ripples, endlessly changing, insignificant, comic because of the disparity between their true insignificance and the vast importance people attach to them. Troilus is led to laugh at human emotion when he applies his reason to an otherworldly perspective (which, in the light of the epilogue that follows, I think we could also call a Christian perspective) on the world. This change to a Christian perspective is to some extent foreshadowed in the scene between the lovers in book IV. When Criseyde faints, rather than attempt to revive her, Troilus draws his sword and makes a suicide speech suitable for a Roman hero. But this high tragic moment is turned to comedy when she stirs and breathes "as God wolde," and he comforts and kisses her, with his sword apparently still in his hand. Christian providence exposes the limitations of pagan heroism, converting tragedy to farce (1149–1246). In the narrator's moralization at the end of the poem, the "blind lust" of human love is replaced by the certain and all-encompassing love of God. For Dante (and perhaps also for Chaucer), God's love and his plan for the world represented the unity in perfection of love and reason.

I have tried to show that perspectives from rhetoric can offer modern readers ways of interpreting Chaucer's writing, concerning both the ways he changed his sources and his purposes in so doing. I think it highly likely that Chaucer used rhetorical principles to read and adapt Boccaccio. Certainly in later periods, rhetorical reading is a necessary procedure in higher-level imitation. But I also want to suggest that Chaucer's practical poetic meditation on the problem of the relationship between reason and emotion is more profound than discussions of the question in textbooks of rhetoric. When Chaucer shows reason using emotion, the process of amplification, and the opposition between reason and emotion (positions 1, 3, and 4), he seems to be working

from well-known rhetorical sources. His exploration of the use of reason to express emotion (position 2) and the superior perceptiveness of emotion (position 5) seem more original, though Chaucer may have arrived at them by reflecting on the contraries of positions 1 and 4. Position 6, which we do not find in rhetorical sources, reflects a characteristic Chaucerian consideration of the reaction of an audience to a narrative. Position 7 probably reflects Chaucer's consideration of the implications of a Christian perspective on a pagan story, reinforced perhaps by his reading of Dante. Rhetoric textbooks raised the problem in a relatively simple, teachable form, whereas the writing of a narrative poem encouraged Chaucer to a deeper meditation on the apparent contradictions and deeper connections between emotion and argument.

Notes

1. *Phaedrus*, 271d–272b.
2. Discussions of this topic prior to 1968 are surveyed in R. O. Payne, "Chaucer and the Art of Rhetoric," in *Companion to Chaucer Studies*, ed. Beryl Rowland (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1968), 38–57.
3. (5) Calchas began, "My Lords, as you all know, I was a Trojan, and if you remember well I was the one who first brought hope in what you are here for and I said that after the necessary time you would obtain it, that is to say victory in your enterprise, and that Troy would be destroyed and burnt by you. (6) You know the plan and the method to keep to in this, which I have shown you; and in order that all your wishes should come about in the time I have said, without trusting in any messenger or any letter, whether open or sealed, I have come to you, as it appears, in order to give you advice and help in this. (7) Wanting to do this, it was advisable that I should leave discreetly and very secretly, without making anyone agree to it, and I did so. As soon as the bright day had gone dark I went out of the city and quietly came here, and I brought nothing with me but left everything I owned there. (8) Truly I care little or nothing about this, apart from a young daughter of mine whom I left there; O what a stern and harsh father I was! Why didn't I bring her alone to safety here? But fear and haste would not allow it: of all that I left in Troy, this is what saddens me, this is what takes happiness and joy from me. (9) Since I have not yet seen any opportunity to ask for her back, I have remained silent; but now there is an opportunity to be able to have her, if I can beg this gift from you; and if now it cannot be, I shall not hope to see her ever again, and I shall let my life fall into neglect, not caring more to live than to die. (10) Noble Trojan barons and several others are here with you now, whom you will exchange with the enemy for your prisoners. Give me just one of these many, in exchange for whose freedom I will get back my daughter. For God's sake, lord, comfort this poor old man, who is without any other consolation, (11) and do not let the thought of having gold for the prisoners attract you, since I swear to you by God that all Trojan power and riches is in your hands for certain. And if I am not mistaken, the valour of the one who holds the gates locked against the wish of all of you

will soon fail, as will appear from his violent death. (12) While the old priest was saying this, humble in his speaking and in his appearance, his cheeks were continually running with tears, wetting his white beard and stern breast. His prayers did not fail to produce an effect of pity, so that, when he stopped speaking, the Greeks all shouted noisily, "Give him Antenor." (*Chaucer's Boccaccio: Sources of Troilus and the Knight's and Franklin's Tales*, ed. and trans. N. R. Havely [Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1980], 57–58, provides a readable translation, which I have consulted in preparing mine.)

Quotation taken from Boccaccio, *Filostrato*, IV.5–12, in his *Opere minori in volgare*, II, ed. Mario Marti (Milan: Rizzoli, 1970), 114–116.

4. E.g. *Medieval Rhetorics of Prose Composition: Five English "Artes Dictandi" and Their Tradition*, ed. Martin Camargo (Binghamton, NY: Binghamton Press, 1995), 56 (petitio deprecativa), 134 (petitio). There are parallel examples in L. Rockinger, *Briefsteller und Formelbücher des eilften bis vierzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1863, reprinted New York: B. Franklin, 1961), 21, 109, 359, 440, 469, 746.
5. All quotations are taken from *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
6. For example, in adding a second occasion when Criseyde observes Troilus riding past her window and a second meeting at the start of book III.
7. Geoffrey de Vinsauf, *Poetria nova*, ed. Edmond Faral, *Les arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle: recherches et documents sur la technique littéraire du moyen âge* (Paris: Champion, 1958), lines 240–263; hereafter cited in the text as *Poetria nova*.
8. *Troilus and Criseyde*, I, 631–651.
9. *Satires*, 10, 2–4.
10. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1354a24—hereafter cited in the text as *Rhetoric*; Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, trans. George A. Kennedy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 30—hereafter cited in the text as Kennedy.
11. *Rhetoric*, 1378a21–1388b31; Kennedy, 121–162.
12. Cicero, *De oratore*, II.34.145–38.161; Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, V.pr.3–5; 15.27–35.
13. Cicero, *De oratore*, II.44.185–46.195; Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, VI.1.9–45; 2.1–36.
14. Cicero, *De inventione*, I.53.100–56.109; *Partitiones oratoriae*, 15.52–17.58.
15. Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, VIII.4.
16. Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, VIII.3.61–82.
17. Saint Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*, IV.4.6.
18. *Poetria nova*, lines 203–218.
19. *Poetria nova*, lines 367–430.
20. *Poetria nova*, lines 367–376: "England, once defended under the shield of King Richard, now defenseless, witness your sorrow with this lament: let tears ooze from your eyes; let terror distend your lips; let twisting knot your fingers; let inner sorrow bleed; and let wailing beat against the sky. All of you dies in his death; the death was not his but yours. Not private, but public, the source of that death. O tearful day of Venus. O cruel star. That day was night for you and

Venus was that poison," trans. Jane Baltzell Kopp, in *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 47. Chaucer alludes to this speech in his *Nun's Priest's Tale*, 4537–4544.

21. *Poetria nova*, 455–459:

    Sic igitur variat vultum: vel more magistri
    Corripit errorem pravum; vel ad omnia dura
    In lacrimis planctuque iacet; vel surgit in iram
    Propter grande scelus; vel fertur ridiculose
    Contra ridiculos.

22. *Poetria nova*, 43–48.
23. R. O. Payne, *The Key of Remembrance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1963), 178–188.
24. Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, II.pr.8.
25. I like to think that Chaucer is thinking of Dante's *Paradiso* here, but the passage from Boccaccio's *Teseida* that he is imitating (though it alludes to Dante) envisages a heaven that is not specifically Christian, like that mentioned by Boethius's Lady Philosophy. Boccaccio, *Teseida*, XI.1–3, in his *Opere minori in volgare*, II, ed. Mario Marti (Milan: Rizzoli, 1970), 599–600; Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, II.pr.7, IV.m.2. This heaven is unambiguously pagan in Lucan, *Pharsalia*, IX, 1–14, which Chaucer undoubtedly also knew, but there too the flight to the heavens is seen as a reward.

7

Advice without Consent in *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Canterbury Tales*[1]

Marc Guidry

The analysis, elaboration, and bringing into question of power relations and the "agonism" between power relations and intransitivity of freedom is a permanent political task inherent in all social relations.

—Michel Foucault[2]

In Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, Hector's speech at the Trojan Parliament that Criseyde must not be traded to the Greeks for the war hero Antenor because the Trojans "usen here no wommen for to selle" (4.182) is doubly ironic.[3] Not only do the Trojans in fact sell her for Antenor, but Pandarus has already procured her for Troilus, both of whom are present at the assembly. As Pandarus tells Troilus not long before the younger man first sleeps with her: "for the am I bicomen, / Bitwixen game and ernest, swich a meene / As maken wommen unto men to comen" (3.253–255).

As discussed below, Chaucer repeatedly styles Pandarus's discourse to both Troilus and Criseyde as *counseil*, and it is through his false counsel that he arranges the affair between them. The Trojan Parliament is, therefore, a quasi-public enactment of what has already happened to Criseyde in private, a highly charged moment when the amatory counsel of *fin amor* blends into the political counsel of that other distinctly chivalric activity, warfare. The Trojan Parliament raises our awareness of the commodification of women in the chivalric economy, as well as the problem of Criseyde's limited agency and lack of consent, to a disturbing degree. This is in stark contrast to Boccaccio's *Filostrato*, where Criseida arranges her rendezvous with Troiolo without further intervention by Pandaro and where there is no formal parliament debating her exchange to the Greeks.[4]

In *Troilus*, Chaucer explores the cultural function of counsel as a key mode of power distribution in chivalric society. Even when counsel is seen to be false

or misguided, it still maintains the function of shaping social identity and subjugating the powerless; correspondingly, the inability to successfully appropriate the discourse of counsel signals a lack of power (the inability to articulate one's needs, interests, and desires, that is, to define one's own identity). Criseyde is twice traded among men, and in both cases the transaction is negotiated through different but related forms of counsel. In turn, at crucial moments in her exchanges to Troilus and the Greeks, she attempts to appropriate the discourse of counsel in order to assert some measure of self-control over what is happening to her. However, rather than exercising agency by acting as her own counselor, she is ultimately acted upon and remains subject to male discourse.

What Chaucer is able to demonstrate with great pathos in his retelling of Criseyde's story is the discursive agon in which the powerless are so often engaged out of a deeply felt human need for freedom. The implicit recognition in *Troilus* that power relationships are not reducible to simple acts of dominance and submission but require the continuous engagement of the "other" opens up a discursive field for Criseyde's response in the face of further loss of personal freedom.[5]

After tracing how Criseyde's relations with Pandarus and Troilus are shaped by the discourse of counsel and comparing her procurement by Pandarus with her exchange at the Trojan Parliament, I discuss her attempt to assume the typically male role of counselor. Implicit in my argument is the premise that Chaucer is able to shift back and forth from the private amatory context of counsel to its public political context because he understands governance as not only the management of the state but also the direction and conduct of individuals. Moreover, courtly love transfers the ethos of conquest from the battlefield to the bedroom.

In the remainder of my essay, I juxtapose Criseyde's situation with that of other Chaucerian women in *The Canterbury Tales* who are also exchanged without their consent at male councils. Strikingly, Chaucer inverts this paradigm in *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, where a knight is exchanged in marriage against his will by a matriarchal council. While the Trojan Parliament indicates that popular sovereignty was unimaginable to Chaucer, he explores the question of *female* sovereignty in great depth. Chaucer, I argue, employs the topos of counsel in both *Troilus* and *The Tales* as a means of analyzing power relations within chivalric society. In particular, by imagining the prospect of female counsel, Chaucer is able to test the limits and conditions of discourse within the context of governance at the chivalric court.

In Book One of *Troilus*, Pandarus establishes himself as Troilus's personal adviser when he offers him "counseil" (1.627) on how to obtain Criseyde. In so doing, he assumes the ironic role of the Ovidian *magister amoris* for whom love is an art that can ostensibly be learned with the right instruction.[6] Following the example of the *Romance of the Rose*—the greatest medieval

"art of love"—Chaucer adds a layer of Boethian consolation to Pandarus's advice to Troilus.[7] But since romantic love is a synecdoche for Fortune—the most alluring of all Fortune's gifts—Pandarus's counsel to Troilus to master his (mis)fortune by learning the art of love and thereby obtaining Criseyde has the effect of burlesquing spiritual counsel.[8] Moreover, there is the problem that Pandarus is himself an unsuccessful lover, making him a variation on Ovid's narrator in the elegiac poems, who poses as the sick physician who cannot heal himself, the counselor who cannot follow his own advice.[9] Like Jean de Meun in the *Rose*, Chaucer points out the absurdity of trying to fulfill an irrational passion through practical philosophy.

But he goes even farther by setting the context for Pandarus's art of love within a realistic (albeit classicized) environment with a "flesh and blood" female (rather than an allegorical personification) who faces concrete social forces. Thus, for Chaucer, counsel is not just a method for examining artistic ideals and philosophical principles; it is a medium for analyzing social relations.

The social struggle between Pandarus and Criseyde becomes quickly evident when he offers her false "reed" (2.389) while on a visit to her house in Book Two.[10] The time for him to have given her counsel and aid would have been immediately after her father Calchas defected to the Greeks. This was Pandarus's obligation since he is both a knight and her closest male relative remaining in Troy. Yet the duty fell to Hector. Pandarus tries to disguise his conflict of interest through circumlocution, but eventually he makes it apparent that Criseyde should become Troilus's mistress, warning that soon "Elde" will rob her of her "Beaute" (2.398–399). His advice, a particularly hollow instance of the *carpe diem* topos, is manifestly against her interest because she is in a socially vulnerable position as the widowed daughter of a political criminal. She can ill afford to risk further damage to her reputation through the exposure of an affair with the king's son, especially since the war with the Greeks began over an illicit affair of another of the king's sons. The comparison between Helen's rape by Paris and Criseyde's situation is implicit throughout much of Chaucer's text.

Criseyde initially rejects Pandarus's counsel as disingenuous rhetoric:

> Is this youre reed? Is this my blisful cas?
> Is this the verray mede of youre byheeste?
> Is al this paynted proces seyde—allas!—
> Right for this fyn? (2.422–425)

However, she is forced to reconsider when he plays on her vulnerability by threatening suicide in her home should she refuse Troilus (a development not found in Boccaccio's version).[11] She attempts to compromise by setting the terms of the relationship: "I nyl nat holden hym in honde, / Ne love a man ne

kan I naught ne may / Ayeins my wyl" (2.477–479). What she does not fully realize is that Pandarus has already plotted a master narrative in which she shall be Troilus's "al hool" (2.587).

Mistrusting Pandarus's advice, Criseyde resorts to her own counsel through a process of critical introspection: "she gan in hire thought argue / In this matere of which I have yow told, / And what to doone best were, and what eschue" (2.694–697). The term *argue* belongs to the same semantic field as that of *counseil* and *red* in Chaucer's poetry. For example, Troilus mocks Pandarus's counsel when the latter advises him to take another lover after Criseyde is traded to the Greeks: "O, where hastow ben hid so longe in muwe, / That kanst so wel and formely *arguwe*? / Nay, God wot, nought worth is al thi *red*" (4.496–498; emphasis added; cf. 4.477, 4.527). Chaucer uses the verb *argumenten* and its nominative form *argument* to denote the act of counseling in the scenes of the Sultan's privy council in the *Man of Law's Tale* (lines 212, 228) and January's household council in the *Merchant's Tale* (line 1619), as well as in the *Parliament of Fowls* (line 538). Her inner counsel reveals how her subjectivity and her sense of self are developed and conditioned by the discourse of counsel.

Criseyde's inner debate recalls Pandarus's statement to her that she should take "Avysement" (2.343) before refusing Troilus's proposition. On a similar note, her confusion over "what to doone best were" recalls the narrator's description of her after her father's desertion as "she that nyste what was best to rede" (1.96). Chaucer uses the infinitive phrase *to rede* reflexively to suggest that Criseyde does not know how to advise herself; in other words, she does not know just what would be "best to do." Significantly, this formula is repeated verbatim after the Trojan Parliament, as well as upon her departure from Troy.[12] To C. S. Lewis's memorable characterization of Criseyde as always afraid, it should be added that she is nearly always *redeless*.[13]

Not surprisingly, then, Criseyde's inner counsel is indecisive. She poignantly counters the thought that a loveless existence is purposeless ("To what fyn lyve I thus?"—2.758) with the consideration that the risks of male possessiveness, infidelity, and abandonment in an affair are even more pointless ("To what fyn is swich love I kan nat see"—2.794). While there is dramatic irony here since we know it is she who will betray Troilus, there is also an undeniable social reality underlying her fears.[14] Vacillating between "hope" and "dread" (2.810), she remains *redeless*.

Her one resolution is that she will maintain the relative autonomy ironically afforded her by her widowhood:[15]

> I am myn owene womman, wel at ese—
> I thank it God—as after myn estat,
> Right yong, and stonde unteyd in lusty leese,

Withouten jalousie or swich debat:
Shal noon housbonde seyn to me "Chek mat!" (2.750–754)

Her illusion of autonomy will be shattered after the parliament. But even then, she will try to exercise agency by refusing to let Troilus abduct her, instead offering her own counsel on how to save their relationship.

The Poliphete and Horaste ruses of Books Two and Three are constructions of Pandarus's counsel. He "conseilest" (2.1528) Troilus on his role in the Poliphete ruse. In turn, "to Pandarus reed" Troilus "gan all assente" (2.1539). Likewise, the Horaste ruse is implemented through Pandarus's "deliberacioun" (3.519), a term belonging to the semantic field of *counseil*.[16] The Horaste ruse has an analogue in the twelfth-century Ovidian didactic love poem *Pamphilus*, while the Poliphete ruse appears to be purely Chaucer's invention.[17] Significantly, he describes the latter as the "engyn" (3.274) of Pandarus, a term that links his character to Anglo-French romance. Chaucer's Pandarus is a composite of the Ovidian *magister amoris* and the trickster figure of medieval romance, both of whom use disingenuous counsel to accomplish their purposes.

Middle English *engyn* and its shortened form *gyn* (both cognates of Old French *engin*) imply trickery or deception. In medieval romance, gyn may take the form of battlefield strategy and engines of war (siege ladders, towers, mangonels), or some more subtle form of social deception. Stephen Jaeger distinguishes between "chivalric" romances, where the action takes place mainly on the battlefield and courtliness is perceived as a "sublime ethical code," and "courtier" romances, where the action takes place in the closed world of the court and courtliness often turns out to be a veneer of good manners.[18] In the latter scenario, conflict is driven by intrigues rather than armed challenges. The two greatest Middle English romances, *Troilus* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, belong to this latter category. Geraldine Barnes observes that in Middle English romance, a great deal of courtier gyn is "devised through red and counseil," which she calls "verbal gyn" (Barnes, 91–92). This is certainly the variety of gyn Pandarus practices in the spatially restricted world of Chaucer's Troy. It is through his verbal gyn or counsel that he entraps Criseyde for Troilus.

According to Barnes, the connotations of *gyn* in medieval romance are generally positive, except when used in combination with such terms as *gile*, *wyle*, and *trecherie* (Barnes, 94). Pandarus is a complex character who has been likened to Chaucer himself because his artistic genius mirrors that of his creator.[19] Moreover, not unlike Pandarus, Chaucer's narrative persona acts as a kind of go-between vis-à-vis the audience and the topic of love. But even though Pandarus's motives are complicated, *trecherie* is precisely the term Chaucer pairs with *engyn* in his confession to Troilus that he has more or less pimped his niece:

And were it wist that I, thorugh myn *engyn*,
Hadde in my nece yput this fantasie,

> To doon thi lust and holly to ben thyn,
> Why, al the world upon it wolde crie,
> And seyn that I the werste *trecherie*
> Dide in this cas, that evere was bigonne,
> And she forlost, and thow right nought ywonne. (3.274–280; emphasis added)

Likewise, citing his special bond as Criseyde's "em," Pandarus calls himself a "traitour" (3.274). At this point in the story, however, Troilus is not prepared to acknowledge his complicity in Pandarus's "bauderye" (3.397). Indeed, he sanitizes it by calling it "gentilesse" (3.402), even as he offers him one of his sisters as a reward for procuring Criseyde.

Traitour is an especially loaded term in Chaucer's narrative. The Poliphete ruse is a scheme to bring Criseyde into Troilus's presence by pretending that she needs protection from the princes of the royal house of Troy due to a libelous suit brought against her by one Poliphete. Poliphete is said to have powerful friends in Aeneas and Antenor, the latter of whom Chaucer's narrator explicitly identifies as the eventual "traitour" (4.204) to Troy at the Trojan Parliament. Just as ironic, the ruse gives Pandarus the opportunity to act out the role he should have played as Criseyde's advocate when the "traitour" (1.87) Calchas fled Troy. Since it is Calchas who initiates her exchange for Antenor at the parliament, the irony of the situation comes full circle in Chaucer's narrative. Only in Chaucer's account of Criseyde's story is she repeatedly betrayed by male counsel.

Characteristically, Criseyde tries to maintain her sense of autonomy despite playing a role in Pandarus's scheme. Once she is together with Troilus at the house of his brother Deiphebus, she tells him that, although he is "A kynges sone" (2.170), she will not cede "sovereignete" (2.172) to him in love. Her manifesto recalls her inner counsel in which she had determined to be her "own woman." It also anticipates her reaction to the Horaste ruse, which is Pandarus's scheme to bed the couple.

Horaste, a figure made up by Pandarus, is purportedly a rival to Troilus for Criseyde's affections. She is manipulatively called upon to prove her love by sleeping with Troilus, but she resists his feigned "argumentes" (3.1166) that "jalousie is love" (3.1024). With the use of the term *argument*, Chaucer puts us once again within the discursive context of counsel and consent. The Horaste ruse pits Pandarus's amatory counsel to Troilus against Criseyde's countercounsel to him. Her self-possession is tied to her ability as a counselor. Although she succeeds in getting Troilus to realize the falseness of Pandarus's counsel, the issue of whether she maintains self-possession or "sovereignty" is deferred until her complete loss of liberty at the Trojan Parliament.

Through the Horaste ruse, Pandarus attempts to implement the Ovidian strategy that jealousy inspires love.[20] However, Criseyde asserts that jealousy is

"but illusioun / Of habundaunce of love" (3.1041–1042). Her refutation strikes at the very core of chivalric culture, which treats romantic love as a displacement of military conquest, the immediate object being possession of women instead of land (although through the feudal marriage economy the two went hand in hand). Jealousy is a symptom of possessiveness, and possession of women through conquest is the school of love to which Diomedes, whom Michael Calabrese has called "a textbook Ovidian lover"(71), belongs. As he escorts Criseyde from Troy, he is already planning how he might win her from Troilus: "But whoso myghte wynnen swich a flour / From hym for whom she morneth nyght and day, / He myghte seyn he were a conquerour" (5.792–794). For his part, Troilus, who awaits Criseyde at Pandarus's house while hiding in a small room or "stuwe" (3.698)—a euphemism for a brothel—makes an appeal to the gods for success with her in which he invokes Ovidian myths of masculine conquest and rape of women: Jove's abduction of Europa, Apollo's pursuit of Daphne, Mercury's seduction of Herse, and Mars's tryst with Venus, which provokes the jealous wrath of her husband Vulcan.[21]

As Jill Mann has argued, Troilus's swoon, which occurs when Criseyde confronts him with the impropriety and superficiality of his jealousy, forestalls the possibility of her rape.[22] Significantly, it happens the moment he finally confronts the falseness of Pandarus's counsel: "'O Pandarus,' thoughte he, 'allas, thi wile / Serveth of nought, so weylaway the while!'" (3.1077–1078). As discussed above, in Middle English romance w*ile* is synonymous with *trecherie*,[23] the term Chaucer had used to describe Pandarus's gyn in his confession to Troilus. Criseyde's challenge to Pandarus's counsel has compelled Troilus to reevaluate his previous praise of Pandarus's behavior as "gentilesse" and recognize it for what it is.[24]

The moment of Troilus's swoon is, ironically, the high point of Criseyde's career as a court counselor. She has gotten Troilus to realize that love is based on mutuality rather than possession. She has also gotten him to realize that following Pandarus's disingenuous counsel has almost destroyed the possibility of their relationship. This opens up a space for the growth of their relationship, which Chaucer describes at the end of Book Three as the "joie" (3.1687) of mutual affection and regard: "For ech of hem gan otheres lust obeye" (3.1690).

However, the actual moment of her consent to lovemaking is disturbingly couched in the language of conquest, returning us to the problem of female consent in the narrative. Just as the "sperhauk" (3.1192) grasps the "sely larke" (3.1191) in its talons, Troilus seizes Criseyde in his arms and demands her submission, "Now be ye kaught; now is ther but we tweyne! / Now yeldeth yow, for other bote is non!" (3.1206–1207). The use of the passive voice and multiple negation in her response suggests a lack of agency and obscures intention: "Ne hadde I er now, my swete herte deere, / Ben yolde, ywis, I were now nought heere!" (3.1210–1211). While Criseyde, as speaker, is the grammatical subject

of her sentence, she is the receiver of the action initiated by Troilus (and, indirectly, Pandarus). In linguistic terms, she is the sentence's theme rather than its agent, making her consent to become Troilus's lover tentative at best. If she cannot even be the proper agent of her own discourse at such a crucial moment, how can we credit her claim to be "her own woman"? The notion that she is here asserting a prior decision to love Troilus cannot quite be squared with the fact that she has never given voice to such a decision.[25] Her inner counsel, which was her most intense and introspective reflection on her feelings for him, was left unresolved. While Chaucer appears to be exploring the paradoxical nature of love growing even in the midst of doubt through his characterization of Criseyde, the passivity of her speech on the night of love brings us to the problem of her complete lack of consent at the Trojan Parliament.

Although Criseyde belongs to the Trojan aristocracy, she does not enjoy full citizenship. Since her status follows that of her father, who has lost his membership in the polis, she can be perfunctorily treated as a "prisoner" of war by parliament. Her absence from the political sphere of Priam's court is magnified by Troilus's scrupling over whether he should publicly defend her "withouten assent of hire" (4.165).

Still more ironic is the fact that the decision of parliament is based on the principle of the consent of the governed. Pandarus, we are informed, "herd what every lord and burgeys seyde, / And how ful graunted was by oon assent / For Antenor to yelden so Criseyde" (4.345–347). Through the device of prolepsis, Chaucer models the Trojan Parliament on the bicameral structure of fourteenth-century English parliaments and uses the customary legal formula to signify that both the lower and upper houses have ratified the Greek proposal.[26] However, Criseyde's reaction to the news of the exchange belies the parliament's appearance of participatory governance. No sooner than she learns of her impending exile from Troy, she prays to Jupiter to "yeve hem meschaunce that this tretis broughte" (4.670). Criseyde has been completely misrepresented as a "prisonere" (4.179) of war, yet her dissent from parliament can only be uttered in private.

Even though Pandarus tries to contain Troilus and Criseyde's affair within the hermetic world of his art, it cannot be separated from the political situation of the war. Criseyde's doomed scheme to return to Troy after her exchange, which Chaucer presents as her counsel to Troilus, is already shaped by the indiscretion of the Trojan Parliament. Conversely, the disintegration of their relationship adumbrates the downfall of Troy through Antenor's treachery. Ultimately, Criseyde's failed counsel mirrors the false counsel of the Trojan Parliament.

After the parliament, Pandarus resumes his Ovidian role as *magister amoris*, but Troilus is no longer receptive. When he rejects his "conseil" (4.439) to replace Criseyde with another lover, Pandarus retorts that he should

"ravysshe" (4.530) her, which once again aligns her with Helen. Troilus replies that he will not "ravysshe hire, but if hireself it wolde" (4.637), which would turn the act into elopement. Troilus's response reveals his emotional growth throughout the narrative. No longer swooning, he now openly rejects Pandarus's counsel.

Apparently having exhausted his conciliar resources, Pandarus confers his role as Troilus's counselor upon Criseyde:

> Syn ye be wise and bothe of oon assent,
> So shapeth how destourbe youre goynge
> Or come ayeyn soon after ye be went.
> Wommen ben wise in short avysement. (4.933–936)

There is no equivalent line in Boccaccio's text thematizing female counsel. The notion that women are skilled at quick deliberation became proverbial after Chaucer.[27] In Criseyde's ensuing conversation with Troilus, she embraces the chance to speak as counselor for the couple: "As I am a womman, as ful wel ye woot, / And as I am avysed sodeynly, / So wol I telle yow, whil it is hoot" (4.1261–1263). Their dialogue streams with the language of counsel taking: for instance, "avisement" (4.1300), "counseyl" (4.1325), "assente" (4.1372, 1526), and the verbal and nominative forms of *red* (4.1364, 1413, 1643).

Although Troilus will not act against Criseyde's wishes, he almost demands that she elope with him: "doth somwhat as that I shal you seye, / And lat us stele awey bitwixe us tweye" (4.1502–1503). One could argue that in rejecting his advice, Criseyde prevents herself from becoming a second Helen, just another lady ravished by a Trojan prince.

Yet her counsel merely elaborates what Pandarus has already instructed her to do, which is to devise a way to return to Troy. Moreover, it is dictated by the law of parliament:

> Now herkneth this: ye han wel understonde
> My goyng graunted is by parlement
> So ferforth that it may nat be withstonde
> For al this world, as by my jugement.
> And syn ther helpeth non avisement
> To letten it, lat it passe out of mynde. (4.1296–1301)

That there is "no advisement" (i.e., consultation) that can prevent her exile only reinforces her exclusion from the political sphere of the Trojan court.

Criseyde's counsel to Troilus impersonates Pandarus in another regard. She plans to trick Calchas into allowing her to return to Troy under false pretenses, claiming that she can catch him "Withouten net" (4.1371). Her locution repeats Pandarus's remark to her during their council in Book Two that she has caught Troilus in the snares of love "withouten net" (2.583). Her plan to deceive

Calchas ironically depends upon her ability to use the same kind of verbal gyn Pandarus had used to procure her for Troilus: "And but I make hym soone to converte / And don my red withinne a day or tweye, / I wol to yow oblige me to deye" (4.1412–1414). Pandarus had used *red* in order to "converte" (2.903) Criseyde to the cause of loving Troilus. Troilus doubts Criseyde's ability to trick the crafty and experienced Calchas: "Ye shal nat blende hym for youre wommanhede" (4.1462). His objection recalls the Poliphete ruse, in which Pandarus had used his verbal gyn to "blend" (2.1496; cf. 2.1743, 3.207) Deiphebus. Troilus also calls her stratagems "sleghtes" (4.1450), a term that at once echoes Pandarus's comment to him that he had found "O manere / Of sleyghte" (2.1512) to deceive Deiphebus and anticipates the "sleghte" (5.773) Diomedes will use to win her over. Criseyde's counsel is thus embedded in the same kinds of deceptive Ovidian rhetoric Pandarus and Diomedes employ.

David Aers has keenly focused upon the way Criseyde imbibes the value system of chivalric culture by accepting second-place status to Troilus and placing the needs of war before the needs of love:[28]

> But that ye speke, awey thus for to go
> And leten alle youre frendes, God forbede
> For any womman that ye sholden so,
> *And namely syn Troie hath now swich nede*
> *Of help.* (4.1555–1559; emphasis added)

It should be added that in doing so she is mimicking parliamentary discourse. The Trojan MPs had argued in objection to Hector that it would be foolish not to trade her for Antenor since the town "han nede to folk, as men may se" (4.191). She prevents herself from becoming a prisoner of love only by accepting her male-designated status as a prisoner of war. In *Troilus*, female counsel turns out to be an impersonation of male counsel.

There is further linkage between Criseyde's counsel and the Trojan Parliament in her apostrophe to Prudence, spoken in the Greek camp after she realizes she will never be able to return to Troy and Troilus:

> Allas, I ne hadde trowed on youre lore
> And went with yow, as ye me redde er this! . . .
> To late is now to speke of that matere.
> Prudence, allas, oon of thyne eyen thre
> Me lakked alwey, er that I come here!
> On tyme ypassed wel remembred me,
> And present tyme ek koud ich wel ise,
> But future tyme, er I was in the snare,
> Koude I nat sen; that causeth now my care. (5.736–737, 743–749)

Her apostrophe to Prudence echoes the narrator's complaint against the indiscretion of the Trojan MPs: "O nyce world, lo, thy discrecioun!" (4.206). Indeed, *discrecioun* is synonymous with *prudence* in Middle English.[29] Criseyde's lack of prudence relates analogously to the misgovernance of the Trojan Parliament, which in turn is a public enactment of the privatized transactions between men in their dealings over (and competition for) women.

Following Cicero, medieval theologians classified prudence as one of the cardinal virtues and subdivided it into *memoria*, *intelligentsia*, and *providentia*, corresponding to the temporal dimensions of past, present, and future (accounting for the popular iconography of the three eyes of prudence).[30] In its ethical dimension, it is the quality that allows individuals to direct their future according to the wisdom gained from the past, making discernment possible. Its ethical dimension was joined to its political dimension in medieval philosophy. For instance, in his sermon *Vivat rex*, the French ecclesiastical statesman and political theorist Jean Gerson (1363–1429) stated that civic order was to be maintained through the exercise of prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice.[31] Accordingly, the Aristotelian term for practical wisdom (*phronesis*) was translated in medieval Latin as *prudentia politica*. Prudence in its special form as a political virtue was considered indispensable to good government and was, at least in principle, to be provided by counselors selected for their "learning, experience and moral virtue."[32] In the *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas synthesizes prudence's dual dimensions, positing an analogous relationship between individual conduct and the governance of the body politic.[33]

By aligning Criseyde's betrayal of Troilus with Antenor's betrayal of Troy, Chaucer draws an analogy between self-governance and the governance of the state, as several critics have observed.[34] He returns to this analogy in the Boethian passage in which Troilus's soul ascends through the crystalline spheres of the Ptolemaic heavens, from where he looks down upon the earthly city he has departed and sees for the first time "with ful avysement" (5.1811). Idiomatically, this phrase translates "with full view," following the derivation of *avyse* from the Latin *videre*, but it is populated with the conciliar language of the text. Troilus, in other words, no longer lacks the third eye of Prudence but instead sees with the benefit of divine *red*. He now knows the severe lesson Pandarus had avoided teaching him, that the world is a place of "brotelnesse" (5.1832) and love a form of worldly fortune subject to mutability. The fall of Troilus in love is a metonymy for the fall of Troy in war, which is glossed in the passage in which Cassandra, whom David Anderson calls "an advisor to Troilus,"[35] recounts the fall of Thebes due to "Fortune" (5.1460).

Yet, as so many Chaucerians have objected, this ending seems discordant and contrived. Love is not detrimental but instrumental to Troilus's chivalric

prowess, much in the manner of Chrétien's Lancelot, closing the gap between private desire and public duty:[36]

> In alle nedes for the townes werre
> He was, and ay, the first in armes dyght . . .
> And this encrees of hardynesse and myght
> Com hym of love, his ladies thank to wynne,
> That altered his spirit so withinne. (3.1772–1773, 1776–1778)

It is not following one's love that threatens the stability of the Trojan polity, but the dehumanization of relationships in the act of chivalric conquest. This is what Paris and the Trojan MPs are guilty of, and it is a mind-set that Troilus through Pandarus's influence adopts but then rejects when he refuses to abduct Criseyde. In so doing, he embodies the spirit of Hector's speech to the parliament that women are not property to be bought and sold.

Criseyde is imprudent precisely because she follows the law of parliament that has reduced her to a commodity, rather than following her love for Troilus.

Yet her betrayal of her love for him is not out of choice but necessity. She fears being raped by Greek soldiers if she is "kaught" (4.703) escaping the Greek camp, where she once again finds herself "allone" and in "nede / Of frendes help" (5.1026–1027) just as she had been after her father's desertion—a bitter irony to say the least. Her will is proscribed by chivalric law and conditioned by the chivalric ethos she has fought so hard against. In the end, she is unable to avoid being ravished. Diomedes "refte hire of the grete of al hire peyne" (5.1036). In this ambiguous line, Chaucer once again conveys how her love is not consensual but compelled by circumstances. In so doing, he complicates the medieval metaphor of the state as a body politic analogous to self-governance. In sum, Chaucer refigures governance as the agonistic process by which personal autonomy is subjugated by power.

As discussed above, Criseyde's social identity as a prisoner of war is defined by the Trojan Parliament. After she becomes Diomedes's mistress, she is acutely conscious of the manner in which her identity will continue to be defined by male discourse:

> Allas, for now is clene ago
> My name of trouthe in love, for everemo! . . .
> Allas, of my, unto the worldes ende,
> Shal neyther ben ywriten nor ysonge
> No good word, for thise bokes wol me shende.
> O, rolled shal I ben on many a tonge! (5.1054–1055, 1058–1061)

The (mis)representation of female identity in male discourse is a subject to which Chaucer returns in *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*. But before addressing that text, I want to direct attention to the way Chaucer repeatedly enacts the

exchange of women without their full consent at patriarchal councils in *The Canterbury Tales*. In *The Knight's Tale*, the Athenian duke Theseus announces his "wille" (line 2986) at his "parlement" (line 2970), which is that his young sister-in-law Emily must marry the Theban knight Palamon in order to create a political "alliaunce" (line 2973). Her private prayer to remain unwed (lines 2297–2330), which recalls Criseyde's protest to the gods against the Trojan Parliament, goes unheard. As David Wallace has demonstrated, Theseus's duchess Hippolita is effectively silenced along with Emily. "Thesian polity" is characterized by "rule without benefit of queenly or wifely counsel."[37] The situation at the Athenian Parliament is in stark contrast to *The Parliament of Fowls*, where Nature grants the formel "electioun" to choose "whom hire lest" (lines 621–622) in marriage. The formel accordingly asserts her prerogative "to avise" (line 648) herself, a choice neither Emily nor Criseyde has. As a dream vision, *The Parliament of Fowls* can articulate an ideal of autonomous conduct that is in conflict with the underlying reality of Chaucer's more historically grounded romances.

In *The Man of Law's Tale*, the aptly named "privee conseil" (line 204) of the Syrian Sultan fulfills his "lust" (2.188) by negotiating with "the chirche, and al the chivalrie" (line 235) of Rome to arrange a marriage between him and Constance, daughter of the Roman emperor. As in the case of Emily and Criseyde, Constance is not consulted by the male counselors who negotiate her exchange.

Likewise, in *The Clerk's Tale*, the subjects of the Lombard marquis Walter request an "audience" (line 104) or council[38] with him in which they advise him through a spokesman to marry. Walter's subsequent meeting with Janicula, the father of the peasant woman Griselda whom he has chosen to marry, amounts to a grim parody of a seigneurial council. He states that he will not speak out of Janicula's "audience" (line 329), but Janicula has already stated that as a simple peasant he has no right to advise Walter: "my willynge / Is as ye wole . . . Right as yow lust, governeth this mateere" (lines 319–320, 322). Walter then proposes marriage directly to Griselda, but only under condition of her complete submission: "I seye this: be ye redy with good herte / To al my lust . . . And eek whan I sey 'ye,' ne sey nat 'nay'" (lines 351–352, 355). Her response echoes that of her father: "as ye wole yourself, right so wol I" (line 361). Like Criseyde, Griselda is exchanged through the patriarchal discourse of counsel. And like Criseyde, Griselda has no real choice in the matter. Her consent to the arrangement is a hollow formula, a ritual serving to validate the ruler's power rather than to make governance more inclusive.[39]

Finally, in *The Merchant's Tale*, the "privee freendes" (line 1813) of the decrepit merchant-knight January assemble to give him "conseil" (line 1480) on marriage and eventually arrange a union between him and the nubile May, to the satisfaction of his "wyl" (line 1468) but, needless to say, to the dissatisfaction

of hers. Like Criseyde, May is in danger of becoming another Helen. On her wedding night, she finds herself in the position of being possessed by January, who "in armes wolde hire streyne / Harder than ever Parys dide Eleyne" (lines 1753–1754). In all of these narratives, counsel serves as a technique of power, a vehicle for subjugating women to male desire.

Only in *The Wife of Bath's Tale* does Chaucer invert the paradigm of the woman exchanged through patriarchal counsel. A knight is exchanged in marriage to an old hag (the Wife's analogue) by a matriarchal council comprised of wives, widows, and maidens and presided over by Arthur's queen, "sittynge as a justise" (3.1028).[40] In Gower's *Tale of Florent* in *The Confessio Amantis*—the closest analogue to *The Wife of Bath's Tale*—the assembly that tries Florent is referred to explicitly as a "conseil" (1.1631),[41] only it is run by a lord. Chaucer's decision to feminize the council thus takes on added significance. The relation between the discourse of counsel and power is again readily apparent in Chaucer's poetry, as the role reversal that takes place at the queen's council results in the hag gaining "governance" (line 1230) and "maistrie" (line 1236) over the knight.

That female counsel is a subversion of power is reinforced in *The Melibee*, Chaucer's handbook on the political skill of counsel-taking addressed to the ruling class.[42] The lord Melibee nearly rejects the counsel of his wife Prudence (Chaucer's archetypal counselor) for no other reason than that she is a woman. He fears that taking her advice over whether he should go to war against his old foes would lessen his authority, overturning the social hierarchy: "certes, if I governed me by thy conseil, it sholde seme that I hadde yeve to thee over me the maistrie, and God forbade that it so were!" (line 1058).

The challenge of female counsel is also evident in the Envoy to *The Clerk's Tale*, where the Clerk pictures the Wife exhorting "hire secte" (line 1171) to resist the silent submission exemplified by Griselda and instead overwhelm men with female speech: "Ay clappeth as a mille, I yow consaille" (line 1200). In her *Prologue*, the Wife appropriates the clerical voice of her fifth husband Jankin to defend her lifestyle against Pauline "conseillyng" (line 67) that women should remain chaste, holding off two male preachers (the Friar and the Pardoner) while making her argument. Judging by his envoy, the Clerk apparently also feels the need to respond to her. Incredibly, at the second meeting of January's household council in *The Merchant's Tale*, the fictional character Justinus cites the Wife as if she were a real authority on marriage: "The Wyf of Bathe, if ye han understonde, / Of mariage, which we have on honde, / Declared hath ful wel in litel space" (lines 1685–1687). Arguably, the Wife succeeds where Criseyde fails. Chaucer imagines her redefining her "estate" from that of domestic servant to that of marriage counselor, becoming an unorthodox authority on the needs and interests of women, which she assertively articulates in both her *Prologue* and *Tale*.

In both *Troilus* and *The Canterbury Tales*, counsel functions as more than just a conventional rhetorical topos used to invent or gloss text. It is a technique of power, a mode of shaping social relations and identities. Chaucer explores the intersection of rhetoric and power by depicting the effect of male counsel upon female agency, as well as the attempt of female characters such as Criseyde and the Wife of Bath to appropriate the discourse of counsel.

Notes

1. This essay is dedicated in memoriam to Julian Wasserman, who would gladly learn and gladly teach.
2. Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," trans. Leslie Sawyer, in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2nd ed., ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 223; hereafter cited in the text as Foucault.
3. Larry D. Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987). All quotations from Chaucer's works are taken from this edition with citations listed parenthetically by book and line number.
4. Louise O. Fradenburg has stated "It is well-known that Chaucer in effect brought out Criseyde's consent *as a problem*" ("'Our owen wo to drynke': Loss, Gender and Chivalry in *Troilus and Criseyde*," in *Chaucer's "Troilus and Criseyde": "Subgit to alle Poesye": Essays in Criticism*, ed. R. A. Shoaf [Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1992], 88–106; hereafter cited in the text as Fradenburg).
5. As the epigraph to my essay indicates, my analysis of power relations in *Troilus* is influenced by Foucault, who argues that "a power relationship" requires that "'the other' (the one over whom power is exercised) be thoroughly recognized and maintained to the very end as a person who acts." Therefore, in a relationship of power, "a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible inventions may open up" (220).
6. The two best readings of Pandarus's Ovidian influences are by John M. Fyler, *Chaucer and Ovid* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), especially 124–147, and Michael A. Calabrese, *Chaucer's Ovidian Arts of Love* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994), 33–80; hereafter cited in the text as Calabrese.
7. For Chaucer's use of the *Roman de la Rose* in *Troilus*, see C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), 182–195—hereafter cited in the text as Lewis; Charles Muscatine, *Chaucer and the French Tradition: A Study in Style and Meaning* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), 140–153; and Barry Windeatt, *Oxford Guides to Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 114–118—hereafter cited in the text as Windeatt.
8. On Pandarus as a parodic Boethian counselor, see Alan Gaylord, "Uncle Pandarus as Lady Philosophy," *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters* 46 (1961), 571–595. But see also Martin Camargo, "The Consolation of Pandarus," *The Chaucer Review* 25 (1991), 214–228. Camargo points out that we

cannot dismiss Pandarus as little more than a parodic version of Lady Philosophy because he manages to display a "fundamental optimism" and "compassion" for Troilus, stemming from his own unrequited love.

9. Pandarus tells Troilus that although he "smerteth sore" (1.667) from love, "yet, peraunter, kan I reden the / And nat myself" (1.668–1669); he also refers to himself as Troilus's "leche" (1.856). In the *Ars amatoria*, Ovid's narrator states, "I fall short of my own counsels [monitis]" (2.548); in the companion poem, *Remedia Amoris*, the narrator states that he is a "shamefully sick physician" (line 314) (*The Art of Love and Other Poems*, ed. and trans. J. H. Mozley, rev. ed. [Loeb, 1957]); hereafter cited in the text as *Art of Love*.
10. *The Middle English Dictionary* (*MED*), ed. Hans Kurath, et al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1956–2002), defines *red* as "Advice, counsel" (1a); hereafter cited in the text as *MED*. See also Geraldine Barnes, *Counsel and Strategy in Middle English Romance* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1993), 30; hereafter cited in the text as Barnes. Barnes notes that the Old English *red*, along with its Latinate counterpart *counseil*, has a variety of applications as "advice": moral, political, legal, strategic, and pedagogical. It is my observation that in *Troilus*, amatory counsel combines several of these applications of *red*.
11. Pandaro and Criseida exchange only "laughter and sweet words" (2.35) free from threats and recrimination. In fact, she freely adopts his argument about the necessity of loving while she is still young and beautiful (2.54–55) (*Il Filostrato*, ed. Vincenzo Pernicone, trans. Robert P. Roberts and Anna Bruni Seldis [New York: Garland, 1986]; hereafter cited in the text as *Il Filostrato*).
12. After the parliament, the narrator states, "she nyste what was best to reede" (4.679); upon her departure from Troy, he once again calls her "she that nyste what was best to rede" (5.18).
13. See Lewis, 185.
14. See Priscilla Martin, *Chaucer's Women: Nuns, Wives, and Amazons* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1990), 173. Martin states that Criseyde's line of reasoning has "its own truth in experience" and "is one of the many ways in which the narrative qualifies the narrator's opening statement of his theme of faithless woman."
15. Chaucer seems to have in mind the medieval English legal doctrine of coverture, whereby women lost much of their legal identity to their husbands upon marriage. See Elizabeth Fowler, "Civil Death and the Maiden: Agency and the Conditions of Contract in Piers Plowman," *Speculum* 70 (1995), 760–792.
16. In *The Melibee*, Chaucer uses the term ten times in relation to the speech act of giving and taking counsel: lines 1029, 1033, 1034, 1042, 1138, 1253, 1298, 1342, 1346, and 1787.
17. See Thomas Jay Garbáty, "The *Pamphilus* Tradition in Ruiz and Chaucer," *Philological Quarterly* 46 (1967), 457–470. See also Windeatt, 170–172. Chaucer definitely knew the *Pamphilus* because he directly quotes it in the *Franklin's Tale*. See *FranT*, lines 1109–1110.
18. See Stephen Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 238–242.

19. See John Fyler, "The Fabrications of Pandarus," *Modern Language Quarterly* 41 (1980), 115–130.
20. See Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, 3.591–594; see also the *Remedia Amoris*, lines 791–794.
21. In the *Roman*, La Vieille cynically mentions the episode of Vulcan catching Venus and Mars in flagrante delicto as an exemplum of how jealousy can be used as a sexual lever. See Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Ernest Langlois, 5 vols. (Paris: Didot, 1914–1924), lines 13823–13846. Elizabeth Robertson includes this catalogue as part of the machinery of what she calls the "rape plot" in *Troilus* ("Public Bodies and Psychic Domains: Rape, Consent, and Female Subjectivity in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*," in *Representing Rape in Medieval and Early Modern Literature*, ed. Elizabeth Robertson and Christine M. Rose [New York: Palgrave, 2001], 281–310, especially 301; hereafter cited in the text as E. Robertson).
22. Robertson concurs with Mann on this point (E. Robertson, 301). However, see also Elaine Tuttle Hansen, *Chaucer and the Fictions of Gender* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 170; Catherine S. Cox, *Gender and Language in Chaucer* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997), 45; and Fradenburg, 99–101. Hansen, Cox, and Fradenburg argue that it cannot be determined whether Criseyde is raped or consents to lovemaking with Troilus.
23. In Malory's *Morte D'arthur*, King Mark says he will destroy Tristram "by som wyllys other by treson." See *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*, ed. Eugene Vinaver (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 578.
24. In contrast, in the *Pamphilus* the ploy of using jealousy to unite the lovers works. The Anus—the stock type of the experienced go-between and amatory adviser—successfully spurs the vacillating Pamphilus to action by falsely claiming that the woman he is in love with, Galathea, is already engaged to another man. See Thomas Jay Garbáty, "*Pamphilus, De Amore*: An Introduction and Translation," *The Chaucer Review* 2 (1967), 108–134.
25. See A. C. Spearing, *Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde* (London: Edward Arnold, 1976), 19. Spearing notes that "the moment of yielding" never occurs on the page, but "must have happened in one of the gaps between scenes." But see also David Aers, *Community, Gender, and Individual Identity: English Writing, 1360–1430* (London: Routledge, 1988), 130. Aers reads the lines in which Criseyde tells Troilus she has already "been yielded" to him as a subtle claiming of her subjectivity.
26. May McKisack notes that the midsummer parliament of 1325 was the last parliament to which the commons were probably not summoned. See *The Fourteenth Century: 1307–1399* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 182 note 2. Fourteenth-century parliaments regularly made royal grants "by one assent" of lords and commons. For example, at the parliament of 1362, "les ditz grantz et Communes granteront dun assent a nostre dit seignur le roi un subside." See J. Strachey, ed., *Rotuli Parliamentorum* (London, 1783), vol. 2, 273. A few Chaucerians have variously attempted to extend the political content of the Trojan Parliament by reading it as an allegory or indirect comment about the Wonderful Parliament

of 1386, which Chaucer attended as a knight of the shire of Kent. See John P. McCall and George Rudisill Jr., "The Parliament of 1386 and Chaucer's Trojan Parliament," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 58 (1959), 276–288; John Ganim, "Chaucer and the Noise of the People," *Exemplaria* 2 (1990), 71–88; and Lee Patterson, *Chaucer and the Subject of History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 158–162.

27. See Bartlett J. Whiting and Helen W. Whiting, *Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases: From English Writings Mainly before 1500* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), W531.
28. David Aers, *Chaucer* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1986), 98–99.
29. *MED*, s.v. "prudent behavior" (2b). Likewise, the *MED*'s first sense for *prudence* is "wisdom, intelligence, discretion" (1a).
30. In *De inventione*, Cicero combines the concept of prudence as a virtue with the concept of its temporal dimensions (*De inventione*, ed. and trans. H. M. Hubbell [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960], 2.53.160). On the iconography of Prudence, see Francis Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), plate 4a; see also Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 193.
31. See Jeannine Quillet, "Community," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, ed. J. H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 539.
32. Antony Black, *Medieval Political Thought, 1250–1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 157.
33. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, ed. T. Gilby, et al. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964–1980), 2.2, Qu. 47, Art. 10.
34. See John P. McCall, *Chaucer among the Gods* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1979), 87 ff.; David Anderson, "Theban History in Chaucer's Troilus," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 4 (1982), 109–133—hereafter cited in the text as Anderson; and D. W. Robertson, "The Probable Date and Purpose of Chaucer's Troilus," *Medievalia et Humanistica* n.s., 13 (1985), 143–171.
35. Anderson, 123.
36. According to Jean Frappier, Lancelot is the authentic hero of Chrétien's romance because he obeys the law of his heart rather than a social code. See *Chrétien de Troyes: The Man and His Work*, trans. Raymond J. Cormier (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1982), 107.
37. David Wallace, *Chaucerian Polity: Absolutist Lineages and Associational Forms in England and Italy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 107; hereafter cited in the text as Wallace.
38. *MED*, s.v. "A council, a (royal or ecclesiastical) court" (2b).
39. David Wallace reads *The Clerk's Tale* as a mediated comment on Ricardian tyranny (261–298).
40. Although the Wife's tale is set in the misty past of the Arthurian world, in Chaucer's time, the king's council (*concilium regis*) occasionally served as a

special session of the king's bench, the criminal court of the land. Moreover, royal justices regularly sat on Richard II's council, and Chaucer was a personal acquaintance of a number of Richard's councilors. For the judicial function of the king's council as a criminal court trying felonies, including rapes, see James Fosdick Baldwin, *The King's Council in England during the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913, reprinted 1969), 265–269, 305. Baldwin transcribes a journal written by John Prophet, the clerk of Richard II's council in 1392, which repeatedly lists "les Iustices du Roy" among the attendees (cf. 490, 492–493). Chaucer was friends with at least four of the councilors listed in Prophet's journal: Sir John Clanvowe, Sir Lewis Clifford, Sir William Neville, and Sir Richard Stury. For his association with these men, see Paul Strohm, *Social Chaucer* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 42. Chaucer also served on a Kentish peace commission in the 1380s alongside the king's chief justice, Sir Robert Tresilian. See Martin M. Crow and Clare C. Olson, ed., *Chaucer Life-Records* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), 348–363.

41. John Gower, *The Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, *Complete Works of John Gower*, ed. G. C. Macaulay (1899, reprinted Michigan: Scholarly Press, 1968).
42. Richard Firth Green has labeled *The Melibee* a "mirror of princes" and has singled out Chaucer's translation of it from a French redaction of Albertanus of Brescia's *Liber consolationis et consilii* as a prime example of his authorial function as "advisor to princes." See *Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 142–143. See also Lloyd Matthews, "The Date of Chaucer's *Melibee* and the Stages of the Tale's Incorporation in the *Canterbury Tales*," *The Chaucer Review* 20 (1986), 221–234. Matthews plausibly argues that Chaucer translated the *Melibee* in the mid-1370s, when it had become apparent that the crown would pass from Edward III to his grandson Richard due to the terminal illness of Richard's father, Edward the Black Prince. There is a possible connection between Prudence's status as a woman at Melibee's court and Chaucer's status as a non-noble member of Richard's court.

8

The Traces of Invention
Phatic Rhetoric, Anthology, and Intertextuality in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

Melissa Putman Sprenkle

Sir Gawain is sent off on his journey to the Green Chapel with a filler phrase, "The bok as I herde say" (line 690),[1] which points to both literary and oral textual traditions. The poem is authorized by earlier (perhaps Latin and therefore more authoritative) texts or the "bok" and is transmitted to the reader through a performance that is "herde." Similarly, at the poem's opening, as a transition from the epic history of the settling of Britain to the narrative of the Green Knight's appearance at Camelot, the narrator explicitly refers to oral performance, implying simultaneously that his poem is in the process of being performed and that other oral performances serve as sources for the current version of the poem: "If ye wyl lysten this laye bot on littel quile, I schal telle hit astit, as I in toun herde" (lines 30–31). This reference to performance also suggests that the poet's tale has literary merit as a "laye" that hails from a cultural center or "toun." These phrases occur at transition points in the poem (e.g., to mark a shift from epic history to romance narrative or a shift from a description of Gawain's armor to his moving out into the wilderness) and can be read as "empty," as mere devices to direct the reader's perspective or to mimic a performer's technique of using repetition or set phrases to hold the audience's attention while the next part of the story is invented or remembered. They could also signal an oral residue indicating that some parts of the poem were originally orally composed through an invention process cognitively distinct from written composition. However, the narrator's use of recursive rhetorical strategies recommended by contemporary handbooks[2] as well as the poem's literary and thematic coherence set limits for reading *Sir Gawain* as an example of oral traditional literature.

Medieval romance has been described as a transitional genre developing on the boundaries between orality and literacy and epic and novel,[3] and while some readers are attracted to the very notion of an intermediate or hybrid form, others mine medieval romances for residues of purer oral forms or relegate them to a subservient position as the handmaiden to later, more worthy literary forms. Often, critical narratives of development, progress, or evolution categorize a given textual strategy as oral or literate or as traditional or complex, narrowing perceptions of the contingencies of textual invention. We understand that contemporary artists, in the process of dealing with the exigencies of performance (whether spoken or written), draw from a heterogeneous repertoire that includes many genres, themes, tropes, sayings, visual representations, texts, and performances. However, we often view medieval artists as working with a set of source material, which they are obligated to develop in one set of specific ways if they are working within the minstrel tradition and in another set of ways if they are informed by bookish traditions.

Viewed as "transitional" texts because they mix minstrel and bookish textual traditions, medieval romances are signs of activities modern readers do not have direct access to. They are probably derived from oral performances, but they are not the actual texts of particular performances. They suggest the growth of vernacular literacy, but they are often written by literate elite. The temptation then is to emphasize the boundary between oral and literate worlds and to view any given romance text as exemplifying or opening the door into one of these two worlds. For example, Carl Lindahl points out how scholars of romance have presented an unbalanced view of the genre by focusing on elite forms and judging all texts according to the elite literary standard that was informed by "authoritarian dicta" in contrast to "folk communications" that "remain unfinished, open ended and relatively free" (67). However, in his attempt to present a more "culturally variegated view of medieval oral artistry" (60), Lindahl also reduces oral textuality to the formulaic epithet and shared stock folk characters such as the loathly lady. Lindahl makes a good argument for viewing the boundaries between elite and popular literary forms as less absolute than they have been described, but he also shows how difficult it is to maintain a view of cultural and textual variegation.

Paul Zumthor and Walter Ong argue that medieval vernacular literary works display this mixture of oral and literate textual strategies because they were composed in a historical context in which general literacy and vernacular writing were increasing, but the culture was still largely oral. On this model, the medieval vernacular poet simultaneously inhabits chirographic and oral traditional worlds and brings both worlds to bear in the production of written vernacular literature;[4] however, this runs counter to Ong's claim that "a literate person cannot fully recover a sense of what the word is to purely oral people"[5] and is

tangential to Zumthor's project of developing an oral poetics that "will offer functional notions applicable to the phenomenon of transmission of poetry by voice and memory, to the exclusion of all other media."[6] Oral composition theory would be even less useful for interpreting the mixed media of *Sir Gawain*, for, as A. B. Lord indicates, in oral traditional hermeneutics "It is the mode of composition that is crucial, not the mode of performance."[7] Rather than applying oral performance or composition theories in order to discover the oral composition elements of *Sir Gawain*, I propose to more fully examine the range of oral performative strategies that occur in the text of the poem to determine whether such strategies are truly empty or meaningless or if they serve textual and rhetorical functions. Setting aside the poet's untraceable use of oral folk sources, the poem's oral features include performance strategies associated with storytelling in general (including both everyday conversational and folk storytelling) as well as oral techniques derived specifically from medieval minstrel traditions. Analyzing how these oral strategies are integrated with what have been described as literate or chirographic textual strategies in *Sir Gawain* will demonstrate that the *Gawain*-poet employed heterogeneous invention strategies with varying degrees of awareness of his choices and that, therefore, his composing process shares more commonalities with the composition processes of modern artists than with those of the theoretical oral poets of "pure" oral culture.

Tense-shifting, an oral feature that was probably not under the poet's conscious control, has long been observed (with some anxiety) in medieval vernacular narratives as a sign of the general messiness of emerging vernacular languages, although the use of historical present (e.g., the extended use of the present tense to mark the passing of time) and tense-shifting to simulate colloquial discourse also occur in modern literary narrative. In contemporary everyday conversation, tense-shifting occurs in narratives that implement other techniques of performance (such as direct speech, asides, repetition, expressive sounds, sound effects, motions, and gestures). In general, it is also unconsciously deployed, for if a speaker is tracking her use of tense she will not alternate tenses.[8] While linguists Nessa Wolfson and Deborah Schiffrin disagree about whether the seemingly haphazard alternation between the preterit and present tenses in conversational narrative serves discourse/textual functions (such as marking off episodes or changes in perspective within a scene) or evaluative functions (such as emphasizing important events), the two agree that such tense-shifts are not meaningless or "ungrammatical" and that they do not refer to actual shifts of perspective in reference to time. Wolfson argues against the traditional explanation that the historical present is used in narrative to make the "past more vivid" or to bring past actions into the now of the narrator and audience, for in the many conversational narratives she collected, the historical present occurred only in narratives in the context of tense-shifting (219).

Peter Richardson and Suzanne Fleischman discuss how in criticism of medieval vernacular narrative, tense-shifting has been viewed as "ungrammatical" and meaningless because a consistent pattern of tense-shifting could not be identified across texts (even among texts of the same language and genre). F. Theodore Visser's explanation is that narrative tenses might be varied in order to fulfill metrical constraints, but while this explanation seemed to account for the lack of a consistent pattern of tense-shifting across texts, it also entailed some dubious mental gymnastics in metrical theory.[9] Recently several literary scholars, such as Fleischman and Richardson, have begun to apply the work of discourse analysts such as Wolfson and Schiffrin to the problem of "ungrammatical" tense-shifting in medieval vernacular narrative poetry. Working from the model of a heterogeneous yet coherent communication situation (that could include both speech and writing), Fleischman demonstrates how tense can serve textual, pragmatic, evaluative, and metalinguistic functions in narrative and how performative contexts and genres determine which function will predominate. This functionalist perspective explains tense-shifting as generating from an orality that medieval and modern people, regardless of their level of literacy, share—the experience of face-to-face communication and interaction.

In *Sir Gawain*, tense-shifting appears to serve textual functions in that it marks the text off and breaks it down into segments that could be more easily processed by a listening audience. For example, tense-shifting is used to reinitiate narrative action after a pause or digression. Present tense marks narrative actions that frame long descriptive passage such as initial description of the Green Knight. In line 135 he "hales" into the hall and is described for several stanzas until he "heldez" his horse in and again "entres" the hall in line 221 and the narrative line returns to the past tense. Similarly, after the description of Bertilak's castle, Gawain's actions are reported in the present tense as the narrative line is reinitiated (lines 773–779). The present tense alternating with past tenses also marks the reinitiation of narrative action after a long speech or series of speeches. For example, in line 316, the Green Knight laughs in the present tense after he and Arthur finish the flyting that followed his entrance, and in lines 1103–1104 the present tense marks the return to narrative action after the long conversation between Bertilak and Gawain that ends in their agreement to exchange winnings.

Tense-shifting also marks a change of scene or a change of perspective on the action in the poem. For example, present-tense clusters occur each time the scene of action shifts from the hunt to the bedroom and from the bedroom to the exchange of winnings for each of the three days. More subtly, at the beginning of the poem, the present tense in the narrative line marks the poet's shift of focus on the actions that occur during the opening banquet scene. In lines 104–113, the present tense marks the narrator's changing focus from the merrymaking at Arthur's court to a description of Arthur's mood and then to the

actions of Arthur and the group of nobles on the dais with him. The present tense in line 136 when the Green Knight "hales" into the hall marks a change in perspective from the serving of the second course to the new series of events the follow the knight's entrance, and in the same scene at line 250 the present tense marks a change of the narrator's focus from the general reactions to the Green Knight's entrance to Arthur's reaction in particular.

The *Gawain*-poet's use of tense-shifting to mark the passage of time could indicate a more conscious choice of tense for stylistic effect. Fleischman makes a distinction between the use of the historical present and what she terms the narrative present. While the narrative present refers to the use of the present tense in alternation with other tenses in orally performed narrative, the historical present, in her view, should be limited to refer to use of the present tense in literary narrative "as a cultivated rhetorical device."[10] One of Fleischman's key theses is that both the stylistic use of tense in literary narrative and tense-shifting in early vernacular narrative both have their origin in linguistic phenomena that developed in response to the pragmatic contingencies of the oral storytelling situation. Regardless of its origin, the historical present as Fleischman conceives it also occurs in *Sir Gawain* when the narrator marks the passing of time during the year that Gawain awaits his turn in the beheading game. The entire passage, almost two full stanzas, is narrated in the present tense, and at first the poet seems to be merely describing the habitual manner in which seasons change, but at lines 531–535 it becomes apparent that the narrator has also been the marking the passage of actual narrative time when he declares that when Michaelmas "watz cumen wyth wynter wage," Gawain "thenkkez" of his journey. The prolonged use of the present tense and the formulaic description of the passing seasons (comparable to the *Canterbury Tales* prologue) indicate that the poet is consciously using tense as a stylistic device.

Interestingly, the narrative present, as Fleischman describes it, also marks the passage of time in three other sections of the poem. The first instance occurs at the beginning of the poem (lines 9–19) when the narrator moves from the doings of Aeneas (past tense) to chronicling the building of European cities (present tense) and again to the founding of Britain and the beginning of his story about Arthur's court (past tense). The second instance occurs when the narrator summarizes Gawain's adventures in the forest on the way to Bertilak's castle (lines 715–725), and the final instance occurs when the narrator marks the passing of the night before Gawain goes to the Green Chapel (lines 1998–2007). In each of these three passages, narrative time elapses in which the sequential ordering of events is collapsed because not all of the events that take place during that time are narratable (i.e., interesting or pertinent). These uses of the present tense to mark the passing of time differ from the passage describing the passing of seasons at the beginning of fit two in that they are less prolonged and they use tense-shifting rather than the present tense alone.

According to Fleischman, tense serves expressive as well as textual functions in narrative. Expressive functions include the narrative devices that sociolinguist William Labov categorizes as evaluation. Evaluation can describe what is often thought of as the "moral" of a story, but it also encompasses the much broader area of what makes a story tellable (i.e., interesting, exciting, horrible, and so on).[11] In *Sir Gawain*, tense-shifting serves the expressive function of highlighting important actions. For example, in the opening scene, present tense clusters distinguish the actions of important people such as Arthur, the Green Knight, and Gawain from the actions of less important people. Also, in the first half of fit two, the actions of Gawain are distinguished from the actions of Arthur and his court and from the actions of the monsters he encounters on his journey.

Tense-shifting also emphasizes actions and events in the poem that, while tangential to the poet's dominant themes, are inherently interesting or exciting. This expressive function of tense-shifting operates in the hunt scenes in which present-tense clusters mark the initiation of the hunt, the maneuvers of the hunters and the hunted (i.e., the tricks they play on one another), the one-on-one confrontation between the lord and the hunted animal, the death of the animal, and the butchering of the game. The fact that not all the actions that take place in each category are narrated in the present tense supports Fleischman's and Wolfson's contention that tense-shifting is not a conscious device deployed by the narrator to speed up the action or make events more vivid. Here tense-shifting emphasizes events that, while not necessarily appealing to modern readers, would be inherently interesting to the *Gawain*-poet's audience. The butchering of the animal, for example, would be interesting among the poet's contemporaries because the ability and privilege to properly butcher game was a sign of nobility.[12]

Richardson, noting many of the passages just discussed, describes tense-shifting as a conscious stylistic device used by the poet to foreground important events. In such a reading, the importance of each action narrated in the present tense must be demonstrated. As Richardson acknowledges, this type of analysis falls into a circular argument in that "foregrounding is defined in terms of what the narrator sees as especially significant and significance is defined in terms of what is foregrounded."[13] This hermeneutic circularity might be less of a problem if the claim to stylistic choice is limited to the poet's extended use of the historical present to mark the passing of seasons as Gawain awaits the initiation of his journey. In contrast, the use of tense-shifting or the narrative present is a textual development strategy derived from oral performance and is probably unconscious. Thus, tense-shifting in medieval vernacular narrative could be described as a phatic rhetorical textual strategy because it foregrounds passages and accentuates themes already marked as important by other, more overt means such as the narrator directly addressing the audience. For example,

the narrator informs the audience that he will tell them no more about how the feast was served (line 130) just before the Green Knight "hales" into the hall (line 136), and following this dramatic entrance, the narrator again addresses the audience in his description of the Green Knight as a half-giant (line 140). Similarly, the tense-shifting in the hunting and bedroom scenes is also accompanied either by enthusiastic description of the hunt or by dialogue.[14]

Another oral performance characteristic commonly noted in the poem, direct references to sound or onomatopoeia, serve similar phatic rhetorical functions and often appear in passages where tense-shifting occurs. For example, the poet's use of expressive sounds or sound effects (a characteristic of performed narrative noted by Wolfson) emphasizes the raucous quality of the merrymaking scenes with references to the "wild warbling" of pipes and the "cracking" of horns, but as shown above these scenes are marked as well by tense-shifting and by the narrator's commentary. Similarly, the well-known onomatopoetic description of the Green Knight grinding his ax is initiated with tense-shifting:

> With heghe helme on his hede, his launce in his honde,
> He *romez* vp to the roffe of tho rogh wonez.
> Thene herde he of pat hyghe hil, in a harde roche
> Biyonde the broke, in a bonk, a wonder breme noyse.
> Quat! hit clatered in the clyff as hit cleue schulde,
> As one vpon a gryndelston hade grounden a sythe.
> What! hit wharred and whette as water at a mulne;
> What! hit rusched, and ronge, rawthe to here. (lines 2198–2204, emphasis mine)

This passage is framed by Gawain commenting on his situation (another oral performance device in conversational narrative) and is accentuated by intense alliteration of harsh consonants and back fricatives that evoke the sound of the Green Knight's ax grinding. It would be difficult to make the case that this scene is central to the development of the poem's high moral and courtly themes or problems of identity. Perhaps, as Gawain suggests when he says that his "five wits" tell him the Green Knight is "the Fende," the passage represents the Green Knight as ultimate Other; however, it is difficult for modern readers to take Gawain's bravado seriously knowing, as we do, that he will soon flinch from the first blow and be chastised for his cowardice by the Green Knight. The performative aspects of the passage are readily recognized by modern readers as creating atmosphere and building suspense, but it is unclear whether we are supposed to be frightened as Gawain obviously is, or amused as we are by Shaggy in a typical *Scooby-Doo* episode. The poet deploys phatic rhetorical strategies to evoke atmosphere in ways familiar to modern readers, and Fleischman and Labov would recognize these oral performative devices as serving expressive narrative functions in that they evaluate this scene

as inherently interesting or "tellable" in the same way that events in the hunting episodes would have been inherently interesting though tangential to the poet's sentential agenda.

One might well ask what need there would be for a hermeneutics of an unconscious style that merely emphasizes meanings available through other interpretive schemes. Paying attention to such phatic rhetorical devices will suggest oral performance, but will not help us recover oral sources or contexts; nor are such interpretations likely to reveal meanings hidden to us but apparent to the poem's "original" audiences. Yet an examination of how the poet uses oral performance devices to build coherence and evaluate important textual events makes visible processes of textual invention and audience negotiation that, when compared with use of such devices in other medieval vernacular texts, might give modern readers new insight into how such texts were composed and read.

For example, the minstrel tags or formulaic references to oral performance that appear in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* are even more prevalent in other Middle English romances, and as Nancy Mason Bradbury has recently argued, these "extranarrative remarks related to performance" support the theory that at least in some instances romance texts were developed, passed on, and performed through memorial transmission. Bradbury points out that the argument that such phrases were used by romance poets to build a "deliberately cultivated fiction of performance" cannot account for the variations of such phrases among written copies of a poem such as the *Seege of Troye* (48–49). Bradbury's argument that the romances develop from "a complex context in which they might be read privately, read aloud from manuscripts by the members of the household, and both read aloud from manuscripts and recited from memory by professional performers" (51) is well taken; however, the function of such tags in written poems cannot always be accounted for through a theory of transmission. Furthermore, focusing on the oral residue to be discovered through analysis of such tags might in fact obscure their textual and rhetorical functions in particular poems.

In the case of *Sir Gawain*, such phrases are heavily used in the opening third of the poem and nearly disappear until the closing scenes. Placement of minstrel tags only at the beginning and the end of a given romance would strongly indicate a contrived "fiction of performance," but the pattern of use in *Gawain* is not this tidy. The narrator and audience are first evoked in the second stanza:

> Mo ferlyes on this folde han fallen here oft
> Then in any oper that I wot, syn that ilke tyme.
> Bot of alle that here bult of Bretaygne kynges
> Ay watz Arthur the hendest, as I haf herde telle.
> Forthi an aunter in erde I attle to schawe,

That a selly in sight summe men hit holden
And an outtrage awenture of Arthurez wonderez.
If ye wyl lysten this laye bot on littel quile,
I schal telle hit astit, as I in toun herde,
With tonge.
As hit is stad and stoken
In stori stif and stronge,
With lel letteres loken,
In londe so hatz ben longe. (lines 23–35)

This passage is so like a typical romance prologue in its references to performance, its narrator's very overt appeal for audience attention, and his references to narrative tradition ratified by his hearing it in town that it is easy to overlook its obvious narrative function. Here the narrator seeks to interest the audience by explaining why his story is tellable and interesting. It involves famous heroes, it recounts an outrageous event or miracle, and it is to be told in "stronge" alliterative verse. In linguistic terms, the poet here uses what Labov would call external evaluation in that the evaluation is made outside of narrative time and action. The poet here steps out of the story to explain its importance or interest. Extranarrative comments serving this evaluative function occur several times in the opening scenes until Gawain makes his journey to Bertilak's castle. The narrator assures us in the opening banquet scene that the ladies were not unhappy about losing Christmas games "that may ye wel trawe" (line 70) and that the silence that followed the Green Knight's challenge was "not al for doute" (line 246) or because of fear. Similarly, in his initial description of the Green Knight's appearance, the narrator emphasizes his extraordinary size: "Half etayn in erde I hope that he were, Bot mon most I algate, mynn hym to bene" (lines 140–141).

In many instances, the evaluative function of the narrator's direct address to the audience is combined with a textual function of preparing the reader for a transition to a new scene or perspective on a scene. For example, in the first banquet scene, the narrator wraps up his description of the meal with "Now wyl I of hor seruise say yow no more" (line 130) just before the Green Knight's entrance; he condenses his description of the knight's silks with "That were to tor for to telle of tryfles the halue" (line 166); and after Gawain's fulfillment of the first half of the beheading game, the narrator tells the audience "Bot thagh the ende the heuy, haf ye no wonder" (line 496) as a segue into his description of the seasons passing during Gawain's year of waiting before making his journey to the Green Chapel. Direct address also marks the beginning of the narrator's explanation of the pentangle, and it is used to condense his narration of Gawain's adventures on his way to Bertilak's castle (lines 718–719) as well as on his way back to Arthur's court (line 2483).

After Gawain arrives at Bertilak's castle and until he takes leave of Bertilak to find the Green Chapel, the narrator intrudes only three times on the story line to make short direct commentary, and each time he does so, it is to emphasize Gawain's danger of temptation (such his companionship with the lady or when the lady offers him a ring) or his distress and sleeplessness the night before his ordeal. The narrator's voice returns strongly after the exchange of winnings is completed and just before the second New Year passes and Gawain begins his journey to the Green Chapel "And ye wyl a whyle be stylle, I schal telle yow how thay wroght" (1996–1997). What accounts for this reticence in the middle section of the poem? It could be attributed to an uneven development or inconsistency on the poet's part, or it could be attributed to an oral aesthetic principle of development not easily understood by modern readers.

A functionalist analysis would suggest that the narrator becomes irrelevant rather than reticent because the evaluative and textual functions of the narrator's direct address are taken over by other oral performative strategies in the poem's exciting middle section. In this section, as discussed earlier, tense-shifting is particularly intense as the story moves from the hall to the hunt to the bedroom and back again several times in succession. The amount of dialogue also dramatically increases as evaluative functions are taken over by words put into the mouths of characters (what Labov calls internal or embedded evaluation). Gawain, the lady, and Bertilak compliment each other often, and they also explain or critique the actions of themselves and of each other. On this reading, the poet consistently develops his narrative line but uses different textual strategies to accomplish his task of helping the audience track and evaluate events and characters.

When the *Gawain*-poet introduces the pentangle and proclaims "I am in tent yow to telle, pof tary hyt me schulde" (line 624), another intriguing possible function of direct address (and by extension, the other oral textual strategies deployed by the poet) is suggested. The pentangle section stands apart from other sections of the poem in that it is an extended departure from the narrative line and directly invokes nonromance literary tradition. The use of the phrase "in tent" followed by detailed exegesis of the pentangle and its connection to Gawain evoke *intentio* or "the category deployed in the scholastic 'commentary tradition' as a statement of a work's meaning or structure,"[15] and the passage ends with another bookish reference before sending Gawain on his journey: "That is the pure 'pentangle' wyth the peple called With lore" (lines 664–665). In *The Idea of the Vernacular*, Jocelyn Wogan-Browne glosses lore as "knowledge" or "teaching (from a book)" and connects it with other Middle English literary terms such as "connyng, infformacion, [and] techyng" (Wogan-Browne, et al., 417). The pentangle passage combined with the narrator's references to romance books and oral traditions at the opening and closing of the poem suggest that the *Gawain*-poet, like Chaucer, uses the concept of *intentio* to merge "vernacular writing with the language of official culture."[16] On the other

hand, the poet might also be better aligned with what the editors of the *Idea of the Vernacular* describe as a "vigorous new vernacular tradition in which negotiations between authors, audiences, and meanings are the very stuff of composition" (Evans, et al., 329)

The pentangle passage has attracted a lot of attention from critics, who view it either as a tool for decoding (or discovering) moralistic messages[17] throughout the poem or as an emblem of the poem's hermeneutic disintegration.[18] However, the passage might actually have less hermeneutic heft and yet be more significant as a symptom of "the very stuff of composition" if we interpret it as a sign that *Sir Gawain* (and perhaps all of the poems in the manuscript) demonstrates what Seth Lerer describes as "the medieval book's fundamentally anthologistic or miscellaneous character."[19] As Lerer and Wogan-Browne, et al., point out, medieval books were more openly heterogeneous in their structure and contents than modern books. Excerpts from a variety of texts and genres were put together based on specific individual interests of patrons who paid for a book's construction. The organization and content of such books would, of course, be determined by the uses for which reader/buyers intended them; authorial attribution and a sense of literary tradition would be secondary to those uses, if such concerns entered the picture at all. While *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is not itself literally an anthology, it could be argued that the *Gawain* manuscript is, and, more importantly, it could be argued that all the poems in the manuscript were composed and read employing an anthologistic impulse.

Consider again the variety of textual traditions referred to, evoked, or utilized in *Sir Gawain*. Oral and written romance traditions supposedly serve as sources for the tale (although a direct textual source for the story has not been discovered). Epic traditions inform the poem's opening and closing lines. The pentangle passage suggests that the *Gawain*-poet might have been familiar with Hermetic or Neoplatonic texts describing the pentagram and at the very least was evoking sermons or devotional books (such as the fourteenth-century *Book of Vices and Virtues*).[20] The detail and accuracy of the hunt scenes indicate that the poet either had read contemporary hunting manuals or was himself an experienced hunter (although, as Anne Rooney suggests, phrasing suggests the former rather than the latter). The bedroom scenes indicate the poet's familiarity with courtly love dialogue, and, finally, descriptions of the Green Knight figure and the beheading game itself hale from untraceable folk sources now lost to modern readers but perhaps well known to the poet's contemporaries.

Remarkably, in every instance, new genres or sources are introduced and woven into the text of the poem via a textual strategy associated with oral performance; that is, with tense-shifting, the narrator's extranarrative commentary, direct quotation or dialogue among the poem's characters, direct reference to sound, or often some combination thereof. A few key examples will demonstrate this pattern. For example, the wild figure of the Green Knight (and the

folk traditions associated with him) disrupts the courtly festivity at Camelot as a "Another noyse, ful newe" (line 132) (reference to sound) that results when the knight "hales in at the halle-dor" (tense-shifting) (line 136). Following the knight's entrance is a long description of his person in which the narrator inserts self-references (extranarrative commentary). The epic arming-of-the-hero scene as Gawain prepares for his journey is interrupted, as discussed above, by the narrator's self-references followed by scholastic exposition of the pentangle's meaning (extranarrative commentary). The hunting and bedroom scenes in which the exchange-of-winnings game unfolds are introduced through a long dialogue between Bertilak and Gawain (lines 1080–1112), and the audience is guided through the shifting scenes via tense-shifting. Tense-shifting is especially prominent in the hunting scenes, whereas it occurs only at the opening and closing of the bedroom scenes (which are mostly made up of dialogue). The language of the hunting manual is most overt in the scene where the deer are broken down at the end of the first day (lines 1325–2471), and, as noted earlier, this scene is heavily marked by tense-shifting. Finally, at the end of the poem, the situations of Gawain and the Green Knight are reversed when Gawain enters the otherworldly domain of the Green Chapel. After Gawain forgoes his final temptation to give up his quest, tense-shifting marks his entrance into the Green Knight's world: "Thenne gyrdez he to Gryngolet and gederez the rake" (line 2160). Following a description of the wild and rough landscape, Gawain comments on weirdness of the place and expresses his fear (direct quotation) and is further harassed by the terrible sounds of the Green Knight's ax grinding (reference to sound). Gawain points directly at this major transition from courtly life to the otherworld of magical beings (also a textual shift from romance to folklore) when he suggests that the Green Knight gives devotion to the devil from the oratory at the Green Chapel (lines 2190–2192).

The poet's use of oral performative strategies to build cohesion among the textual traditions he draws from makes the textual heterogeneity or, in modern critical terms, the intertextuality of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* almost invisible to modern readers because we do not experience moments of recognition as he moves through images and ways of speaking familiar to his contemporaries. Our investment in viewing the poem as part of a unique manuscript of works composed by one author would further cloud our perceptiveness in detecting elements of the textual network from which the poet drew. This exploration of the phatic or structuring functions of oral performance strategies in the poem has allowed an excavation of the seams of textual invention. Still, it's not clear what the aesthetic response of his contemporary readers would have been. Would they have applauded the wit of his more embedded method of making textual allusions or evocations, or would they have taken his descriptions of courtly life and values as "normal" or merely as "the way things are" in the realm of story?

In a discussion of how Chaucer thematizes oral and literate modes of transmission in the *Thopas-Melibee* section of the *Canterbury Tales*, Seth Lerer describes a "romance of orality" in which "The telling is a kind of quest, the teller beset by the giants of mistaking critics and aberrant audiences. The telling is also a form of education, a growth from childish fascinations with the mouth and ear to the adult appreciation of the eye and mind" (184). While Lerer ostensibly focuses on analyzing Chaucer's "drama of reception" in the *Thopas-Melibee* tales, he also echoes the criticism leveled at oral theories as reducing complex texts to basic oral strategies such as repetition in search of pure, native, traditional, tribal, folk culture. Lerer's reference to Augustine's criticism of his boyish fascination with romances in the *Confessions* suggests a textual tradition for Chaucer's "childish" presentation of the *Thopas* narrator; however, simultaneously, Lerer models a more complex view of the heterogeneous textuality of medieval romance. The orality of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is probably not the orality of folk tradition, although it draws from such traditions, and it is probably not the orality of composition in performance, although it is highly performable. We are not likely to discover how the poem was transmitted, as Zumthor says, through "voice and memory." However, because the orality of the poem is an orality that we share with the *Gawain*-poet, paying attention to his implementation of a phatic rhetoric developed through the deployment of oral performative textual strategies allows us to get an inkling of how the poem might have been processed among the textual communities within which he worked.

Notes

1. Quotes from the poem follow the Andrew and Waldron edition. Due to typesetting restrictions thorn and yogh are represented by "th," "y," or "gh," according to context.
2. See Scott D. Troyan, "Rhetoric without Genre: Orality, Textuality, and the Shifting Scene of the Rhetorical Situation in the Middle Ages," *Romanic Review* 81 (1990), 377–395.
3. For example, see Nancy Mason Bradbury, "Literacy, Orality, and the Poetics of Middle English Romance," in *Oral Poetics in Middle English Poetry*, ed. Mark C. Amodio (New York: Garland, 1994), 36–69 (the article hereafter cited in the text as Bradbury; the volume hereafter cited in the text as Amodio), and Dave Henson, "Tradition and Heroism in the Middle English Romance," in Amodio, 89–107.
4. Problems with this diachronic continuum model are revealed in Joyce Coleman's critique of Ong in *Public Reading and the Reading Public in Late Medieval England and France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
5. Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York: Methuen Press, 1982), 12.

6. Paul Zumthor, *Oral Poetry: An Introduction*, trans. Kathryn Murphy-Judy (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 3.
7. Albert Bates Lord, *Epic Singers and Oral Tradition* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 3.
8. For example, Wolfson notes that tense alternation did not occur in any of the formal interviews she conducted. In an interview situation, a speaker is more likely to track discourse patterns such as tense (Nessa Wolfson, "A Feature of Performed Narrative: The Conversational Historical Present." *Language in Society* 7 [1978], 215–237).
9. Richardson also notes that although Visser justifies his theory by claiming that tense-shifting only occurs in narrative verse, it actually also occurs in the prose narratives of the Norse Sagas (Peter Kent Richardson, *Narrative Strategies in Early English Verse* [Diss., University of California—Berkeley, 1991; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1991—9203692], 124).
10. Suzanne Fleischman, *Tense and Narrativity: From Medieval Performance to Modern Fiction* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 79.
11. William Labov, *Language in the Inner City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 1973; hereafter cited in the text as Labov.
12. For example, in Strassburg's Tristan, the hero reveals his noble lineage by demonstrating his butchering skills. See also Ann Rooney's discussion of medieval hunting manuals and *Sir Gawain* in *Hunting in Middle English Literature* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1993).
13. Peter Kent Richardson, "Tense, Discourse, and Style," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 92.3 (1991), 348.
14. According to Labov, representation of dialogue or direct speech in narrative serves evaluative functions such as putting the moral or point of the story in the mouths of the story's characters.
15. Ruth Evans, et al., "The Notions of Vernacular Theory," in *The Idea of the Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory, 1280–1520*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, Nicholas Watson, Andrew Taylor, and Ruth Evans (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 314–330, 328; the article hereafter cited in the text as Evans, et. al.; the volume hereafter cited in the text as Wogan-Browne, et. al.
16. Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Traditions and Vernacular Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 186.
17. See, for example, Gerald Morgan, "The Significance of the Pentangle Symbolism in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,*" *Modern Language Review* 74 (1979), 769–790.
18. See, for example, Thomas J. Farrell, "Life and Art, Chivalry and Geometry in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," *Arthurian Interpretations* 2.2 (1988), 17–33.
19. Seth Lerer, "Medieval English Literature and the Idea of the Anthology," *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 118.5 (2003), 1253.
20. Piotr Sadowski, *The Knight and His Quest: Symbolic Patterns of Transition in "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*" (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996), 129.

9

"The Word Was Made Flesh"
Gendered Bodies and Anti-Bodies in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Arts of Poetry

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As the reference from John 1 in the title would suggest, the central moment in Christian history, the Incarnation of Christ, materializes in and acts as a model for the compositional theory of the *artes poetriae*. In the twelfth- and thirteenth-century arts of poetry, particularly Matthew of Vendôme's *Ars versificatoria*, Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*, John of Garland's *Parisiana poetria*, and Eberhard the German's *Laborintus*, the authors depict rhetoric as textual and imagined physical body, emphasizing and erasing gendered manifestations of the body based upon their respective conceptualizations of language and genre. At the same time, the compositional theory and body ideologeme alter with theoretical shifts in the general Neoplatonic cosmology, visual epistemology, and moral aesthetics that undergird the treatises, while attitudes toward postlapserian flesh and language inform the type of body used as linguistic analogue and the presence or absence of an imagined physical body. The relative scope and purpose of each work likewise predicate inclusion of the disparate gendered embodiments of language and/or the rhetorical art itself. Depending on the degree of ornamentation suggested in relation to the nature of the subject matter, the chosen genre, and the perceived purpose of discourse formation, these authors ascribe masculine and feminine qualities to language and texts. Rather than depicting a universalized dichotomy of masculine authorship and feminine language, these manuals deploy crisscrossing continuums of gendered rhetorics ranging from the *incarnational* to the *wanton* and culminating in an image of an ineffectual, *domesticated rhetoric*. It is not, then, just a question of whether language/texts are embodied or gendered; instead, these manuals would suggest that the type and degree of embodiment that occur, as well as the authorial motivation for engendering a particular type or admixture, have hermeneutic

import. Using body metaphors, these authors articulate the debates about language, knowledge, and gender played out on those bodies, illustrating their immersion in or cognizance of the broader linguistic discussions of the period and hinting at a more complete conceptualization of composition than suggested in earlier studies. As a result, the corporeal provides a hermeneutic paradigm for reading the treatises, understanding their theories, and tracing the transmission of both in other medieval works.[1]

Scholars have explicated the compositional theory of the *artes poetriae*, disagreeing on their nature, placement within the trivium, and influence; others have expounded upon one or more of the arts as hermeneutic tools for textual analysis. Critical attention to these manuals ranges from early awareness of their existence through translation of the actual texts and/or exposition of their contents as generally related to medieval linguistic, cosmological, ontological, or epistemological theories; to analysis of medieval rhetoric that places the treatises in historical continuums; to analysis of particular authors, commentaries, and uses.[2] Central to the concerns in each successive wave of criticism (and to the concerns of the treatises themselves), certain questions implicitly and explicitly recur: what rhetoric is, whether these texts are, therefore, rhetorical, and how their rhetorical theory should be considered or used.[3]

While scholars have examined the arts of poetry collectively in terms of both their general composition and specific descriptive theory and some have applied that analysis to the work of other authors, rare is the scholarship that treats the epistemological, cosmological, and aesthetic components of the arts of poetry in conjunction with gender and genre as constituitive parts of their discursive practice. Just as previous scholarship has provided the groundwork for explication of the treatises' discursive strategies, critics have also theorized the gendered nature of medieval language in general and as manifest in particular works, sometimes briefly mentioning Matthew of Vendôme or Geoffrey of Vinsauf, and recent attention to gender, discourse, and the body has called into question an earlier tendency to do so in universalized terms of a masculine entity creating a feminized text, language, or body.[4] While this dichotomy most certainly exists in these and other medieval texts, it is my contention that we must extend our understanding to include a continuum of gendered language in flux according to the attitudes about language, body, and gender to which the respective authors prescribe.

Building upon this prior scholarship, then, this analysis seeks to both further define the nature of the treatises and their theories of composition and to suggest their potential use as artifacts and primary texts in their own right as social constructs, as both discursive practice and discourse. Using parallel social constructs of body and gender in conjunction with medieval and modern formative rules of various discursive practices associated with different forms of embodiment, we can reexamine the nexus of ideas related to discourse, gender, and

genre. To do so, we must first recognize the various types of rhetoric as the medieval authors constituted them and as they are informed by epistemological, cosmological, and aesthetic concerns—the ideological forces that shape their discourse. As Copeland asserts, "[R]hetoric as a system, like philosophy, is itself a discursive construct; its language and strategies of self-representation are themselves susceptible of rhetorical explication" (4).[5] It is through those "strategies of self-representation," configured as they are in terms of gendered embodiments and posited within the treatises themselves as competing discourses/rhetorics, that I propose we reexamine the medieval arts of poetry as discursive and hermeneutic constructs.

Within the category of *ars poetria*, the various treatises comprise a general discourse as well as providing the rules for further discourse formation; however, within the respective works and between them, various discursive practices are in both harmony and conflict. As Foucault defines it in the *Archeology of Knowledge*, "discourse" consists of "a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation," "a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined," and "a fragment of history, a unity and discontinuity in history itself, posing the problem of its own limits, its divisions, its transformations"; furthermore, he delineates "discursive practice" as "a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area," and these rules constitute "the conditions of the enunciative function."[6] Comprising a part of these conditions, as Barthes suggests in *The Pleasure of the Text*, "the ideological systems are fictions [themselves]" with "fiction" understood as "that degree of consistency a language attains when it has jelled exceptionally and finds a sacerdotal class (priests, intellectuals, artists) to speak it generally and to circulate it."[7] Barthes's fictions inform and are articulated through what Foucault would term the "discursive practices," and the group of rhetoricians themselves comprises Barthes's "sacerdotal class," *preaching* their linguistic theories, including the ideologies that inform them, to university students.[8]

To discern the rules or conditions that delimit the existing discourse types present in these treatises, we can examine the "trace[s]" or "marks that refer back to the moment of their enunciation," through which we can "free meaning, thoughts, desires, buried fantasies" in a "system that usually makes it possible to snatch past discourse from its inertia and, for a moment, to rediscover some of its lost vitality" (Foucault, 123). Similarly, those "traces" are what Barthes would term the text's "shadow," or "a bit of ideology, a bit of representation, a bit of subject: ghosts, pockets, traces, necessary clouds" (32). These "traces" or "shadows," herein glimpses of the body intermittently appearing in the arts of poetry, should be taken into consideration as they point to further ideas about composition and the body itself; the somaticized text articulates the

rules of its creation inscribed into the corpus thus produced. The function of "enunciative analysis," then, is "to discover what mode of existence may characterize statements . . . in the density of time, in which they are preserved, in which they are reactivated, and used," through consideration of their "remanence" and the support mechanisms and techniques that preserve the residue of ideas (Foucault, 123). Searching the *artes poetriae*, we find "traces" of variant linguistic forms in the diverse references to the body left in the "residue" of these texts; yet those references and the configurations of gender therein encoded must likewise be deconstructed and held in suspension until, taken as a whole, their "remanence" suggests particular gendered embodiments of discourse that illuminate the respective rules of their formation. Theorizing these discursive formations, then, is a process of recognizing and retracing the corporeal forms embedded in the "recursively saturating" and "recursive structuration" of the arts themselves.[9]

In further examining the discursive practices of the arts of poetry, we must, as Foucault asserts, "be ready to receive every moment of discourse in its sudden irruption; in that punctuality in which it appears, and in that temporal dispersion that enables it to be repeated, known, forgotten, transformed, utterly erased, and hidden far from view, in the dust of books" (25). The irruption of various iterations of discursive form and practice materialize at specific moments in the treatises in bodies that flash, dissolve, contradict, and overlap. Such reception involves holding what Foucault labels "pre-existing forms of continuity" in suspension to examine the manner in which the forms themselves are constructed (25) and to create a theory that realizes the "non-synthetic purity" of the discursive elements (26): The treatises' various conceptions of language, genre, body, and gender must momentarily be held in suspension "[t]o reveal in all its purity the space in which discursive events are deployed" and "to describe the interplay of relations within it and outside it" (29). Being thus held in suspension, the relations or unities among the constituitive elements of the disparate gendered rhetorics will become manifest through the "analysis of their coexistence, their succession, their mutual functioning, their reciprocal determination, and their independent or correlative transformation" (29). In other words, the reference to and use of bodies in the arts of poetry make visible a continuum of gendered rhetoric in which the various types are constituted in relation to the other versions. Moreover, rather than being of one type, the discursive elements include "rules of formal construction, [as well as] rhetorical practices; some define internal configurations of the text, others the modes of relation and interference between different texts" (59). Therefore, I mean *rhetoric* herein to apply to the range of discursive practices as they comprise the respective gendered rhetorics, including art, process, and product.

As the arts of poetry can be defined as rules for discourse formation in and of themselves that are, in turn, the product of the intersection of other discursive

rules, Foucault's general iteration of the elements proper to discursive formation in general are particularly apt here:

> the way in which, for example, the ordering of descriptions or accounts is linked to the techniques of rewriting; the way in which the field of memory is linked to the forms of hierarchy and subordination that govern statements of a text; the way in which the modes of approximation and development of the statements are linked to the modes of criticism, commentary, and interpretation of previously formulated statements (59–60)

—all of which Matthew, Geoffrey, John, and Eberhard address to variant degrees as integral to composition. Locating a "preconceptual level, the field in which concepts can coexist" (60), the question of which is posed at "the locus of emergence of concepts" (62), we can reexamine the schemata of each discursive formation or type of embodied rhetoric.

The "traces" or "ghosts" of the discursive elements, I would argue, are written into the treatises through metaphors of embodiment, the contours of which materialize, disperse, converge, and diverge: Language gives form to thought or idea, while the metaphor of the body describes both the compositional process and depiction of characters within the text. In Butler's words, "And we do tend to describe language as actively producing or crafting a body every time we use, implicitly or explicitly, the language of discursive construction."[10] As Foucault's language above would suggest, discursive practice covers a broad range of textual strategies and occurrences as they are embodied within discourse, what Barthes defines alternatively as "figuration" and "representation":

> Figuration is the way in which the erotic body appears (to whatever degree and in whatever form that may be) in the profile of the text. For example, the author may appear in his text. . . . one can feel desire for a character in a novel . . . the text itself, a diagrammatic and not an imitative structure, can reveal itself in the form of a body. . . . All of these movements attest to a *figure* of the text, necessary to the bliss of reading.
>
> Representation, on the other hand, is *embarrassed figuration*, encumbered with other meaning than that of desire: a space of alibis (reality, morality, likelihood, readability, truth, etc.). . . . That is what representation is: when nothing emerges, when nothing leaps out of the frame. (55–57)

In the various treatments of poetic composition, the difference between Barthes's "figuration" and "representation," a distinction based on the authorial definition of desire and its ability to transcend the text, provides one clue to the tension that distinguishes the respective author's preference for alternatively gendered discursive modes as well as the degree to which the figure of the body appears in the text and the level of ornamentation prescribed.

As Barthes's distinction between these two types of somaticized texts would suggest, authorial motivation in relation to desire predicates the inclusion of the respective types of embodiment. In fact, both Barthes and Foucalt designate desire as a formative element of discursive embodiment: "Does the text have human form, is it a figure, an anagram of the body? Yes, but of our erotic body" (Barthes, 17), and "this authority [upon which discursive choices are made] is characterized by the *possible positions of desire in relation to discourse*: discourse may in fact be the place for a phantasmatic representation, an element of symbolization, a form of the forbidden, an instrument of satisfaction" (Foucault, 68). Degrees of embodiment partially result from the authorial motivation in relation to desire as the author conceives it, and "the meanings of the body are at least partially 'produced' in a semiotically infused physical exchange of erotic energy between the beloved and lover, writer and reader, object-looked-upon and the adoring gaze" (Zita, 13).[11] Positing the possibility of "writing aloud," Barthes further suggests that "what it searches for (in a perspective of bliss) are the pulsional incidents, the language lined with flesh, a text where we can hear the grain of the throat, the patina of consonants, the voluptuousness of vowels, a whole carnal stereophony: the articulation of the body of the tongue, not the meaning, of language" (66–67). In contrast, I would argue that the medieval rhetoricians give body to the text through both a "language lined with flesh" *and* an articulation of that body in sound and meaning, differentiating types of embodiment based on the perceived relation of desire to the creation of the text.[12] We can, then, redefine the focus on style and the textual surface (as noted and negatively critiqued by some scholars as evidence of the fragmentation and/or perversion of rhetoric) as the manner in which the surface codes what the interior means for both bodies and texts: It is through the focus on the superficial aspects of the text and language that the "language lined with flesh" and the meaning it evokes are achieved.[13] Through figuration and representation, Matthew, Geoffrey, John, and Eberhard embody discourse, varying that embodiment according to other formative elements of discourse. I mean *embodiment*, then to suggest at once giving linguistic form to ideas, calling forth an image of the bodily contours of the text, and textualizing the body.

As this analysis explicates a deliberate conflation of body and text in the rhetorical treatises themselves, the term *body* herein is meant to suggest an imagined physical body and a rhetorical one. While Barthes distinguishes between the biological body and its cultural significance with an emphasis on the erotic body, I would suggest, on the one hand, that our images of the body are always already colored by theological, social, political, and historical ideas. On the other hand, conceptualizing rhetoric as body involves the attribution of appropriate qualities, perhaps colored by ideas or fantasies about historical bodies. As Butler would suggest, the body "is not a 'being,' but a variable boundary, a surface whose permeability is politically regulated, a signifying practice within

a cultural field."[14] *Body* should, then, call to mind the image of a physical body, both the human form re-created through verbal/visual imagery (e*ffictio*) and the shape or contours of the text as analogous to the physical body (the rhetorical body) with the two connotations being interdependent: A reading of the text as body calls upon the particular cultural construction and semiotics of that body in order to create the analogy, while "reading" the physical body as text utilizes the visual and cognitive techniques of textual analysis—scanning the object, distinguishing signs and symbols, and deciphering meaning. As Kay and Rubin state, "*bodies* (in the plural) are constructed discursively in the symbolic order" (3). The rhetoric of the body deployed in the arts of poetry calls for a place in the text wherein rhetorical bodies and imagined physical bodies co-mingle in the mind.

Not only do the discursive theories of the *artes poetriae* rest upon the evocation of bodies, but the bodily and textual appeal also stems from particular constructions of gendered bodies and sexuality. Rather than one form of embodiment, the rhetoricians ascribe beliefs about the masculine, feminine, heterosexual, and homosexual onto the body of the text and the text of the body. In the *History of Sexuality*, Foucault argues that sexuality is a social construction that acts in the interests of the dominant class, with social institutions like language contributing to this construction, an idea that De Lauretis corrects to argue that "the representation of gender *is* its construction" (3).[15] As Evans remarks, "Biologically sexed bodies, then, and their respective capacities, are socially marked, coded into sexually distinct categories which carry specific socio-cultural meanings."[16] Furthermore, addressing what Gayle Rubin labels "the heterosexual matrix," Cohen and Wheeler assert, "the kinds of masculinity and femininity that the exchange matrix constructs pass themselves off as inevitable, as universal, but as we have begun to see, they might be culturally contingent, limited, and local" (ix). As Cohen and Wheeler likewise iterate, "Theorizing gender does not sublime the body's solidity to melt, suddenly, into air. The conceptual categories of 'man' and 'woman' have profoundly material effects on the production of human subjects, and theorizing gender . . . only historicizes the process of sedimentation" (x). Such theorization, I would argue, actually illuminates the use of said bodies even in the fluidity of their representation. "The challenge, however, is to begin to see sexuality and its categories not simply as system-bound surfaces permanently encoded by the social process that produced their coherence, but as virtualities, bodies, and affects in motion that are always crossing lines" (x–xi). Variations in the gendered types of embodiment in the *artes poetriae*, these particular "bodies and affects," result from distinctions in the other formative elements of the discourses—namely, the cosmological, epistemological, and aesthetic theories; moreover, the boundaries between gendered manifestations blur, are "in motion," as a result of reciprocal and conflictive coexistence within the treatises.

The treatises' general cosmological, epistemological, aesthetic, and linguistic foundation rests upon a series of beliefs in which an omniscient God created the

world and its inhabitants in His image according to a plan and with a process that moves from potentiality to actuality through speech, the created beings are good or true as they reflect His essence, prelapserian language as a divine construct originally reflected the objects to which it referred, and knowing is possible because beings reflect their Maker.[17] But after the Fall, sin disrupts this cosmological, epistemological paradigm, and the only being created thereafter without hermeneutic question or flaw is Christ, the Logos; therefore, the Incarnation and Resurrection restore the possibility of acquiring knowledge and creating meaningful language. Within this philosophical framework, Matthew, Geoffrey, John, and Eberhard differ in their application of and level of belief in the power of rhetoric: Matthew envisions linguistic efficacy as the product of the imaginative faculty, locating semantic power in ornate discourse, and Geoffrey sees redemption in imagination, memory, and ornamental language itself, whereas John appeals to reason, privileging the redemptive capacity of language in service of divine or didactic subject matter achieved through the Marian conception of the Word and distrusting imagination in service of secular subjects, and even Eberhard's disillusioned lament over the ineffectiveness of reasoned rhetoric in the face of sophistic manipulation of discourse depends on a realization of the relations among cognition, persuasion, and the emotive qualities of language.[18]

Incarnational Rhetoric

The *Incarnate Word*, the ultimate expression of giving body to idea, acts as a linguistic model from which the other discursive formations depart. In what I term *incarnational rhetoric*, specific rhetoricians liken the discursive practice to the conception of Christ as Logos or Word made flesh. Language as body herein would be both deified and masculine were it fully made real; however, it is the *idea* of the body of Christ rather than a physical body that acts as vehicle for this metaphor. While the idea of the Incarnation informs this masculine rhetoric, the focus is not on the physicality of the imagined body; rather, Geoffrey of Vinsauf utilizes the divine embodiment to discuss the rejuvenative, didactic, and salvific power of discourse, and even though the other authors do not specifically articulate this type, the idea of *incarnational rhetoric* is at the heart of their discursive paradigms. *Incarnational rhetoric* is the *process* of putting thoughts into words that truly signify. It is calling to mind Christ's body without realizing or focusing on it as a physical entity or in terms of the language created as that body because the author is not God and cannot create in a divine fashion; instead, the human author's actions as *artifex* can only mimic those of the Creator, and the discourse thus produced is humanized as masculine or feminine, both of which will be analyzed in subsequent sections. This first type of discourse, although prototypical, hovers out of reach of the human pen and is paradoxically relatively bodiless.[19]

In the *Poetria nova,* Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *incarnational rhetoric* has two interdependent applications: First, his composition theory depends upon the regeneration of human beings and language through the Birth and Resurrection of Christ; second, it hinges on giving body to ideas. The former empowers the latter: "Human language, reborn through the Incarnation, could now assist God in spreading the effects of the Incarnation through the world."[20] Christ, as the Word or Logos, existed in and as God from the beginning (John 1:1), but was later made manifest to mankind through His Incarnation, His embodiment: "The Word was made flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14). In his extended example of the plain colors that focuses upon the Fall and Incarnation, Geoffrey states that "in the flesh," "he [Christ] became manifest," and "God came to dwell among us in true flesh" (74, 75) ["Hic in carne sine carie" and "Hac ratione Deus in vera carne morari / Nobiscum venit" (232 and 233)].[21] Within this exegetical extract used to treat rhetorical concerns, Geoffrey questions Satan's rationale for "damn[ing] Christ to the cross," fixating on these bodily concerns: "Did you think his body an illusion? But he took flesh from the Virgin. Did you think him to be all man? But he proved himself to be God in virtue" (Kopp, 75) ["Serpens invidiae nostraeque propaginis auctor, / Cur cruce damnasti Christum? Meruitne? Sed expers / Omnis erat maculae. Corpus fantasma putasti? / Sed veram carnem sumpsit de virgine. Purum / Credebas hominem? Sed de virtute probavit / Esse Deum" (Faral, 232)].[22] Furthermore, Geoffrey later presents Christ as God clothed in flesh, the "garment of a human," in his explication of the figures of thought: "Not otherwise may the virtue of man overthrow the Foe, except God clothe himself in flesh" (Kopp, 86) ["Humanos habitus" and "Non aliter virtus hominis prosterneret hostem / Ni Deus indueret carnem" (Faral, 243)].

Just as Geoffrey depicts Christ as divinity clothed in human body, so too does he define poetic language as clothing and/or giving body to the matter of the poem: "When a plan has sorted out the subject in the secret places of your mind, then let Poetry come to clothe your material with words" (Kopp, 35) ["Mentis in arcano cum rem digesserit ordo, / Materiam verbis veniat vestire poesis" (Faral, 199)]. Thus, the nature of Christ as concept and as incarnate being acts as a model for Geoffrey's poetic process, which moves from conception in potentiality to its actual creation through words: "assemble the whole work in the stronghold of your mind, and let it first be in the mind before it is in words" (Kopp, 35) ["Opus totum prudens in pectoris arcem / Contrahe, sitque prius in pectore quam sit in ore" (Faral, 199)]. Geoffrey's lengthy example of the various types of facile ornament presents the Fall and Resurrection as a "plan" that "proceeded to the act itself" (Kopp, 76), making Geoffrey's poetic *archetypus* analogous to the divine plan: "the work is first measured out with his heart's inward plumb line, and the inner man marks out a series of steps beforehand, according to a definite plan; his heart's hand shapes the whole before his body's

hand does so, and his building is a plan before it is an actuality" (Kopp, 34) ["Sicut opus fuerat, sic res processit in actum" (Faral, 234) and "intrinseca linea cordis / Praemetitur opus, seriemque sub ordine certo / Interior praescribit homo, totamque figurat / Ante manus cordis quam corporis; et status ejus / Est prius archetypus quam sensilis" (Faral, 198)]. Paralleling the nature and method of the Creation, Christ's Incarnation (both the process and product) acts as a mirror for Geoffrey's poetic technique, which moves from conception in potentiality to actual creation through words and the linguistic effect of rhetorical ornamentation. "If the word that remains in the speaker is like the procession of the Word from the Father, it follows that the word that goes out from the speaker is like the Word that became flesh, the visible sign of the invisible conception."[23] While in the Incarnation the divinity takes on human "flesh," Geoffrey does not delineate the contours of that body as they might have been described in more affective manifestations; therefore, it is the incarnational act as model that herein becomes the focus rather than the actual physical form.[24]

Not only does Geoffrey equate the creation of poetry through rejuvenated language with Christ's Incarnation, but the metaphors he uses to prescribe the author's role in the creation of an ornamental text also allude to Christ's role in salvation. Geoffrey suggests, "if the expression is old, be a physician and make the old veteran a new man" (Kopp, 60) ["Si vetus est verbum, sis physicus et veteranum / Redde novum" (Faral, 220)]. The phrasing of this advice is remarkably similar to biblical discussions of spiritual rebirth made available by Christ's Resurrection through which the believer becomes a new man: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old one has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). According to Geoffrey, the Incarnation and Resurrection of Christ restore the linguistic ability lost in the Fall of the "old man," Adam, invigorating language and humanity with new life through the "second Adam" (Kopp, 82) ["secundus Adam" (Faral, 239)].[25] Further linking the poetic and salvific projects in his lengthy example of plain colors in which he addresses the Fall and Redemption, Geoffrey reiterates the link between incarnation and redemption: "he was manifest, inasmuch as he redeemed the world" (Kopp, 75) ["patuit, quia cuncta redemit" (Faral, 232)]. Geoffrey depicts the regeneration of language as analogous to the Incarnate Word that saved humanity and linguistic power as analogous to the salvific nature of Christ as Word made Flesh. *Language*, therefore, is manifest, inasmuch as it redeems the *word*.

Further expounding an *incarnational rhetoric*, Geoffrey explains the appropriate transsumption of words in which the text reflects its author: "Such transsumption of language is like a mirror for you, since you see yourself in it and recognize your own sheep in a strange field" (Kopp, 62) ["Talis transsumptio verbi / Est tibi pro speculo: quia te specularis in illo / Et proprias cognoscis oves in rure alieno" (Faral, 222)].[26] The author is manifest in his own creation, as God is made present through and in His, and the words of the text are the

author's "sheep," mirroring him and having been given life through him. Geoffrey's pastoral image of the author as shepherd further alludes to Christ—as the Good Shepherd, the resonance of which is made explicit later in the treatise: "So the Shepherd has led his stolen sheep back to the sheepfold" and, thus, has "redeemed" man (Kopp, 77) ["Abductas ita pastor oves ad ovile reduxit" and "mors victa suos a morte redemit" (Faral, 234)]. The significative value of language rests on its redemption whereupon words regain their ability to mean through the Word: "Power comes from speech, since life and death rests in its hands" (Kopp, 106) ["Vis venit a lingua, quia mors et vita cohaerent / In manibus linguae" (Faral, 260)]. In the *Poetria nova*, Geoffrey predicates discourse formation upon and models it after Christ as Word made Flesh, a paradigm in which language has an increased capacity to signify the divine yet wherein, once the language is embodied, it exists in feminized form, as explicated below.[27] As such, incarnational rhetoric is at once "figuration" and "representation" in that the author appears in his own text and the reader is meant to spiritually desire knowledge or a realization of the Logos as the precursor to cognitive or linguistic renewal, yet the embodiment evokes a certain morality or truth rather than erotic pleasure.

Naked Rhetoric

This eulogistic focus on the redemptive power of ornamental language takes a negative turn in John of Garland's theory of discourse formation resulting partially from his distrust of postlapserian human cognition and carnality as well as his figuration of flesh and its linguistic analogue, decorated discourse, as female, leading John to privilege *naked rhetoric*.[28] This second masculine paradigm, the naked male text—a model premised upon the originary status of Adam's sinless and naked form—acts as the blueprint for potential human discourse with feminized language differing from it rather than from the divine model. Like *incarnational rhetoric*, the focus here is not on the physical body itself but on its naked state signifying its truth value and innocence. Furthermore, that nakedness contrasts deliberately and explicitly with clothed, adorned texts, which indicate deception and sin similar to Adam and Eve's desire for clothing after the Fall: "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves" (Genesis 3:7). The naked male text approaches the prelapserian body, while the clothed, adorned one replicates the postlapserian flesh figured female. Just as Eve was derivative of Adam, God's creation, feminized language differs from Adamic discourse rather than divine utterance.[29]

In his *Parisiana poetria*, John of Garland prefaces his discussion of rhetorical ornamentation with the distinction between naked and painted texts. In reference to the *ars dictaminis*, he writes: "The next subject is dressing up naked matter. I call 'naked matter' whatever is not rhetorically amplified or

embellished" (Lawler, 65) ["Sequitur de materia nuda uestienda. 'Materiam nudam' uoco illam que non est rethorice ampliata neque ornata" (Lawler, 64)].[30] Keep in mind John's earlier explication of ideas from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* relating to honorable and disreputable subject matter: "In honorable subject matter use plain sentences and words that put the case in the open. Disguising disreputable subject matter calls for subtlety" (Lawler, 21) ["In materia honesta utendum est sentenciis planis et uerbis materiam declarantibus. In turpi materia, si velimus latere, vtendum est insinuacione" (Lawler, 20)].[31] Plainness herein, then, indicates, according to John, honor.

Explicating this interpretive link between style and conceptual integrity in a section on "the Six Vices Peculiar to Verse," John provides an example of a "[s]tudent's letter" in which he announces his desire for plain style in the transmission of truth and vilifies ornate language as deceptive: "truth doesn't seek out corners, nor indeed is true love depicted in art as disguised by a veil of flattery" (Lawler, 91) ["Littere Scolastice" and "Veritas non querit angulos, nec amor uerus immo simulatus adulationis uelamine picturatur" (Lawler, 90)]. True or honorable subject matter does not hide nor is it veiled by ornate language. In the same exemplary letter, John explicates his own motive for using unadorned prose:

> My rude paper, artless pen, and humble Muse all come announcing plainly both who I am and what I want. True love knows not how to be painted in the ornament of words and brilliant figures, knows not how to spread paint over plain soil, does not seek the chaff without the grain, does not smile at smiles without fruit, does not cover blackness with snow. Formerly Love was painted naked; he shows everything naked, everything that is his open to his own. (Lawler, 91)
>
> (Carta rudis, stilus incomptus, deiecta Camena, / Quis sim quidque uelim nuncia certa uenit. / Verborum faleris et claro cemate pingi / Nescit amor uerus; pingere nescit humum, / Non querit paleam sine grano, non sine fructu / Subridet foliis, non tegit atra niue. / Olim nudus amor pictus fuit; omnia nuda, / Omnia que sua sunt monstrat aperta suis. [Lawler, 90])

Truth is not ornamented, deceptive, worthless, barren, or artificial; instead, it is plain, open, and naked. Lest the student miss his point, John reiterates:

> I have used a naked style to you, lest I seem to cloak a foxy slyness by cursing my state and changes in fortune in fancy language. I put forth the naked truth, by nakedness, I cast off the charge of dissimulation, nor in my plainness, do I seek to invent an obstacle of deceit . . . I go along the path of this decision, writing to you rather in the open air of truth than in the shade of vanity, by no means under the mask of a Ciceronian tongue a hunter after artifice, but an embracer of Christian integrity, free of the subtleties of dissimulation. (Lawler, 93)
>
> (vsus sum nudo stilo uobis, ne uulpinam palliare uidear arguciam dum statum meum et fortune mee mutatoria perstringo coloribus. Nudam ueritatem propono, nuditate

> culpam simulationis amoueo, nec in plano quero fraudis offendiculum inuenire . . . in huius opinionis tramite procedo, vobis scribens magis in ueritatis propatulo quam in vanitatis obumbraculo, nequaquam sub lingue Tulliane larua uenator fictitii, sed integritatis Christiane sine simulationis scrupulis amplexator. [Lawler, 92])

Authorial ethos depends on the type of language used. Attesting to his own veracity, John suggests that the text, its style, and its words reflect the nature of the author: The naked text is the embodiment of the masculine "embracer of Christian integrity," whereas the adorned text becomes everything that is feminine, flesh, and fallen in John's paradigm—except when ornament serves divine or consecrated subject matter.

Yet even as John calls the veracity of the fleshly body into question, he resorts to embodying himself in his letter, Barthes's conception of "figuration" wherein the author appears in his text. However, John's assertions here likewise would suggest Barthes's "representation" due to John's explicit use of the body to deny desire and suggest truth as his primary motivation for literary disrobing. While Butler's comments refer to Descartes's writing, they are equally applicable here: "The very language through which he calls the body into question ends up reasserting the body as a condition of his own writing. Thus the body that comes into question as an 'object' that may be doubted surfaces in the text as a figural precondition of his writing" (Butler 2001, 258). As Todorov notes within his discussion of ancient rhetoric, "ornate discourse is like an easy woman, with glaring makeup; how much more highly must one value natural beauty, the pure body, and thus the absence of rhetoric!"[32] The use of the term "naked" points to the lack of artifice or clothing and acts as an indication of inner worth rather than calling for a visualization of the nude body.[33] Jager's comments on Ambrose's *De paradiso* equally apply here: "Here humankind's original state of virtue is represented by nakedness, whereas deceit that enters the world with the Fall is symbolized by coverings of various kinds" (125). While John privileges plain language, Geoffrey's suggestion that the text reflects its maker occurs within his privileging of ornate discourse in which "transsumption of language" is like a mirror in which the author sees himself (Kopp, 62). Their disparate readings of style clearly manifest themselves in their articulations of discourse gendered as masculine or feminine and their emphasis on variant embodiments. The author as *artifex* is present in his work as a somaticized text for both John and Geoffrey; however, John's attitude toward the fallen nature of human perception and ability permeates his treatment, while Geoffrey's conception of the salvific nature of language informs his.

Disembodied Rhetoric

If John privileges *naked rhetoric*, then Matthew of Vendôme would seem to promote a *disembodied rhetoric*, language and rhetorical techniques that erase the body in the depiction of worthwhile masculine subjects in contrast to the

focused physicality of feminized language and subjects. As Smith asserts, "value is attached to a male body that becomes more than its matter" (6–7), yet Butler's pronouncements hold true: "Thus language cannot escape the way it is implicated in bodily life, and when it attempts such an escape, the body returns in the form of spectral figures whose semantic implications undermine the explicit claims of disembodiment made within language itself" (2001, 258). In particular, Matthew's analysis of *descriptio* and his preference for *notatio* in praise of men emphasize inner attributes including virtues and cognitive skills. As both Barthes and Foucault would suggest, the rhetorical techniques themselves and the examples used to represent them comprise part of the discursive enunciation and create a specific body present in the text's contours; therefore, Matthew's descriptive dicta and the portraits he provides create one such contour.

Following his descriptive examples, Matthew cautions, "Listeners should concentrate, not on what is said, but on the manner in which it is said" (Galyon, 45) ["Etenim contemplandus est non effectus sermonis, sed affectus sermocinantis" (Faral, 132)].[34] Matthew thus asserts a descriptive theory similar to Barthes's "language lined with flesh" wherein the "articulation of a body . . . not the meaning of language" occurs (Galyon, 67). Furthermore, he stresses that "those characteristics which are attributed. . . . should be understood . . . as characteristics that may apply to other persons of the same social status, age, rank, office, or sex" (Barthes, 45) ["quod dictum est de summo pontifice, vel de Caesare, vel de aliis personis quae sequuntur; ne nomen proprium praeponderet ceteris personis ejusdem conditionis, vel aetatis, vel dignitatis, vel officii, vel sexus, intelligatur attributum, ut nomen speciale generalis nominis vicarium ad maneriem rei, non ad rem maneriei reducatur" (Faral, 132)].[35] Given this assertion, Matthew's use of *notatio* for men and *effictio* for women and one degenerate man indicates a correlation between the interior body and men and the exterior form and women or dissolute men. This idea becomes clearer when Matthew asserts that "some epithets ought to be restricted to certain types of persons" (Galyon, 45) ["Amplius, sunt quaedam epitheta quae circa quasdam personas debent restringi" (Faral, 133)] and "in praising a woman one should stress heavily her physical beauty. This is not the proper way to praise a man" (Galyon, 46) ["in femineo sexu approbatio formae debet ampliari, in masculino vero parcius" (Faral, 134)]. In addition, Matthew differentiates between "exterior" description that focuses on "bodily graces" and "interior" description that "describes the qualities of the inner man such as reason, faithfulness, patience, honesty, double-dealing, arrogance, or prodigality, or other characteristics of the inner mind, that is, of the spirit" (Galyon, 48) ["superficialis, quando membrorum elegantia describitur vel homo exterior, intrinseca, quando interioris hominis proprietates, scilicet ratio, fides, patientia, honestas, injuria, superbia, luxuria et cetera epitheta interioris hominis, scilicet animae" (Faral, 135)]. He does state, however, that "one's

general appearance ought to be fully delineated" (Galyon, 48) ["vultus maxime debet informari" (Faral, 135)], but he does not so delineate in his laudatory descriptions of men. Characterization of women becomes credible through physicality—through "figuration," while the depiction of their believable or laudable male counterparts rests upon interior qualities—through "representation"—and their debauched male peers in turn receive blame through or as excessive language. The linguistic corollary renders overly ornate discourse effeminate.

If, as Kelly argues, "Matthew insists on choice of affective epithets deemed fitting for each type of person or action" (1972, 72), then Matthew's examples of laudatory descriptions of men delineate the spiritual, cerebral, linguistic, and kinesthetic as masculine arenas, erasing a sense of the body throughout each portrait. For instance, the pope is the premiere synthesis of sanctified inner attributes whose "body, his bride does not diminish the dowry of the spirit; / His spirit, the bridegroom, seeks to enrich the body, the bride" (Galyon, 37) ["Non dotes animi minuit caro conjuga, sponsus / Spiritus ad sponsae carnis anhelat opem" (Faral, 122)]. Even with this brief effeminization of the pope's body, consonant with theological images of the believer as the bride to Christ's bridegroom, the portrait as a whole fixates on the pope's inner attributes, and "[h]is holy mind loathes its vessel of corruption; / His lofty soul laments being bound in fetters of flesh" (Galyon, 37) ["Mens sacra vas aegrum fastidit, compede carnis / Necti conqueritur spiritualis honor" (Faral, 122)]. At war with this unembellished body, the pope's "mind thirsts for its heavenly home" (Galyon, 37) ["Mens sitit aetheream sedem, pastorque frequentat" (Faral, 122)]. While six lines do refer in vague terms to a body, the remainder of the fifty-line description waxes eloquent on the pope's virtue: for example, "In him honesty shines, reason reigns, order flourishes" (Galyon, 36) ["honestas / Scintillat, ratio militat, ordo viget" (Faral, 121)]. "Play[ing] the part of a heavenly shepherd" and "outshin[ing] humanness," the pope fulfills his office dutifully; moreover, in him, "[a]n assembly of virtues is at strife," including temperance, justice, piety, and wisdom (Galyon, 36–37) ["Coelestis partes opilionis agit," "Affectus hominem praeradiare potest," and "Disputat in papa virtutum contio" (Faral, 121)]. Given Matthew's general dictum of generalized portraits, the pope embodies virtue through a disassociation with a body that Matthew explicitly delineates as fallen—disembodiment.

Moving from this exemplar of virtue to the worth of kinesthetic and discursive qualities of warriors or rulers, Matthew depicts Caesar through a series of military and political activities: "As the ideal knight he outshines other leaders in manliness, / Outstrips them in rewards, and exceeds them in honors" and "Separating sloth from peace in the scales of justice, / Dutifully he combines law with temperance, while he tempers / The rod of judgment with gentle compassion" (Galyon, 37) ["Praeradiat virtute duces, exemplar equestris / Officii, pretio vernat, honore praeit" and "et libramine juris / Compensat pacis nequitiaeque

vices. / Jura pie sociat moderantia, dum pietatis / Blanditiis ferrum judiciale tepet" (Faral, 122)]. Within this forty-eight-line description, only one real reference to body exists ("Manliness endows his limbs with strength"), and the focus is upon the qualities of this "best of daring leaders [as o]ne who has enriched Rome with many a tribute" (Galyon, 38) ["Virtus, fama, fides replet, adjuvat, instruit artus, / Virtutem, mentem robore, laude, statu. / Hoc pretio servivit ei sub jure tributi / Roma, suo majus ausa videre caput" (Faral, 123)]. Whereas Caesar's portrait focuses upon the political value of this emperor, the depiction of Ulysses depicts combat skills and eloquence as praiseworthy. Matthew's Ulysses primarily represents the height of eloquence: "Lest the glory of his intellect be dimmed, he embellishes / With flourishing elegance what lesser men speak plainly" (Galyon, 38) ["Ne languescat honor mentis, facundia vernans / Ampliat et reficit quod minus esse potest" (Faral, 123)]. But, more to the point, Ulysses's very brain typifies the process of cognition that leads to this eloquence: "Not a cell of Ulysses' brain can be called wanting; / Imagination, reason, memory are each active in its roll. / The first perceives, the middle one discerns, the third retains; / The first comprehends, the middle one judges, the third unites all. / The first sows, the middle one savors, the third holds all" (Galyon, 38) ["Non cellae capitis in Ulixe vacant, epithetum / Officiale tenet prima, secunda sequens. / Prima videt, media discernit, tertia servat; / Prima capit, media judicat, ima ligat. / Prima serit, media recolit, metit ultima; tradit / Prima, secunda sapit, tertia claudit iter" (Faral, 124)]. Ulysses conjoins wisdom and eloquence, as does his portrait, receiving a high commendation from a rhetorician—"In eloquence, he is a Cicero" (Galyon, 39) ["Tullius eloquio" (Faral, 125)]. Matthew depicts these exemplary male figures through character and exploits, not an evocation of their physical bodies, to erase potential negative connotations of and/or posit an antibody for bodiliness.[36]

In contrast to even the brief references to bodies in the above portraits, Matthew's tribute to Cartula is noticeably devoid of body, focusing as it does instead on Cartula's pedagogical and stylistic excellence. In this laudatory description, Matthew emphasizes the quality of Cartula's writings and teaching without any reference to Cartula's physical form. The first lines of this description, the briefest of Matthew's examples, indicate its subject: "Cartula writes a simple poetry which glides to the ear / Of the listener in plain but melodious style" (Galyon, 41) ["Cartula praesumit simplex quae serpit ad aures / Judicis arguti pauperiore metro" (Faral, 127)]. This style "receive[s] strength from its sincerity" and "sparkles" because it is "[w]ritten from his heart" (Galyon, 41); the interior harmonizes with the exterior: "[t]he contents glorify the container" (Galyon, 41) ["Sedulitas redimit quod minus esse potest. / De se facta petens festivat metra, potentis / Materiae pretium materiata beat" (Faral, 127)]. In this "teacher, mirror of the fatherland, ornament / To the city," Matthew finds a "worth [that] shines out" (Galyon, 41) and a "[c]haracter [that] overcomes

frailties inherent in human nature" (Galyon, 42) ["Doctor, ave, speculum patriae, decus orbis," "Cujus dedignans hominem sapientia laudes," and "Naturae sensus praevenientis honor" (Faral, 127–128)]. The brevity of the description, finally, mirrors the nature of Cartula's teaching and Reason's pronouncement at Cartula's birth: "If a poem lacks brevity, it lacks poetry" (Galyon, 42). With Cartula as a "[m]irror for mankind" ["Urbis et orbis ave speculum" (Faral, 128)], as Matthew suggests, this description reflects the appropriate correlation between content and form in its articulation of that premise, its actual concision, and its focus on the poet's body of work as indicative of his nature; moreover, immediately following the lengthy descriptive diatribe on Davus's perverted form, these lines are a commentary on and a corrective to what we shall see is *effeminized rhetoric*.[37]

Effeminized Rhetoric

While both *incarnational* and *naked rhetoric* suggest a body that is absent, unobtainable, or generalized and *disembodied rhetoric* erases the perception of an actual body even in description, *effeminized rhetoric*, wherein a heightened sense of physicality exists, focuses on a distorted, deformed male body as indicative of inner rot or bad content. A "border body," this fourth masculine embodiment, then, acts as a critique of discourse presented as perverted, masculine language reflecting a lack of integrity in the author, subject matter, or both.[38] In an explicit contrast to the naked, male text, John positions "the painted songs of the poets" as "filthy debaucheries [that] contaminate the pure" (Lawler, 207) and as the equivalent of language corrupted by lust or by feminized language figured as flesh ["Picta poetarum fuge carmina, que uenena fundunt, / Luxus lutosi polluuntque puros" (Lawler, 206)]. "Straight repulsion," like that manifest in John's language, "is an emotive response directed toward certain kinds of 'border bodies,' bodies defined by their transgression of normative sex and gender boundaries" (Zita, 37). John and Matthew articulate the very tension in Barthes's distinction between "figuration" and "representation" here: *Effeminized rhetoric* is "figuration," literally embodying the dangers of figuration's excess and thereby pointing to a meaning other than desire, an antibody to homosexual desire articulated in the repulsion that emanates from the body thus described.

Not so easily categorized as *naked*, *disembodied*, or *effeminized* rhetoric, Geoffrey's kinesthetic description offered as a corrective to the "trite and outworn" nature of "description of physical appearance" occupies a space much like that of *pedestalized* rhetoric sliding into its *wanton* counterpart as addressed below (Kopp, 55) ["Sed, cum sit formae descriptio res quasi trita / Et vetus, exemplum sit in his, ubi rarior usus" (Faral, 216)]. In other words, while Geoffrey depicts bodies in motion, he makes no reference to the bodies being

clothed or naked; instead, his focus therein rests upon the body parts in a frenzied dance mirrored by the instrumental sounds (rather than the body moving in rhythm to the music):

> They [the hands] hasten out and they return . . . Nor does the foot go idle; rather, it frequently moves out, returns, and flits back . . . A third man spins himself with agile motion in a circle, or flies full length, or lifts up his supine limbs in a graceful leap, or bends his flexible joints in the form of a bow, neck to ankles . . . now the clapping grows rapturous, now the fingers snap in playful art, now the arms undivided curve in a graceful arch, the motion of the shoulders is made frenzied by the swift and sidewise movements of the hands" (Kopp, 56) ["Vadunt redeuntque; resurgunt / Et recidunt; . . . pes non vacat, immo frequenter / It, redit et lepide passu migratur eodem; . . . Tertius ad motus agilis se gyrat in orbem / Aut volat in longum, vel membra supine resumit / In saltum fragilem, molles aut arcuat artus / In talos refuga cervice, vel ensis acumen / Erigit et certus dubios intervolat enses . . . Nunc sonus exultant manuum, nunc arte jocosa / Colludunt digiti, nunc brachia curvat in arcum / Infurcata manus lateri celerique meatu / Furantur motus humeri (Faral, 217)].

In this description, a body necessarily and obviously exists, but it is disembodied, fragmented into torso, arms, legs, fingers, and even joints to which the music situates its sound and rhythm according to different types of pleasure: "And you may see the instruments follow the action, there being from them for every man his own kind of pleasure: the feminine hautboy, the masculine tuba, the raucous tympany, the clear-voiced cymbals, the harmonious symphonia, the sweet pipe, the soporific cithers, and the jolly fiddles" (Kopp, 56–57) ["Gestumque videres / Instrumenta sequi, quorum sua cuique voluptas: / Tibia feminea, tuba mascula, tympana rauca, / Cymbala praeclara, concors symphonia, dulcis / Fistula, somniferae citharae vidulaeque jocosae" (Faral, 217)]. The sheer excess of taste, sound, and movement building to a rapturous close likewise points toward the possibility of variant gendered discursive enunciations as witnessed by the "feminine hautboy" and the "masculine tuba." A novel form of *descriptio*, according to Geoffrey, this "carnal stereophony" (Barthes, 66) fixates on the male body as a form of homoerotic textual pleasure, as "[t]aste is not the same for everyone" and "varied pleasure has more honeyed sweetness" (Kopp, 56) ["Gestus non omnibus unus, / Cuique suus: plus mellis habet variata voluptas" (Faral, 216)]. The disembodied focus on excess achieved through flashing limbs, similar to the fragmented discussion of rhetorical devices that occupies much space in the rhetorics, alludes to the homoerotic pleasure of the textual body, celebrating what John finds as rhetoric's excessive danger.

Within an extended appropriation of Horatian form for spiritual content used to "chasten a certain handsome youth who recovered manfully from a serious lapse" (201), John asserts the damage done to the body of the text when heavenly content is perverted by immoral texts or effemininized form: "And read

more morally by actually doing what you do in your imagination when you read—lest your reading find fault with your deeds, your words with your hands, lest your deeds scandalize your voice, lest a human face smile in front and a foul fish behind, arousing the mockery of all who see you" (Lawler, 207) ["que composui ad castigationem cuiusdam formosi iuuenis post lapsum uiriliter resurgentis" (Lawler, 198, 200) and "Legas agendo quod facis legendo, / Ne culpet factum tua lectio, ne manus loquela, / Ne scandalizent facta uocis usum, / Ne caput humanum prerideat, ater inde piscis, / Et excitetur risus intuenti" (Lawler, 206)]. Reading immoral works leads to a deformed embodiment of the ideas fermented in the imagination, and even artful coloring distorts the bodies thus produced: "He who shimmers on the surface in the lightning of his speech, but whose deeds do not harmonize with his golden words, seems like gold on the surface, but copper lies underneath" (Lawler, 207) ["Extra qui rutilat fulgare faminis / Nec concors opus est uocibus aureis, / Extra cernitur aurum, / Cuprum sublatitat tamen" (Lawler, 206)]. Furthermore, the discord between form and content above produces decay and instability of form: "A whitewashed wall decays within, even the best gives way to termites or fire; here is blossom without fruit" (Lawler, 207) ["Albatus paries interius perit, / Cedit uermiculis optimus ignibus; / Flos hic est sine fructu / Quem sternit boreas ferus" (Lawler, 206)]. Episcopal corruption, in particular, becomes a "trap" that "bring[s] death to their [the multitude's] deep hearts' core" because "outside they are gentle lambs, [but] within they are wolves that will tear you apart" (Lawler, 207) ["Multos hic laqueat morbus episcopus, / Qui cordis penetrat letifer intima: / Mites sunt foris agni, / Intus sunt rapidi lupi" (Lawler, 206)].

In his example of a seventh Horatian meter, an "Ode on the Pleasures of Sinning," John in actuality explicates the effects of sin on the body: "Though they cure others, doctors cannot drive the sickness from their own bodies . . . for their own fever delights them" (Lawler, 209), while his "Ode on Barristers and Lawyers" briefly addresses "[t]he orator in his fancy harness [who] pleases himself alone" and in whom "the bloated hearts of the wordmongers rattle inside" (Lawler, 213) ["Oda de Delectatione Peccandi," "Curantes alios medici depellere morbum / Non proprio de corpore possunt. / Non sentire uolunt, non cernere quod leuet egros, / Delectat sed eos sua febris," "Oda de Causidicis et Legistis," and "Phaleratus sibi rethor placet uni . . . Logicorum tumidum cor crepat intus" (Lawler, 208, 212)]. Using "the Heinousness of Lust" to indicate the ravages it does to the body, John asserts the "end [that] awaits those whom the Cyrprian pollutes": "first she brings sorrow to the breast, then torture to the body" (Lawler, 215) ["Oda de Infamia Luxurie" and "Cerne quis exspectat pollutos Cipride finis: / Primo dolor fit pectoris, corporis inde labor" (Lawler, 214)]. According to John, "those are the things the thirster after flesh may hope for, the man whom the world goads and Satan drives" (Lawler, 217) ["talia speret / Carnis sititor, quem premit mundus,

agitque Sathan" (Lawler, 216)]. *Effeminized rhetoric*, influenced by flesh figured as female and the desire it evokes, infects and perverts both the physical and textual masculine body.

Evidencing the effects of immorality John addresses, Matthew of Vendôme uses Davus's body in a vituperative *effictio* to illustrate the melding of negative content and form and to create an anti-art of poetry: Davus epitomizes inept, debauched, carnal poetry, and his genitals are metaphorized as meter gone awry. This "border body" is, as Matthew depicts it and as Zita would define it, "queer" because "it do[es] not clearly align with the linear prescriptions of sex, gender, and sexual orientation" (Zita, 37). Where the pope's body is wed to his spirit in a positive manner and Cartula's style indicates inner worth, Davus literally embodies the melding of negative content and form: "A shell as rotten as the kernel shows him no hypocrite" (Galyon, 40) ["Se negat hypocritum nucleo nux consona" (Faral, 126)]. Here the content and form exist in perfect harmony as constituents of a negative being. Depicting Davus as "[a] child of wantonness" who is "[d]eformed in body and poisoned in mind" (Galyon, 39), Matthew suggests that Davus's "habits mark him as wicked by nature" (Galyon, 40) ["Semen nequitiae, veri jejunas, abundans / Nugis, deformis corpore, mente nocens" and "Pullulat in speciem naturae concolor usus" (Faral, 125)]. Furthermore, Matthew repeatedly calls attention to Davus's corrupt form: "Behold this mass of evil—a depraved mind, a debauched / Body, a false tongue, and a fraudulent hand" (Galyon, 40) ["Ecce mali cumulus, mens est scelerata, profanum / Est corpus, fallax lingua, nefanda manus" (Faral, 126)]. Yet Davus is "[t]oo deceitful to allow his outward mien to reflect his inner / Mind," and he "affects a sort of metonymy of spirit" (Galyon, 40) ["Ne per se patiatur idem consordeat intus / Et foris, in Davo methonomia parit" (Faral, 126)]. His physical body indicates his inner depravity; as such, he is devoid of form: "a lumpish social outcast, a shame to nature, / A burden to the very earth, a bottomless pit of depravity, / A stinking dung heap" (Galyon, 40) ["Faecis massa, pudor naturae, sarcina terrae, / Mensarum barathrum, stercoris aegra domus" (Faral, 126)]. Transgressing well beyond what is fitting, Davus as a "border body" evinces the interior and exterior dangers of excess.

Davus's gluttonous activities, the subject of ten lines alone, render him a leaky container, "[m]aking a trumpet of his rear and answering this tune with a belch" (Galyon, 41) ["In pateris patinisque studet, ructante tumultu / Et stridente tuba ventris utrimque volat" (Faral, 126)]. While in Cartula "the content glorif[ied] the container," "Davus, belching and farting, is like a broken prison / No longer able to contain those things / Which most need to be contained" (Galyon, 41) ["Davus hians aeger ventorum turbine, fracto / Carcere, dispensat quos cohibere nequit" (Faral, 127)]. As the epitome of inept, carnal poetry, his body cannot contain its passion to productive fruition: "He turns to lewdness as foul passion suffuses his genitals, / Causing love's orbs to bulge and Venus' lance to stiffen. / Yet before the lengthy member of this dactyl can pierce home, / The short syllables shake and destroy the enterprise" (Galyon, 41) ["Vergit ad incestum, Venus excitat

aegra bilibres / Fratres, membra tepent cetera, cauda riget. / Metri dactilici prior intrat syllaba, crebro / Impulsu quatiunt moenia foeda breves" (Faral, 127)]. An obvious reference to an erect penis, the euphemistic yet explicit attention to sexual organs (bulging orbs and stiffening lances) leaves the reader with more of a sense of the body here than in that promoted by John's "naked" text. Davus's genitals and premature ejaculation metaphorically demonstrate meter gone awry. Davus's excessive passion effeminizes him and the poetry he embodies as did lust in John's schema; furthermore, it renders Davus impotent, causing him to spill his seed and leaving him unable to inseminate even a poetic text.

The body deformed by moral turpitude, "[s]eeking out every source of sensual gratification" (Galyon, 41), serves as a metaphor for overly ornate discourse in a system wherein flesh, fallen, and female are synonymous and in which the originary masculine discourse is tainted by attributes perceived as female—inordinate lust, excessive ornamentation, and a deceptive nature ["Urget blanda" (Faral, 127)]. The focus on the physical body as flesh is more pronounced than in the other masculine discourse types. Rather than envisioning the naked body or rhetoric as indicative of truth, Davus herein sees it as incitement to perversion: "He is inflamed at the sight of the naked body. / This man is a rebel against nature, / One who travels across thresholds forbidden to natural tastes" (Galyon, 41) ["furit in libera terga, rebellis / Naturae vetito limite carpit iter" (Faral, 127)]. This allusion to homosexuality further acts as a mnemonic connecting the description to Alain of Lille's equation of bad grammar and homosexuality in the *De planctu naturae* just as the general tenor and specific characteristics of Davus's portrait make him the embodiment of Alain's ideas.[39] As Epp suggests, language with "excessive use of rhetorical ornament" "is not masculine, precisely because it lacks, and should be under, reasoned masculine control."[40] For John, Matthew, and Alain, just as Todorov notes in relation to Quintilian, "discourse is masculine, from which it follows that ornamented discourse is the male courtesan: the vice of homosexuality is superimposed on lust" (Todorov, 74). In a similar manner, Matthew also likens bad poets to transvestites, or "purveyors of feminine apparel that, acting under the impulse of a silly audacity, presume to caw like crows and twist the meaning of words" (Galyon, 84), and he distinguishes his work from trivial verses, which "are like a corpse without life" or "windy" and "inflated bladders" (Galyon, 85). ["Amplius, sunt quidam trasonitae et nugigeruli qui, ex impetu praesumptionis inconcinnae praesumentes cornicari, verborum significationibus abutuntur hoc modo" and "Amplius, a praesentis doctrinae traditione excludantur versus inopes rerum nugaeque canorae, scilicet frivolae nugarum aggregationes, quae quasi joculatrices vel gesticulatrices auribus alludunt solo consonantiae blandimento, quae possunt cadaver exanimatum imitari . . . quae vesicae distentae possunt comparari, quae ventoso distenta sibilo sine venustate sonum distillans ex sola ventositate sui tumoris contrahit venustatem" (Faral, 166)]. Bad poetry results from faulty cognition and a perversion of language and the body, and inept poets are mirrored

in their process and lines as they are not able to embody thought into word as Geoffrey, John, and Matthew elsewhere prescribe.

Marian Rhetoric

The most obvious difference between the masculine linguistic variations and the feminized ones is that the types of feminized language are all paradoxically clothed, yet the focus on the physicality, or "bodiliness," of language and woman is marked. As Todorov notes, "Rhetorical ornamentation changes the sex of discourse" (75).[41] *Marian rhetoric*, ornamental language reserved for and legitimated by the Virgin Mary as the source of linguistic efficacy, and *chaste rhetoric*, ornamental language that is considered unquestionably legitimate and reflects a divine or respectable subject matter accurately, use fewer body images than the other feminized types; however, denial of the nature of female physicality or sexuality occurs, calling forth a conceptualization of the traditional negative connotations of the female body and contrasting both with the positive perception of the sanctified male body.

In a sense, *Marian* and *chaste* rhetoric are the feminized analogues of the masculine *incarnational* and *naked* rhetoric, but these types admit, even require, ornamentation or clothing, possibly necessitated by the perceived nature of female flesh after the Fall. According to Todorov, "the means/end relation has been replaced by the form/content pair, or rather—and this is where the door is open to devalorization—by the outside/inside pair. Thoughts or things are interior, which is only covered by a rhetorical wrapping. And, since language . . . is endlessly compared to the human body, with its gestures and postures, rhetorical ornaments are the adornments of the body" (73). Rather than being a mirror of the author, the decorated discourse herein reflects the nature of the content, recuperating the fallen nature of both language and woman. Beauty here is indicative of the inner worth of a text and a woman, and the idea of the sexual body is negated or partially erased. Furthermore, like *naked rhetoric*, *chaste rhetoric* is only made possible through the rejuvenative effects of the Incarnation and a renunciation of the human body and its appetite in exchange for inner sanctity: Herein, however, power derives from the model *Marian rhetoric* affords. The feminine aspects of the language and body become rehabilitated in the adoption of masculine traits similar to Saint Jerome's prescriptions for spiritual wholeness: "As long as woman is for birth and children, she is as different from man as body is from soul. But when she wishes to serve Christ more than the world, then she will cease to be a woman and will be called man."[42] Ironically, the Marian act of childbirth both prefigures the sanctity of other female figures, yet normal female participation in the earthy act of birth negates said spirituality.

Focusing upon the carnality of human nature and the resultant flaws in humanity's cognitive and linguistic abilities, John's cosmological, epistemological center is woman's role in the Fall and Redemption. According to John, God is

still the ultimate source of all being, but the actions of Eve and Mary feed into two types of language, *wanton* and *Marian rhetoric*, the former of which will be addressed below; however, Eve's transgression and its results make necessary the deeds and words of Mary; the Fall obviously necessitates redemption, and Mary plays the cognitive and linguistic muse to John. Even though John presents God as "Creator of all things" (Lawler, 183) and the "Holder of the world's reigns" (Lawler, 195), man's fallen nature and imperfect cognition, as John suggests in his "Homely Example on Beginning as a Teacher," render him unable to perceive God's essence manifest in Creation, distorting the ideas emanating from the Eternal Exemplar: "a noble idea takes its beauty from God; it bewails its exile in the world" (Lawler, 167) ["Qui solus cunta condidit," "Rerum frena tenens," "Exemplum Domesticum de Principio Magistrali," and "Hic ydea nobilis Deo decoratur, / Mundi flens exilio, longe deriuatur" (Lawler, 182, 194, 166)]. As Jager notes,

> On the whole, Neoplatonic tendencies lead Augustine and other patristic authors to place servere ontological and epistemological limitations on signs in general, including words. Both the Platonic and Christian myths of *logos* held signs to be the symptoms of a primal catastrophe, whether this catastrophe was conceived as the soul's "fall" into the body or as humankind's fall into sin (57).

John of Garland conflates the two catastrophes: Human knowledge suffers from both the "soul's fall into the body" and "humankind's fall into sin." The divine and eternal concepts are present in the universe, yet they are perverted in man's understanding: "The First Cause possesses eternal spring; on this mirror of the Holy One all living things gaze, things which tremble in the grip of time, defective, liable through sin to death and hell" (Lawler, 169) ["Ver eternum possidet, Causa Primitiua; / In hoc Sancti speculo cunta uident uiua, / Que subiecta temporit nutant defectiua, / Per peccatum Stigie mortis incursiua" (Lawler, 168)]. John further reflects on man's faulty perception and divorce from knowledge: "In us knowledge is blind and buried; pining in the prison of the body" only to be restored by teaching (Lawler, 169) ["In nobis sciencia ceca sepelitur, / Corporis ex carcere languens inanitur" (Lawler, 168)]. Jager explains, "With the Fall and exile from Paradise . . . Adam and his descendents lost this vision [inner knowledge of God] and were banished into an alien realm where they had to seek knowledge indirectly through material signs apprehended by the bodily senses, signs being either things themselves, or images, or words" (52).

Fortunately, according to John, virtue can aid man in acquiring knowledge as "[k]nowledge flows from virtue and wears down vice . . . Stirred by study, knowledge bursts into new life, grows and flourishes" (Lawler, 169) ["Ex uirtute defluit viciumque terit; / . . . Suscitata studio, surgit rediuiua / Et crescit sciencia, uirens ut oliua" (Lawler, 168)]. Through a series of three mirrors, humanity can

perceive the relationship between content and form, the separation of form from matter, and the exemplar behind the being thus examined (Lawler, 167). These mirrors provide a graduated knowledge of the world culminating in the understanding of objects as copies of the Divine Exemplar. Promoting Logic, "the irrigatrix of the mind" as a corrective to man's faulty thinking, John suggests that this feminine being can drive the "cloud of the mind" away and act as "an open path that guides to truth, leads by deduction to certain knowledge of things" (Lawler, 169) ["mentis irrigatrix," "mentis nubilo pulso," and "Via patet Logices ueri directiua / Et ad certitudinem rerum deductiua" (Lawler, 168)]. John, furthermore, calls upon Logic to aid in his understanding: "Hold up the mirror of your reason, that I may see the flaws in my roughness; that my roughness may be smoothed by the file that renews and the clear path to truth may lie open" (Lawler, 171) ["Rationis speculum uestre porrigatis / Speculer ut vicium mee ruditatis, / Vt limetur ruditas lima nouitatis / Et illimis pateat uia veritatis" (Lawler, 170)].[43] John's comments on the regenerative nature of Logic are sandwiched between his discussion of the merits of the Virgin Mary; moreover, he conflates the two beings: Logic and the Virgin both aid man in the acquisition of knowledge, allow him to produce effective discourse, and are asked to correct John's treatise.

It is through Mary and her role in the Incarnation that human perception can be restored, according to John: "Sin turned wisdom to ignorance; knowledge looks to restoration through virtue" (Lawler, 169) ["Culpa sapienciam dedit ignorari; / Virtute sciencia petit restaurari" (Lawler, 168)]; therefore, John pleads, "O Mary, way of life, keep leading us" and "Wipe away the mud of our sins" (Lawler, 171) ["O Maria, / Uite uia, / Nobis perge preuia," and "Lutum peccatorum, / Ablue nostrorum" (Lawler, 170)]. In a manner analogous to Logic, Mary prepares, leads, and redeems humanity's perception, erasing the ravages of sin through the conception of Christ: "Eve deformed the world, 'Ave' reformed the world, a pure one purified the world, a good woman made good the sin, a path for men, yet unapproachable" (Lawler, 171) ["Eua mundum deformauit, / Aue mundum reformauit, / Munda mundum emundauit, / Pia nephas expiauit, / Via uiris inuia" (Lawler, 170)], an often repeated refrain of John's to which he later adds the phrase "by bearing Christ" (Lawler, 183) ["Christum pariendo" (Lawler, 182)], providing the reason for the redemptive value of her utterance.

If Eve's transgression ruptured language's efficacy, then Mary's utterance reunites language and meaning; therefore, using ornamental language to depict Marian subjects becomes an act of providing language that fits content. In a later "hymn of [his] own composition on the conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary," John defines Mary as "[a]ll-powerful virtue, true knowledge" asking her "to be our guide, the path for our steps" (Lawler, 195); moreover, in a subsequent hymn on the same theme, John positions Mary's body as part of the

building of redemption in which the first stone of this edifice is "the conception of the virgin" (Lawler, 199) ["ut in hoc hymno quem composui de conceptione Beate Uirginis Marie, que conceptio intelligitur sanctificacio in utero," "Uirtus omnipotens, uera sciencia / Perdurans bonitas, omnibus omnia, / Stellam mitte tuam nocte uiantibus / Que sit dux, uia gressibus," and "uirginis conceptio" (Lawler, 194, 198)]. While John envisions Christ as both the builder and product of the actual framework of redemption, he visualizes Mary as the beginning of linguistic regeneration and turns to her for poetic inspiration: "Direct my feet through slippery ways by directing the feet of my meter, lest voice and work falter and entangle the upright mind" (Lawler, 199) ["Pedes regas per lubricum / Pedem regendo metricum, / Ne uox opusque iambicent / Statumque mentis inplicent" (Lawler, 198)]. Like Geoffrey's articulation of *incarnational rhetoric*, John of Garland's *Parisiana poetria* depends upon salvation for a validation of its rhetoric; unlike Geoffrey, John focuses on Logic and Mary as the agents of purification, as it is the *conception* (both Mary's through God and humanity's through reason) of the Word that redeems words rather than the embodiment of language modeled on the Incarnation, conceived in the imagination, and realized in poetry. Whether embodied as woman or language, *Marian rhetoric* is the container of truth in which the form faithfully reflects the content.

Depicting legitimate feminized language as sanctified, beautified, chaste, and the ultimate picture of beauty, John explicitly presents *Marian rhetoric*, in which he condones seemingly excessive use of figurative language because of the Virgin Mary's nature and role in the Incarnation, as paradigmatic of all other *chaste rhetoric*; however, John only actualizes *Marian rhetoric*, delegitimizing the use of ornate language for any entity other than the Virgin as is witnessed in his numerous diatribes equating women and immoral reading and reserving *naked rhetoric* (masculine language) for all secular matters. With Mary's body a fit container for the Logos, the virginal purity of that body redeems language's capacity to depict the truth. Metaphorized as everything but physical body, the body of Mary purifies language, thus allowing ornamentation. In his sixth chapter addressing the embellishment of poetry, John provides a poem in which ornamentation is predicated upon sanctification: "She is a creature, yet blessed, / Sanctified, beautified, / Marked out and presented, / Transported, assumed" (Lawler, 119) ["creata est beata, sacrata est ornata / Signata est donata, translata est leuata" (Lawler, 118)].[44] This creature embodies the theoretical paradigm of Marian rhetoric: She is a "[g]irl of chastity, well and fount of sweetness / Picture of beauty, lamp and vessel of brightness, / Highest glory of demureness, star of deity, / Eternal light of gracefulness, lamb of piety" (Lawler, 119) ["puella castitatis, cisterna, fons dulcoris, / tabella venustatis, lucerna, vas splendoris / pudoris laus superna, deitatis stella / decoris lux eterna, pietatis agnella" (Lawler, 118)].[45] Pervading this poem is John's conviction that, in order for poetic works to be ornamented, they must be sanctified. The anonymous "she"

of the poem is a blessed, sanctified, beautified, and beatified being who is marked out, presented, transferred, and translated: Specifically, she must be Mary, the model for a *chaste rhetoric* that is necessarily unrealized in John's treatise because of the impossibility of human aspiration to that level of translation. As such, she is as much a metaphorization of language as she is a depiction of woman for the purposes of discussing language.

Later, in very flowery language, indeed, John elaborately and extensively praises Mary using standard medieval Marian imagery in "A Rhymed Poem on the Blessed Virgin," which John asserts "display[s] various rhetorical figures": Mary is not only beautiful and resplendent and the ornament of all women, the "star of the sea," and "the breath of the true flower" (Lawler, 177), "who shine[s] before us with a unique and constant guiding flame," (Lawler, 177), but also "the living ark of Noah," the "dove with the olive branch," "the herald of peace," and "the path through the Red Sea" (Lawler, 179). ["De Beata Virgine Rithmus Diuersimode Coloratus," "Stella maris," "Da spiramen ueri floris," "Que prefulges singulari / Semper igne preuio," "archa Noe viua," "columba cum oliua," "pacis nuncia," and "uia Rubro Mari" (Lawler, 176, 178)]. That is to say, she simultaneously represents peace, hope for regeneration, and the way out of exile. Not only does Mary exemplify these abstract concepts, but she also becomes Rebecca, Rachel, Ruth, Susannah, Esther, Judith, Jahel, Deborah, and Hannah—carrying the conceptual weight these female figures convey (Lawler, 179). In a reverse typology, Mary is the incarnation that retrospectively becomes the model for female chastity, encapsulating feminine goodness in human form—whether that be body as text or text as body. Rhetorically, John ends this poem by asking, "Why do I entangle so many scriptures and draw out so many emblematic meanings?" (Lawler, 179–181), a highly appropriate question given John's declared preference for the naked truth, to which he provides the following answer: "She [Mary] is everything to us: the ornament of virgins, a unique model, the glory of women" (Lawler, 181) ["Quid intrico tot scripturas / Et extrico tot figuras? / Hec est nobis omnia: / Hec est decus uirginale, / Et exemplum speciale, Mulierum gloria" (Lawler, 178)]. Mary, as the purifier, in her virgin state restores woman and language to their prelapserian potential: "Mary brought forth Christ, the sole Creator of all things; the Woman lost the world, Mary gave back life, her bosom blooming undefiled" (Lawler, 185) ["Qui solus cuncta condidit, / Maria Christum edidit; / Virago mundum perdidit, / Maria uitam reddidit, / Intacto uernans gremio" (Lawler, 184)]. Ironically, given the predisposition toward masculine paradigms, *Marian rhetoric* prefigures an *incarnational rhetoric*. For John, as "[f]or Augustine, the fruit of Mary's womb was not only the divine Word but specifically a divine Book, the ultimate 'written' Text" (Jager, 74). Despite Christ as Word made Flesh being the ultimate referent to which the building of language owes its composition, John finds Mary an apt muse and intercessor

who bridges the gap between celestial and terrestial matters because, through her, John can be directed toward writing sanctified texts, texts invested by their sacred matter and figured as beatified woman. The authorial role of poet is justified in John's mind by the topic that he chooses to praise, for without this divine subject matter, his poetry would be "painted," playing Eve, the fallen woman or *wanton rhetoric*, a somaticized text that, as we shall see, Matthew embraces in the "figuration" and "representation" of Helen.

Chaste Rhetoric

Moving from *Marian rhetoric* to the possible human form it predicates, Matthew provides one embodiment of *chaste rhetoric* in the form of Marcia. To understand Matthew's continuum of feminized languages, we must first, however, recognize that he predominantly presents language as feminized in his compositional theory in which verse, beauty, and woman are conflated. Defining "verse" as "metrical discourse advancing in cadenced periods with the restraint that meter demands and made charming by a graceful marriage of words and by flowers of thought," Matthew privileges "the elegant combinations of words, the vivid presentation of relevant qualities, and the carefully noted epithets of each single thing" (Galyon, 27) within a tripartite theory of composition advancing from the conception of meaning to the transference of thought into and manipulation of language and the disposition of material (Galyon, 99) ["Sed quia stipulationis noverca est dilatio, ne videar, dissimulator opis propriae, mihi commodus uni, compensato rationis perpendiculo, juxta mei parvitatem ingenioli promissionem meam volui effectui mancipare, ut doctrinae promotum, disciplinae incrementum, invidiae pabulum, inimicitiae cruciatum, detractioni pretendam nutrimentum" (Faral, 109)]. In fact, Matthew's definition of verse and composition mirror each other, for Elegy imparts another iteration of "poetry," which includes "polished words," "figurative expression," and "inner sentiment" (Galyon, 65) ["Etenim sunt tria quae redolent in carmine: verba polita, dicendique color, interiorque favus" (Faral, 153)]. Within his presentation of the versemaker's craft, verisimilitude plays a primary role in description, the central component of verse: "Since the exercise of the craft of versification consists especially in skill in description, I would advise that if a thing is described, the greatest attention be paid to credibility in writing descriptions, so that what is said either is true or seems to be true" (Galyon, 47) ["Et quia in peritia describendi versificatoriae facultatis praecipuum constat exercitium, super hoc articulo meum consilium erit ut, si quaelibet res describatur, in expressione descriptionis maximum fidei praetendatur nutrimentum, ut vera dicantur vel veri similia" (Faral, 135)]. In addition to verisimilitude, as noted with reference to his disembodied rhetorical techniques for masculine portraiture, Matthew stresses the generic quality of descriptions

coupled with the symbolic nature of the words used in particular descriptions and conflates verse, beauty, and woman. According to Matthew, "Beauty [as well as verse and woman], indeed, is the elegant and harmonious proportion of parts, accompanied by charming color" (Galyon, 47) ["Est autem forma elegans et idonea membrorum coaptatio cum suavitate coloris" (Faral, 134)]. If verse is synonymous with beauty, both consisting of the qualities of the beautiful, and beauty is equated with the feminine, then beauty, verse, and female are the same—a conflation evidenced in Matthew's examples of laudatory description of women.

To embody *chaste rhetoric* in particular, Matthew uses *notatio* in praise of Marcia who "transforms the weaker sex into the stronger," thereby "glorify[ing] womanhood" by denying her perceived nature as a sexual, fleshly being (Galyon, 43) ["aegrum / In melius sexum degenerare facit" and "Marcia femineum sexum festivat" (Faral, 128–129)]. The aesthetics of the text are harmonious with their content. In the form of Marcia, the woman (matter) of the female text rises above her body (form). Marcia embodies all that her sex supposedly is not: "she makes the weak sex strong and rejects feminine / Frauds; she smacks of discretion and shines with / Faithfulness" (Galyon, 42) ["Mollitiem sexus solidat, fraudesque relegans / Femineas redolet mente fideque nitet" (Faral, 128)]. Marcia's inner attributes mark her exterior in such a manner as to belie her sex: "She is matron in name only; her spirit rejects / An epithet of Nature and cancels all deceit" (Galyon, 42) ["Est mulier non re, sed nomine; mens epithetum / Naturae refugit evacuatque dolum" (Faral, 128)]. She, thus, deserves the appellation of "paragon" or "ideal" because of this remarkable shedding of her very (feminine) nature. Furthermore, Matthew catalogues Marcia's character traits as if they were embodied: "The beauty of her face bespeaks her excellent worth; / Her expression is the prophet of honorable intent. / No lightness of mind marks her as a stepmother to / Modesty; her matronly countenance bespeaks firmness. / The bristle of her brows and the sobriety of her thoughts / Give clear indication of her devout disposition" (Galyon, 42) ["Praedicat oris honor pretium virtutis, honesti / Propositi vultus esse propheta potest. / Non mentis levitas monet esse noverca pudoris, / Sed matronali disputat ore rigor. / Silva supercilii mentisque modestia signa / Praetendunt mentis expositiva sacrae" (Faral, 128)]. Marcia's physical attributes act as a discourse proclaiming her worth, intent, firmness, and disposition—her body talks.[46] Her speech, through the constraints of modesty and chastity, removes her from such conventional attributes of feminine discourse as carnality, deceptiveness, and immoderation, while her face "bespeaks" her inner attributes (Galyon, 42).

Through the figure of Marcia, Matthew legitimizes feminized rhetoric in a contained setting in which she is seen as regenerative, yet confined by the constraints of socially acceptable behavior. Emphasizing the harmony of inner and outer attributes embodied in Marcia's figure, Matthew writes, "the sweetness of

the nut contends with the nutshell, and / The unsightly honeycomb wars with the flavor within" (Galyon, 42) ["Cum nuce rixatur nuclei praestantia, pugnant / Aegra superficies interiorque favus" (Faral, 129)]. Marcia's form simultaneously illustrates her worth and counters that worth: She embodies *chaste rhetoric*, always necessarily countering the very essence of woman and language. Marcia, in a nutshell, is "frank, devoted, chaste, and decorous" (Galyon, 42) ["Marcia fraude carens, pia, casta, modesta" (Faral, 129)]. Beauty here indicates the inner worth of a text and a woman, and the sexuality and carnality of the female body is negated or partially erased—a process that highlights the "embarrassed figuration" that Barthes designates "representation."

Pedestalized and Wanton Rhetoric

In contrast to *chaste rhetoric*, its sanctified subject, and belied bodiliness, *pedestalized rhetoric* (ornate language depicting a courtly or noble subject matter in which both language and woman retain use and value through beauty) and *wanton rhetoric* (decorated discourse illuminating the sexual nature of female figures that is distrusted or commended for its association with carnality and duplicity by which the language and woman are marked to make the female characters' roles in romance and fabliaux more credible) are more heavily embodied than the above masculine and feminine discourses. The demarcation between these third and fourth types of feminized rhetoric becomes blurred depending upon the motivation for discourse formation because, as addressed below, the potentiality of the latter is latent in the former—the possibility of *wanton rhetoric* rests at the heart of *pedestalized rhetoric*. *Pedestalized rhetoric*, then, constitutes what Barthes delineates as a "Text of pleasure," or "the text that contents, fills, grants euphoria; the text that comes from culture and does not break with it, is linked to the comfortable practice of reading" (14). *Wanton rhetoric*, however, consists of "Texts of bliss," or "the text that imposes a state of loss, the text that discomforts . . . , unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories, brings to a crisis his relation with language" (14). As Todorov suggests, "If rhetorical production stems from adornment and clothing, then interpreting texts that use these devices is . . . an activity akin to undressing them—with all that may be pleasurable in that activity" (76). Barthes would amend Todorov's pronouncement to read "pleasurable or blissful" because of variant readers' possible relation to the ideas embodied in such texts. For example, both Matthew's *effictio* of Helen and Geoffrey's "full picture of female beauty" begin with the idea of woman as text, praising female beauty for its utility and using the female body as a site for mini arts of poetry; however, in the second portions of both descriptions, the latent sexual use of the body and language become blatant. As Barthes asserts, "[a] site of bliss is then created . . . the possibility of a

dialectics of desire, of an *unpredictability* of bliss" (4); moreover, he explains, "the *brio* of the text . . . is its *will to bliss*: just where it exceeds demand, transcends prattle, and whereby it attempts to overflow, to break through the constraint of adjectives—which are those doors of language through which the ideological and the imaginary come flowing in" (13–14). Both Helen in particular and the quintessential portrait of female beauty are meant to embody the desire encoded in such feminized space in the creation of a credible poem, and their portraits act as the texts' "brio." Matthew and Geoffrey predicate authorial ethos upon a female body and language that entice the reader, yet it is the danger of this type of language figured as female and flesh from which John suggests the reader flee.[47]

While Matthew's Marcia embodies the beauty of virtue in *chaste rhetoric*, his Helen is the incarnation of the utility of beauty in *pedestalized rhetoric*. Whereas Marcia's outer form "wars with the flavor within," "Helen's radiant beauty of face and form" lays no claim to inner virtue, and her form becomes more actualized in effect articulating the nature of *pedestalized rhetoric* and its inherent power, *wanton rhetoric*. As Parker explains, such description "involves an act of unfolding, offering to the eye, and the more static sense of something to be seen" (127); furthermore, Vickers argues that, in such a "rhetoric of display," "'the object or matter . . . is submitted to a double power-relation inherent in the gesture itself: on the one hand, the describer controls, possesses, and uses the matter to his own ends; and, on the other hand, his reader, or listener is extended the privilege or pleasure of seeing.'"[48] Matthew privileges Helen's form for its innate beauty, and this beauty is "hers by / Nature's gift [and] needs no embellishment by artifice" (Galyon, 43) ["Pauperat artificis Naturae dona venustas / Tindaridis, formae flosculus, oris honor" (Faral, 129)]. It is natural or even supernatural in splendor: "Her countenance puts to shame ordinary mortal form; / Beauty beyond beauty, she shines with the grace of the stars" (Galyon, 43) ["Humanam faciem fastidit forma, decoris / Prodiga, siderea gratuitate nitens" (Faral, 129)]. Helen's form provides a template with which all other female beauty can be judged, and her description, mirroring as it does Matthew's definition of beauty and verse, acts as a mini art of poetry for feminized discourse—Helen is poetry incarnate.[49] Matthew stresses her celestial or cosmic nature moving from her countenance in general to her facial features in particular: "Her dark eyebrows, neatly lined twin arches, / Set off skin that is like the Milky Way. Her sparking eyes rival the radiance of the stars" (Galyon, 43) ["Nigra supercilia via lactea separat, arcus / Dividui prohibent luxuriare pilos. / Stellis praeradiant oculi" (Faral, 129)]. Helen's natural beauty contends with Nature's other splendid creations, and specific features radiate with erotically divine significance. If one were looking to the heavens for knowledge based on their divine origin, the individual might better, according to Matthew's *effictio*, cast one's eyes on Helen.

Not only is Helen's beauty of cosmic or even divine proportions, but it also articulates its very worth becoming a discourse in itself: "Her brow shows its charms like words on a page; / Her face has no spot, no blemish, no stain" (Galyon, 43) ["Pagina frontis habet quasi verba faventis, inescat / Visus, nequitiae nescia, labe carens" (Faral, 129)]. Lest we think that Helen's beauty is a passive essence, note the manner in which her body is said to reveal its appeal: "Her golden hair, unfettered by any confining knot, / Cascades quite freely about her face, letting / The radiant beauty of her shoulders reveal / Their charms; its disarray pleases all the more" (Galyon, 43) ["Auro respondet coma, non replicata magistro / Nodo, descensu liberiore jacet; / Dispensare jubar humeris permissa decorum / Explicat et melius dispatiata placet" (Faral, 129)]. It is at this moment wherein Matthew begins to articulate the latent power of Helen's form, the sexual allure that makes her pleasurable as a textual body and credible as the catalyst for the Trojan War. Helen, as an icon of the disruptive energy of the female form, comes replete with her mythic ability to entice, and that perception colors even the first lines of this description, but Matthew explicitly begins to concretize this allure. Her body articulates the desire for which she and her portrait have been created: Her eyes "with engaging frankness play ambassadors of Venus" and her "rosy lips" sigh "for a lover's kiss" (Galyon, 43) ["oculi Venerisque ministri / Esse favorali simplicitate monent" and "Oris honor rosei suspirat ad oscula, risu / Succincta modico lege labella tument" (Faral, 129–130)]. Helen represents discourse on display, *pedestalized rhetoric*, yet the portrait veers away from the passive qualities of a typical, contained object and concretizes the purpose of such a display, to entice the reader. As Matthew explains in the remarks prefatory to his examples of description,

> if one writes about the power of love—how for example, Jupiter burned with love for Callisto—then the audience ought to be given a foretaste of such exquisite feminine beauty, so that having a picture of such beauty in their minds, they would find it reasonably believable that a heart as great as Jupiter's could be heated up over the charms of a mere mortal. For it ought to be made clear what a wealth of charms it was that drove Jupiter to so vile an act" (Galyon, 34) ["Amplius, si agatur de amoris efficacia, quomodo scilicet Jupiter Parasis amore exarserit, praelibanda est puellae descriptio et assignanda puellaris pulchritudinis elegantia, ut, audito speculo pulchritudinis, verisimile sit et quasi conjecturale auditori Jovis medullas tot et tantis insudasse deliciis. Praecipua enim debuit esse affluentia pulchritudinis quae Jovem impulit ad vitium corruptionis (Faral, 119)].[50]

While Paris is no Jupiter, this "taste of . . . exquisite beauty" provides explanatory evidence for Paris's actions. Furthermore, the perceived agency of the fictive female body places blame on that body for the act committed on it: the respective charms of Callisto and Helen seemingly drive men to commit vile or questionable acts.

In Matthew's second portrait of Helen, he emphasizes the partitioning of her body, suggesting the relation of the parts to the whole and thereby creating a manifestation of Helen as metonymy and focusing on her definitive body parts as reason for her and the portrait's being. Addressing those who are "fastidious" and claim that "there is no point to wordiness" in this second, purportedly abbreviated version of Helen's attributes, Matthew opines: "Her teeth are like ivory, her broad forehead like milk, / Her neck snow, her eyes stars, her lips roses, / Her chest and waist narrow and compact, giving / Way to the last swell of her abdomen" (43) ["Vel si deliciosus erit auditor, dicens quod in multiloquio pretium non est, membrorum descriptionem sic comprehendat" and "Respondent ebori dentes, frons libera lacti, / Colla nivi, stellis lumina, labra rosis. / Artatur laterum descensus ad ilia, donec / Surgat ventriculo luxuriante tumor" (Faral, 130)]. Rushing through the area between head and waist, Matthew focuses on the defining component of Helen's influence—her sexual organs. Giving license to the possibilities he sees embodied in Helen, Matthew lists epithets for her genitalia: "the storehouse / Of modesty, the mistress of Nature, the delightful / Dwelling of Venus" (Galyon, 43) ["Proxima festivat loca cella pudoris, amica / Naturae, Veneris deliciosa domus" (Faral, 130)]. Progressing through the head-to-toe description, Matthew then moves to her leg, knee, and foot. Noticeable given the brevity of his attention to other body parts are the three epithets used to call to mind Helen's sexual organs; moreover, to these epithets, Matthew adds: "Of that sweetness which lies / Hidden there, he that partakes be the judge" (Galyon, 43) ["Quae latet in regno Veneris dulcedo saporis, / Judex contactus esse propheta potest" (Faral, 130)]. Describing Helen's sexual center without being explicit, Matthew invites the reader into this orifice. As Barthes suggests, "The pleasure of the text is not the pleasure of the corporeal striptease or narrative suspense. . . . the entire excitation takes refuge in the *hope* of seeing the sexual organ" (10). In Matthew's description this is a hope deferred to the imagination. Furthermore, Matthew asserts, "I have chosen / For myself such things as Matthew loves to describe" (Galyon, 44) ["mihi tales eligo, tales / Describit quales Windocinensis amat" (Faral, 130)]. Given Matthew's avowed pleasure in this text and his invitation to the reader to partake of it, "the text is a fetish object, and this fetish desires" the reader (Barthes, 27). If credible poetry, as Matthew suggests, results from numerous epithets that define the person described, then Helen herein is predominantly equated with her genitalia.[51]

Helen, all parts taken into consideration with particular ones being of note, is the perfect embodiment of beauty and feminized discourse: "Her appearance lacks no perfection; / She weds gracefulness of manner to Nature's dower. / The comeliness of her features, her exquisite form / Give the appearance of matchless beauty" (Galyon, 43–44) ["Ne titulo careat species, sua dona maritant / Corporeae dotes, effigiale bonum. / Materiae pretium, formae praestantia quaeque / Membra relativa sedulitate beant" (Faral, 130)]. Moreover, Matthew

makes this part-to-the-whole association explicit: "One is unable to say which is more charming, / The sweetness of the parts or the perfection / Of the whole" (Galyon, 44) ["Materiam picturat opus praedulce, venusto / Materiae pretio materiata placent" (Faral, 130)]. In the composition of Helen, the incarnation of Matthew's definition of feminine beauty and prescribed verse form, Matthew implicitly and explicitly realizes his earlier conflation of verse, beauty, and woman; Helen's portrait acts as an art of poetry in miniature. Moreover, the effect of said description should make credible her role in the Trojan War, as Matthew suggests, "If Greece asks, 'Why did Priam's son carry her off to Troy?' / Say 'Put Hippolytus alongside her and he will become Priapus'" (Galyon, 45) ["Hoc pretio Frigios laesit Ledea, rapina / Priamidae, Trojae flamma, ruina ducum. / Cur hanc Priamides rapuit si Graecia quaerit, / Illic Ypolitum pone, Priapus erit" (Faral, 130)]. The historical and textual exchange of Helen rests on the actualization of desire seen in her form by those who view or read her; in fact, her sexual allure has such pull that just being near her would cause Hippolytus, who withstood Aphrodite and devoted himself to the service of Artemis, to become Priapus, a fertility god generally depicted with a large, erect phallus. Originating in Matthew's pleasure in creating this female text and extending to the pleasure he imagines for the reader, the desire that emanates from this portrait becomes an explanation, making Helen's role in the Trojan War credible.

Similar to Matthew articulation of *pedestalized* and *wanton* rhetoric in his female portraits and conflation of verse and woman, Geoffrey explicitly joins language and woman throughout his treatise. Geoffrey, in fact, carries the analogy of text-as-woman one step farther, figuratively joining rhetoric as woman to rhetoric as clothing or ornament. After prescribing the care with which one should plan the composition of a poetic work, Geoffrey moves to the "offices of pen and tongue," which then "clothe" the cognitive manner with words: "When a plan has sorted out the subject in the secret places of your mind, then let Poetry come to clothe your material with words" (Kopp, 35) ["Non manus ad calamum praeceps, non lingua sit ardens," "suspendat earum / Officium" and "Mentis in arcano cum rem digesserit ordo, / Materiam verbis veniat vestire poesis" (Faral, 198–199)]. Poetry, as a series of techniques, plays the handmaiden grooming the ideas into artistic form wherein the words are alternatively body parts or items of clothing: "a head of tousled hair" or "a body clothed in rags" can "displeas[e]," while "a single blemish mars a whole face" (Kopp, 35) ["ne caput hirtis / Crinibus, aut corpus pannosa veste, vel ulla / Ultima displiceant" and "unica menda / Totalem faciem difformat" (Faral, 199)]. When thought becomes incarnate, it assumes the fleshly trappings of the feminine, a body veiled in the artifice of clothing. Geoffrey threads a sense of the feminine embodiment of poetry throughout his discussion of both arrangement and the rhetorical devices of amplification: Distinguishing between natural and artificial order, Geoffrey describes the former as "barren" and the latter as

"fertile" (Kopp, 36), with the poem's beginning acting as a "triform mother" (Kopp, 38) activated by the male poet or father of the text; moreover, this gestational metaphor extends through Geoffrey's depiction of *descriptio*, aptly presented as pregnant ["sterilis," "Fertilis," and "matre triformi" (Faral, 200–201)].[52] Embodying the fecundity necessary to *amplificatio*, description is "pregnant with words" and "large" yet "delightful" or "handsome" (Galyon, 53) ["Septima succedit praegnans descriptio verbis, / Ut dilatet opus. Sed, cum sit lata, sit ipsa / Laeta: pari forma speciosa sit et spatiosa" (Faral, 214)]. Fertile verse results from contained copiousness, a theory mirrored in Geoffrey's *exemplum* of female portraiture.

Like Matthew's portrait of Helen, Geoffrey's depiction "of a full picture of feminine beauty" acts as a mini *ars poetria*, containing the various dicta for constructing poetry in general and *effictio* in particular: Both must be artfully and colorfully decorated, ordered, and polished.[53] Herein Geoffrey prescribes the construction of functionally ornamental rhetoric and its analogue, functionally ornamental woman, in his articulation of *pedestal rhetoric*. The prescriptive nature of the first lines of this description mirror Geoffrey's introductory pronouncements about poetic composition: "Let Nature's compass describe first a circle for her head" (Kopp, 54), and "[l]et the mind's inner compass circumscribe the whole area of the subject matter in advance" (Kopp, 34) ["Praeformet capiti Naturae circinus orbem" and "Circinis interior mentis praecircinet omne / Materiae spatium" (Faral, 214, 199)]. Color, like Poetry as a handmaiden, then delineates the various components of the being (poem or woman): "Let the color of gold be gilt in her hair; let lilies spring in the eminence of her forehead; let the appearance of her eyebrow be like dark blueberries; let a milk-white path divide the twin arches" (Kopp, 54) ["Crinibus irrutilet color auri; lilia vernent / In specula frontis; vaccinia nigra coaequet / Forma supercilii; geminos intersecet arcus / Lactea forma viae" (Faral, 214)].

Coloring in these body parts must be planned and ordered like the "boundary line" from which "the plan [of the poem] ought to run" (Kopp, 35): "Let strict rule govern the shape of the nose, and neither stop on this side of, nor transgress, what is fitting" (Kopp, 54) ["quo limite debeat ordo / Currere" and "castiget regula nasi / Ductum, ne citra sistat vel transeat aequum" (Faral, 199, 214)]. Returning to "coloring" the object thus depicted, Geoffrey advises that "her eyes shine, both of them, either with gems' light or with light like that of a star," "her face rival the dawn, neither red nor bright," "her mouth gleam," and "her lips, as if pregnant, rise in a swell, and let them be moderately red: warm, but with a gentle heat" (Kopp, 54) ["radient utrimque gemelli / Luce smaragdina vel sideris instar ocelli; / Aemula sit facies Aurorae, nec rubicundae / Nec nitidae, sed utroque simul neutroque colore. / Splendeat os forma spatii brevis et quasi cycli / Dimidii; tanquam praegnantia labra tumore / Surgant, sed modico rutilent, ignita, sed igne / Mansueto" (Faral, 214)]. The

lips of a woman thus described should moderately swell in a manner similar to proper dilation achieved through the sexualization of *descriptio* itself, as if pregnant. Lips in Geoffrey's example, like that of Matthew, are a site of sexual promise and allure; moreover, they herein are conflated with the genital lips, equally alluding to the fecund promise and/or danger of female sexuality and such description on display. Moreover, other body parts activate the relatively passive promise encoded in these earlier attributes: "From her crystal throat let a kind of radiance go forth which can strike the eyes of the beholder and madden his heart" (Kopp, 54) ["Ex cristallino procedat gutture quidam / Splendor, qui possit oculos referire videntis / Et cor furari" (Faral, 215)]. In Geoffrey's articulation as well as that of Matthew, the desire percolating under the surface of the *descriptio* of *pedestalized rhetoric* erupts from the object thus being described, becoming at once Barthes's "figuration" and "representation": Verbal display of beauty as a portrait, a rhetorical device, becomes the site of pleasure (figuration), while the woman thus presented is believable within the representation of desire that the author wishes to make credible (representation).

Geoffrey sublimates this promise, however, with his subsequent focus on decorum and containment of the body parts from neck to waist: Her teeth should be "of one proportion," her neck "a column which bears up the mirror of her face on high," "her shoulders adjust[ing] together with a certain discipline," and her waist "narrowly confined, circumscribable by the small reach of a hand" (Kopp, 54) ["dentes niveos compaginet ordo," "quae speculum vultus supportet in altum," "Quadam se lege coaptent / Ne jaceant quasi descendant," and "Sit locus astrictus zonae, brevitate pugilli / Circumscriptibilis" (Faral, 214–215)]. Not only do these epithets presented as advice suggest containment, but they also invite the mind to envision grasping this partitioned body by measuring at least a waist with the hand. Geoffrey adds, "I am silent about the parts below: more fitting does the imagination speak of these than the tongue" (Kopp, 54) ["Taceo de partibus infra: / Aptius hic loquitur animus quam lingua" (Faral, 215)]. Although seemingly more reticent, like Matthew, Geoffrey herein invites us to "the most erotic portion of a body where the garment gapes . . . the intermittance of skin flashing between two articles of clothing . . . the staging of appearance-as-disappearance" (Barthes, 10). At the same time, the conclusion to this "full picture" renders the construction of description and poetry synonymous: "And thus let beauty descend from the top of the head to the very roots, and everything together being highly polished down to the fingernail" (Kopp, 55) ["Et sic / A summo capitis descendat splendor ad ipsam / Radicem, totumque simul poliatur ad unguem" (Faral, 215)]. Just as in clothing the body of the text with words, the "turns of phrase" in portraiture should be polished lest "any minor detail be displeasing" (Kopp, 35) ["vel ulla / Ultima displiceant" (Faral, 199)].

Immediately following this prescriptive rather than descriptive partitioning of the female body, Geoffrey offers a "clothed" version of this beauty, highlighting the motivation for such portraiture and alluding to the energy latent in the former description, the enticement of *wanton rhetoric*.[54] He infuses the whole with "gold," using the word five times in the initial lines: Her braids are to be "entwined with gold," "a band of gold" is "to give radiance to the brightness of her brow," "her mantle" is "to burn with gold," "[g]old" is "to circle her fine fingers, and a jewel prouder than gold pour forth its beams" (Kopp, 55) ["Nexilis a tergo coma compta recomplicet aurum; / Irradiet frontis candori circulus auri," "chlamis ardeat auro," and "circinet aurum / Subtiles digitos et gemma superbior auro / Diffundat radios" (Faral, 215–216)]. In addition to coloring the objectified female thus depicted, the golden accoutrements both contain and conform her body, entwining and encircling it.

Luminous objects also act as a transition to the remainder of the description, which focuses upon the reader's reception of the portrait: "Who is there who is ignorant of the fire in this torch? Who is there who has not discovered this flame?" (Kopp, 55) ["Quis in hac face nesciat ignes? / Quis non inveniat flammam?" (Faral, 216)]. The brilliance and heat evoked through gold and fire suggest the allure of the feminized language as woman and woman as text, and Geoffrey explicitly reminds the reader of the desire encoded in both. Geoffrey constitutes this erotic body through an "open list of the fires of language," articulating a "body of bliss" (Barthes, 16). Geoffrey, then, provides a list of female figures whom Jove would not have "sported with," "deflowered" or "deceived" had he seen this vision, asserting a rationale for female portraiture: "He [Jove] would have courted her alone and seen all others in a single woman" (Kopp, 55) ["Si Jupiter illis / Temporibus videsset eam, nec in Amphitrione / Luderet Alcmenam; nec sumeret ora Dianae, / Ut te fraudaret, Calixto, flore; nec Yo / Nube, nec Antiopam satyro, nec Agenore natam / Tauro, Messione nec te pastore, vel igne / Ansepho genitam, vel te Deionis in angue, / Vel Ledam cygno, vel Danem falleret auro. / Hanc unam coleret omnesque videret in una" (Faral, 216)]. The purpose of describing a woman and creating ornate discourse begins with the utility of *pedestalized rhetoric*, credibility, but extends to the evocation of desire as the means of producing this credibility, the use of *wanton rhetoric*. A convincing and evocative poem or description makes the seduction or rape of the gods more credible, just as the portrait of Helen renders Paris's actions understandable.

Fearing the very power Matthew and Geoffrey find latent in feminized language, John of Garland seems to waver between the necessity for and a deep distrust of rhetorical ornamentation in his *Parisiana poetria*; moreover, his differentiation between two types of female discourse, *Marian* versus *wanton rhetoric*, corresponds to this ambivalent attitude. Recalling John's preference for *naked discourse* in his explanatory text and dictaminal examples coupled with

his use of ornamented language in the service of divine truths or subject matter, we can discern that this distrust stems from the dangers he sees inherent in the feminine whether it be language or woman.[55] His examples allude to the deficiencies he sees in feminized language as mediator of truth and the dangerous enticement of decorated discourse and female flesh. The postlapserian nature of language and woman, the misogynistic tradition that blames Eve for the fallen state of humanity and language, directly influences John's discourse. As Cox asserts, "the feminine flesh is subjugated by hierarchical protocols to an inferior, disdained position and regarded with revulsion by patristic theologians and by those who embrace their tenets" (7). Aligning himself with said patristic theologians as one who embraces "Christian integrity" rather than a Ciceronian "artificer" (Lawler, 93), John vilifies the ornate discourse, or *wanton rhetoric*, of secular poets: "Flee the painted songs of the poets, which spout poisons and whose filthy debaucheries contaminate the pure" (Lawler, 207) ["Nequaquam sub lingue Tulliane larua uenator fictitii, sed integritatis Christiane" and "Picta poetarum fuge carmina, que uenena fundunt, / Luxos lutosi polluuntque puros" (Lawler, 92, 206)]. While "heavenly reading . . . brings salvation" (Lawler, 207), the "painted songs" play the siren, enticing and destroying the reader ["Lectio celestis placeat tibi, lectio salutis" (Lawler, 206)]. Furthermore, John explicitly links the fallen, carnal state of language with the nature of women in his example of "chastisement": "[t]he lips of a whore drop honey, but her depths give wormwood (cf. Prov 5:2–4)" (Lawler, 15) ["De castigacione. Meretricis labia fauum distillant, sed absinthium eius nouissima subministrant" (Lawler, 14)]. While the surface of woman and language may be sweet, the inner content brings spiritual rot.

Much later in the treatise, John writes, "In death's eternal kingdom Woman is enthroned forever; from her mouth flows the gall that is taken for nectar, and kills the body and soul. Woman is lovely, beautiful—and destroys everything through lust" (Lawler, 217) ["Eterno regno prefertur femina, cuius / In ore nectar creditur, quo fel fluit / Quod corpus mentemque necat; mulier speciosa / Formosa queque destruit libidine" (Lawler, 216)]. The desire *wanton rhetoric* creates emanates from woman's mouth, feminized language. John further conflates ornamental rhetoric as corrupted language and woman as fallen being in his "Ode on the Conflict of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, Sung by Calliope" in which "[t]he world, the evil spirit, and the flesh wage painful wars on the strong soldier" "entic[ing]," "weaken[ing], "break[ing]" and "ruin[ing]" him through "a joke," "idleness," "laughter," and "the sound of a lute, a girl's hair, wine, food" (Lawler, 211) ["Oda de Conflictu Carnis, Mundi, et Demonis, quam Decantavit Calliope" and "Mundus, spiritus, et caro / Forti bella mouent tristia milite. / Incautos oculos foris / Mundus blandiciis mitibus allicit . . . Belligerans iocus / Furtim debilitat, frangit et ocium, / Mentis menia diruit / Risus, uox cithara, trica, merum, cibus" (Lawler, 210)]. In this list of dangerous enticements to the

fleshly appetite, John equates verbal and nonverbal sensory appeals; "the eager flesh leaps to comply" with the message sent by both feminized language and female attributes (Lawler, 211) ["Paret prosiliens caro" (Lawler, 210)]. John "materializ[es] the pleasures of the text, in making it *an object of pleasure like the others*" and "relat[ing] the text to the 'pleasures' of life . . . and to it join[ing] the personal catalogue of our sensualities" (Barthes, 58–59).

John continues this preoccupation with the carnality of language and woman in his advice on the proper subject matter of poetry: "the amiable Flesh joins herself to her beloved World. Those whom the King bought with His blood, indeed, redeemed by His death, the pomp of the World presses while enticing Flesh murmurs; fear the ambushes of Satan morning and evening; lest you struggle in vain in the end, sing the things that should be sung" (Lawler, 69) ["Se Mundo caro iungit amica Caro. / Sanguine quos emit Rex, immo morte redemit, / Mundi pompa premit dum Caro blanda fremit; / Insidias Sathane formida vespere mane; / Ne certes uane fine, canenda cane" (Lawler, 68)]. Recall the *Marian rhetoric* and reading that John positions as a corrective to the allure of the dangers of the fleshly woman or text. Following Augustinian precepts about judicious reading, John would suggest that "reason control appetite, so the 'masculine' reader must resist the temptation embodied by the 'feminine' text" (Jager, 84). For John, carnal desire creates "a form of the forbidden" (Foucault, 68).

If artificial enhancement cloaks the body of the text and adorns the woman, covering the reality of this flesh figured as female, the "wormwood" John of Garland evokes, then Matthew of Vendôme actualizes that reality in Beroe: Beroe represents the gradual disembodying of *wanton rhetoric*, paradoxically achieved through increased emphasis on the body as a physical entity, the eventual slide back into chaotic formlessness, or, as John would state, "the rose is changed from Semele into Beroe and degenerates from its virgin state to take on the pallor of old age" (Lawler, 49) ["sed a Semele rosa mutatur in Beroen, et a uirgineo statu degenerans pallorem induit senectutis" (Lawler, 48)].[56] As such, Matthew's Beroe "is a mangy cur, a pallid social outcast, / Horrid in appearance, the work of Nature gone mad" (Galyon, 44) ["Est Beroe rerum scabies, faex livida, vultu / Horrida, Naturae desipientis opus" (Faral, 130)]. Beroe simultaneously manifests the ravages of debauchery prefigured in Matthew's Davus and John's moral admonishments, enacts the reversal of creation and the inversion of beauty, and reflects the conception of female physicality as degenerate—all of which are synonymous. Momentarily recall that these theorists conflate beauty, woman, and verse through the requisite components of order, proportion, color, and light in a cosmology in which God creates through the imposition of those characteristics on formless chaos, man mimics that act as *homo artifex*, and the created beings and artifacts manifest their worth by emanating those properties. By contrast, "weighed down with wasting away,"

Beroe's "body is filthy to look at and repulsive to touch" (Galyon, 44); moreover, she is the "specter" that looms behind Matthew, Geoffrey, and John's reference to adornment as cover ["larvae / Consona, conspectu sordida, tabe gravis, / Corpore terrabilis, contactu foeda" (Faral, 131)].[57]

From Beroe's "bald" head and "skin like rust" to her "gouty feet" (Galyon, 44–45) ["Pelle, pilis caput est nudum, ferrugo rigescit" and "cogitque ciragra" (Faral, 131–132)], Matthew follows a fairly typical head-to-toe description in this *effictio* of Beroe, but he does so in a rather slippery manner. For example, the filth that flows from various portions of Beroe's countenance acts as a conduit into the description of the various parts: the "[d]irt flows down her menacing brow—pale and unsightly," leading to "[b]ushy brows bristling above bleary eyes" that "make the upper / Half of her face a thicket of grime and filth," while "[h]er eyebrows reaching halfway down to cover her nose / Vainly try to offset a thin and wasted neck" (Galyon, 44) ["Fronte minax, turpis, lurida, sorde fluens. / Silva supercilii protenditur hispida, sordem / Castigat, fruticis obice iter. / Triste supercillium tabes retinere laborat / Cervicis, nares progrediendo tegit" (Faral, 131)]. The slippage of parts conducting the eye down her visage continues: "[h]er ears are packed with dirt; only the eyes / Do not seem to teem with worms. From them slime drips. / Her pale eyes have bloody matter running from them" (Galyon, 44) ["Auris sorde fluit, non orbiculata redundat / Vermibus, huc illuc pendet obesa madens. / Livescunt oculi, sanies decurrit, inundat / Fluxus, lippa regit lumina, faece replet" (Faral, 131)]. Beroe's face alone would suggest the early onset of the body's decay in death, a return to dust, and the fate of the carnal body. This sense of Beroe as the living dead continues in the "hungry flies" that "her eyelids like mousetraps imprison in little baskets / Of foul matter" (Galyon, 44) ["Dum volitant avidae circum sua pascua muscae, / Palpebra fiscatas muscipulare solet" (Faral, 131)]. Her body resembles a carcass upon which worms and flies feed. Matthew, thus, ironically creates a text of pleasure by appealing to the reader's sense of *dis*pleasure.

The elision of body parts through disfigurement and fetid matter continues for a total of twenty-four lines, creating an overwhelming sense of primordial—no, primeval—ooze. For instance, "[h]er fetid flat nose that lies along / Her face at a distorted angle drips pestilential mucus," and [t]his flow keeps her upper lip wet as the thick froth / From her nose returns to its diseased host" (Galyon, 44) ["Naris sima jacet, foetens, obliqua meatu / Distorto, flamen exitiale vomit. / Proxima labra madent, fluxus distillat et aegrum / Naris ad hospitium pendula spuma redit" (Faral, 131)]. Moving to the areas adjacent to nose and lips, Matthew expounds on Beroe's cheeks "stiff and cracked with wrinkles," through which one can only distinguish her eyes because of "[t]he rheumy sickness welling up in them" (Galyon, 44) ["In rugas crispata riget gena foeda, lituris / Obsita, quas oculos tabe fluente notat" (Faral, 131)]. The flux of this face continues in her liquefied lips "drooping" and "pale," as "Stygian saliva manures

her mouth's / Curving lines" (Galyon, 44) ["Pendula pallescunt et marcida labra, saliva / Cerberei rictus stercorat aegra sinus" (Faral, 131)]. While the liquid has seemed to congeal on Beroe's teeth in a "film," they are "[d]oubly destroyed by her stinking breath and by worms" (Galyon, 44) ["In dentes rubigo furit, quos spiritus aeger / Et tineae duplici perditione premunt" (Faral, 131)]. Beroe's halitosis would point to an inner decay, as would the worms wiggling from this orifice—a gradual disembodying of feminized rhetoric similar to the physical and discursive effects written on Davus's body and analogous to John's assertions about the effect debauched poetry and language have on the body.

Compared to the emphasis Matthew places on the oozing distortion of Beroe's face, he seemingly abbreviates the remainder of her corpus; nevertheless, this erasure of the body before our very eyes—achieved ironically through a fixation on its very physicality—further depends on the antithesis of order, proportion, light, and color. In the first few lines of the portrait, Matthew refers to Beroe's "itchy neck," and he now returns to the "scabbiness" that causes this itch, extending the visual of this body part to include a "repulsive mass of knots, / Sores, and streaming corruption" (Galyon, 44) ["Cervicis scabies" and "Non parcit scabies collo vicina, quod horret / Nodis, quod sordet ulcere, tabe natat" (Faral, 131)]. Her body, a veritable bag of "skin and bones," is delineated by "[e]nlarged veins" that "[d]raw and crisscross her chest, while the flabby skin of her breasts makes them look like deflated bladders" (Galyon, 44) ["Livida costarum macies exire videtur; / Pellis conqueritur carnis egere latus" and "Venis distrahitur pectus simulatque mamillas / Consona vesicae panniculosa cutis" (Faral, 131)]. In the flesh, Beroe is John of Garland's woman who is enthroned in death's eternal kingdom, as "[h]er stomach swells out with sores which / The nearby Lethe, the doorway to her lower regions, / Stirs up" (Galyon, 44) ["Turgescit stomachus scabie, quam proxima Lethe / Suscitat" (Faral, 131)]. She is a humpbacked "wretched chaos of a woman" (44) emitting "sulfurous" matter and blood into her "chamber pot" (Galyon, 45) ["inferni janua, triste Chaos" and "Emeritis hirsuta pilis hiat olla lacunae / Consona, sulfurei gurgitis unda rubet" (Faral, 131–132)]. Knees replete with a "painful flow of burning pus," shins "mangy" and "worm-eaten," and "gouty feet" completing the portrait (Galyon, 45) ["Est genuum compago rigens, imbuta fluenti / Diluvio, spargi se Flegetonte dolet. / Tibia vermescit scabie, cogitque ciragra / Reciprocos digitos esse podagra pedes" (Faral, 132)], Beroe has not one foot but a whole body in the grave. Lest the reader miss Matthew's equation of Beroe with death and evil, he adds, "To gaze on her body is horrible—there / The underworld lies hidden, a lake brimming with filth" (Galyon, 45) ["Sentibus horrescit descensus ad ilia, latrat / Cerberus, exundat faece lacuna patens" (Faral, 132)]. To gaze on Matthew's *effictio* of the consequences of woman as flesh is to realize the slide into anti-body prefigured in the Fall and embodied in a *wanton rhetoric* defined as dangerous, debauched body.

Domesticated Rhetoric

In Eberhard the German's *Laborintus*, we find another embodiment of John of Garland's fears: Against the force of *wanton rhetoric*, *domesticated rhetoric* is feeble. Eberhard's focus on the power of *wanton rhetoric* results from his conceptualization of a positive yet inefficacious *domesticated rhetoric* in which grammar and rhetoric are personified as wet nurses and/or nursemaids. In the first section of the *Laborintus*, Mother Nature "hands the mother of the child the models of his tasks, selected from the foremost part of her brain" (Carlson, 7) ["Dicit et impingit matri simulacra laborum, / Quos cella capitis anteriore legit" (Faral, 339)].[58] The texts she gives to the mother and those that are absent illustrate the privileging of grammar over rhetoric and point to the delimited power of discourse in Eberhard's construction: "The two treatises of Cicero to whom the teacher of rhetoric is slave, flowery and adorning the beauty of language" are noticeably absent, whereas Donatus's primer, representing the art of grammar, is foregrounded (Carlson, 7–8) ["Non Ciceronis adest pingens sermonis honorem, / Cui rhetor servit, florida carta duplex" and "Donatos vertit, lacrimarum fonte fluentes, / Qui dantur pueris post elementa novis" (Faral, 339, 340)]. The proper foundation for the young student would begin, then, with the study of grammar and progress through the other arts, but Fortune, "the fickle goddess whose home is the world," immediately tells the newborn: "Through me the flower of rhetoric withers, the grammarian's toil is vain and the art of speaking is entombed" (Carlson, 9) ["Huic dea quam sedes orbicularis habe" and "'Per me rhetoricus flos, grammaticus labor, artis / Garrulitas tumulat, evacuatur, aret'" (Faral, 340)]. Through Eberhard's Fortune, the reader realizes the hold *wanton rhetoric* has taken on the world:

> Those men flourish who with the weapons of their tongue know how to misrepresent righteous causes and to justify unrighteous ones. Those men flourish whom the beating of a weak pulse enriches urinae sedimen sterculeusque color. Hypocrites flourish, those imitators of true scholars who make shadows with the tree trunk and are slaves to love of money. Jesters flourish, the lowest dregs of mankind, whom the crowd flatters and who please their masters with their empty chatter. Flatterers flourish, whose tongues produce honey and who overpower unfortunates by treachery (Carlson, 10) ["Florent qui jaculis linguae pervertere causas / Justas, injustas justificare sciunt. / Florent quos ditat infirmae pulsio venae, / Urinae sedimen sterculeusque color. / Florent hypocritae, sapientum simia, trunco / Qui faciunt umbram, quos ligat aeris amor. / Florent faex hominum scurrae, quos curia lactat, / Qui dominis linguae garrulitate placent. / Florent palpones, quorum sub melle venenum / Lingua parit, miseros proditione premit" (Faral, 341)].

The world distorts the tools of grammar and rhetoric, with the power of discourse being deployed for misrepresentation, falsehoods, and flattery; therefore,

rhetoric, being falsely used, becomes empty, deceitful, and treacherous—the enticing, destructive "honey" of *wanton rhetoric* feared by John of Garland.

Philosophy, the mother of Grammar, nonetheless, places the child/schoolmaster under the nurturing guidance of Grammar as the "reasoning-power begins to mature" in the boy: "The eldest sister among you, with breasts full of the milk of human knowledge, stands at the very threshold of the ascent. She implants the seeds of word formation and explains what letters can themselves produce musical sounds and what cannot" (Carlson, 11–12) ["Pubescit ratio" and "'Inter vos gradus est soror in limine prima / Primo, quae lactis ubera plena gerit'" (Faral, 341 and 342)]. In addition to word formation, Grammar introduces "the syntax of simple words" and the "join[ing] together parts of speech fashioning a figure of speech and a trope" (Carlson, 12) ["'Simplicium modum generat, conglutinat apte / Sermonis partes, scema tropumque facit'" (Faral, 342)]. As the foundation for all other types of knowledge, the child/schoolmaster learns his trade by suckling at the breast of grammar: "Thus your herald who is summoned by Fate's decree, may drink temperately from Grammar's full breasts" (Carlson, 13) ["'Vester sic praeco, qui fati lege vocatur, / Ubera grammaticae sobrietate bibat'" (Faral, 343)]. When "[t]he boy approaches the older sister's breast and draws the first yields of milk," he learns the alphabet and the parts of speech, "he drains out what parts are placed at the beginning and the end (of the sentence)" and "[f]rom the remaining richer breast he drinks in the reason why Diction is wedded to his companion, Grammar" (Carlson, 13–14) ["Gremium subit iste prioris / Germanae, lactis primitiasque trahit" and "Sugit quae partes sint prima sede locatae, / Quae sint quae sede posteriore sedent; / Ubere de reliquo bibit uberiore, maritet / Dictio se sociae qua ratione suae" (Faral, 343–344)]. Suckling and edifying himself in matters of greater complexity, he "drinks" knowledge of the pleasing construction of words, the "congruity of what the sense and words means," and "what style excuses imperfection and all the distinct forms each figure of speech contains" (Carlson, 14) ["Quae sit festiva, quae non constructio vocum, / Et quot sint species illius inde bibit; / Quae sit congruitas sensus et vocis, utramque / Quae teneat, quae non, synthesis, inde bibit; / Quis modus excuset vitium, quot quaeque figura / Distinctas species continet, inde bibit" (Faral, 344)]. Like Bernard of Clairvaux, Eberhard uses breasts as a "symbol of the pouring out towards others . . . of instruction" (Bynum, 115). Lactating grammar as a linguistic wet nurse, one of Eberhard's incarnations of *domesticated rhetoric*, is accompanied by Poesy, who "bears the burden of further duty," "explains the law of meter," "teaches what a foot is" and "teaches that diverse matters are not to be delineated in the same meter, but each subject is allotted its own" (Carlson, 17) ["Grammaticae famulans subit ingeniosa Poesis: / Officii confert ulterioris onus. / Explicat haec legem metri, quid pes docet" and "Quod diversa metro non describuntur eodem, / Sed res quaeque suo sit propriata docet" (Faral, 345, 346)]. Poesy, in Eberhard's rendition, includes all subject

matters and is attended by Philosophy: "My subject matter includes all that the circumference of earth embraces. Philosophy dances attendance upon me" (Carlson, 17) ["'Est mihi materia quidquid capit ambitus orbis; / Ludit in obsequio Philosophia meo'" (Faral, 346)]. With the stranglehold Fortune suggests sophistic rhetoric has on the world, all of this edification would seem for naught. Through the homely image of a wet nurse, Eberhard demonstrates the positive fecundity of the trivium, yet *domesticated rhetoric* as a type marks the demise of an informed, truthful language in a world that privileges John of Garland's worst nightmare—language that whitewashes the truth has won.

Discursive Flesh and Its Hermeneutic Import

Addressing the "chronology of this perceptive movement," Murphy states: "It begins rather hesitantly, with Matthew of Vendôme about 1175, reaches a peak—its most 'rhetorical' stage—with Gervase of Melkley and Geoffrey of Vinsauf around 1210, begins to falter with the abortive attempt at collation by John of Garland two decades later, and sputters out almost cynically shortly after mid-century with Eberhard the German" (Murphy, 162). Yet, while Murphy later suggests that this movement "flickered out in the conscious disgust of Eberhard" (182), it is important to note that he adds:

> Medieval grammar, then, may be seen as a fairly unified body of preceptive materials, taking for itself the whole province of language use in prosaic, metrical, and rhythmical forms. . . . Implicit in the medieval grammarian's jurisdictional claim was a deep-rooted tension between language as a whole on one hand, and the particular purposive uses of language on the other (191).

This tension fuels the disparate gendered discursive formations delineated within this study; furthermore, "the practical needs of the poets, letter-writers, and preachers continued to build up specific preceptive traditions suited to the exigencies of those fields" (Murphy, 192). Rather than "flicker[ing] out in disgust," then, the discursive strategies of the authors herein analyzed shifted increasingly toward an appeal to reason and truth and back to a means–end pairing resulting from a gradual distrust of the form–content focus of the earlier works and the different foci of the authors themselves. However, the tension between the means–end and form–content was always present within the works themselves as seen in the consistent blurring of "figuration" and "representation" in the gendered embodiments of discourse. Looking toward the *ars dictaminis* and the *ars praedicandi*, the two movements that Murphy labels "the hallmarks of medieval rhetorical development" (193), as well as other medieval texts, we can continue to trace how word is made flesh, whether that flesh leads to pleasure or bliss, and what antibodies are formulated to protect language and reader alike from the perceived dangers of the body.

Admittedly, the hermeneutic paradigm for reading the *artes poetriae* offered above contains gaps that warrant fuller explication of the rhetorical, cosmological,

epistemological, aesthetic, and ocular theories that undergird and differentiate the treatises; however, the intent herein is to articulate the continuum of linguistic embodiment as a constituitive element of the discursive practice of the arts themselves by holding in suspension, as Foucault suggests, the "traces" of that embodiment, thereby revealing the space wherein the rhetoricians employ bodies as discursive events and constructing a theoretical space within which we might further examine the "fragmentary" compostitional theory of these works. For in the very fragments that flash in this body of work, we find the twelfth- and thirteenth-century materialization of Barthes's "writing aloud," the aim of which is a "language lined with flesh, a text where we can hear the grain of the throat, the patina of consonants, the voluptuousness of vowels, a whole carnal stereophony: the articulation of the body of the tongue, not that of meaning, of language" (66–67). Looking at the dizzying array of rhetorical techniques that are, indeed, the focus of a great deal of the treatises, is that not what we find—advice that would lead to discourse that mimics the "grain of the throat" in its use of the rhetorical figures and colors, the very transsumption of language? In their celebration and denial of decorated discourse, Matthew, Geoffrey, and John "make us hear in their materiality, their sensuality, the breath, the gutturals, the fleshiness of the lips" (Barthes, 67). As such, their language, a textual mimicry of ancient "actio" in the reader's imagination, "granulates, it crackles, it caresses, it grates, it cuts, it comes: that is bliss" (Barthes, 67). These treatises, then, advise the writer in the construction of not just the text of pleasure but one that grants the possibility of bliss.

If text equals body and vice versa, reading these discourses should involve a realization of the different discursive embodiments including the cosmologies, epistemologies, and aesthetics that produced them as well as the genres with which they are associated. Such an understanding of the various corporealities would likewise allow us to examine the various embodiments in medieval poetry, sermons, and prose, addressing the admixtures that often occur when authors place these theorized rhetorics in narratives or other discursive enunciations. Analyzing the bodies thus described in terms of the theories that led to their materialization will allow us to discern the knotty associations among genre, gender, language, and looking. If as Barthes suggests, the author "seeks out the reader" in the creation of a particular "site of bliss," we must track the authorial motivations and techniques related to discursive desire as they manifest themselves in the language not just "lined with flesh" but given form through that very corporeality. The somaticized text bespeaks its origin, but to borrow Burns's term, what does this "bodytalk" profess?

Notes

1. An earlier version of the ideas of this article occurred in abstract form under the same title as part of "Rhetoric and History," an e-seminar of the New Chaucer Society's 2000 Congress (July 13–17, 2000) in London. As they are

beyond the scope and length of this treatment, I do not herein propose to argue the cosmological, epistemological, and aesthetic aspects of these texts; instead, I wish to present the general gendered discursive paradigms as framed by brief references to the aforementioned theoretical concerns, which I elsewhere argue in further depth and which will constitute a portion of a book-length study of gendered embodiment in these treatises. See Robin R. Hass, "Naked Truth, Feminized Language, and Poetics Paradigms of Femininity from the Rhetoricians to Chaucer" (Diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1995)—hereafter cited in the text as Hass 1995—and "The Poet as *Artifex* and the Creation of a Feminized Language, Subject, and Text," *Proceedings of the Medieval Association of the Midwest* 4 (1997), 16–38; hereafter cited in the text as Hass 1997.

2. For example, in *Les arts poétique du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1924), Edmond Faral made Geoffrey's, Matthew's, and Eberhard's Latin texts available (hereafter cited in the text as Faral), while Charles Sears Baldwin, *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic* (to 1400) (1928, reprinted Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1959)—hereafter cited in the text as Baldwin; Richard McKeon, "Rhetoric in the Middle Ages," *Speculum* 17 (1942), 1–32 (reprinted, with alterations, in *Critics and Criticism, Ancient and Modern*, ed. R. S. Crane [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952], 260–296); and Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953) provide early analysis of the texts' compositional theory. Translations of Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova* include Margaret F. Nims's *Poetria nova of Geoffrey of Vinsauf* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1967) and Jane Baltzell Kopp's "The New Poetics (*Poetria nova*)" in *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1971), 26–108 (hereafter cited in the text as Kopp), while two translations of Matthew's text exist: *Matthew of Vendôme: The Art of Versification*, trans. Aubrey E. Galyon (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1980) (hereafter cited in the text as Galyon), and *Matthew of Vendôme: Ars Versificatoria (The Art of the Versemaker)*, trans. Roger P. Parr (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1981)—hereafter cited in the text as Parr. Traugott Lawler provided the Latin original and a translation of John of Garland's treatise in *The Parisiana poetria of John of Garland* (New Haven, CT, London: Yale University Press, 1974)—hereafter cited in the text as Lawler—and Eberhard's work is only available in translation in Evelyn Carlson's "The *Laborintus* of Eberhard Rendered into English with Introduction and Notes" (M.A. thesis, Cornell University, 1930); hereafter cited in the text as Carlson. All Latin quotations and English translations from John of Garland's *Parisiana poetria* are taken from Lawler with citations listed parenthetically by page number.

   Later representational analyses of the compositional theory include Douglas Kelly, "Scope and Treatment of Composition in the Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Arts of Poetry," *Speculum* 41 (1966), 261–278 (hereafter cited in the text as Kelly 1966); *Medieval Imagination: Rhetoric and the Poetry of Courtly Love* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1972), 29–35, 47–56, 65–84 (hereafter cited in the text as Kelly 1972); and *The Arts of Poetry and Prose* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991)—hereafter cited in the text as Kelly 1991; Winthrop

Wetherbee's *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972); James J. Murphy's *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 162–176 (hereafter cited in the text as Murphy 1974); O. B. Hardison, *Classical and Medieval Literary Criticism: Translations and Interpretations* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1974), 6–15 (hereafter cited in the text as Hardison); Martin Camargo's "Rhetoric," in *The Seven Liberal Arts in the Middle Ages*, ed. David L. Wagner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 96–124 (hereafter cited in the text as Camargo); Brian Vickers's "Medieval Fragmentation," *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 214–253 (hereafter cited in the text as Vickers); and Rita Copeland's *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Traditions and Vernacular Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)—hereafter cited in the text as Copeland 1991.

3. Baldwin sees the arts of poetry as a "misapplication of rhetoric to poetic" (193); Murphy categorizes the works as "preceptive grammar" (1974, 162–193); Hardison cites evidence that would alternatively place the treatises in the arts of grammar or rhetoric (6–15, 125–126); Vickers places the works in grammar as part of what he sees as the "fragmentation" of rhetoric in the medieval period (231–232, 239–244); Kelly provides evidence that would place Matthew's and Eberhard's treatises in the grammatical tradition and Geoffrey's and John's in the rhetorical one (1966, 261–278, and 1991, 49–64); Camargo sees them fitting more accurately in the *ars grammatica* (105–107); Marjorie Curry Woods explains the manner in which "rhetorician" and "poet" appear as synonymous in the medieval period in "Literary Criticism in an Early Commentary on Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*," in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latins Bononensi*, ed. Richard Schoeck, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 37 (Binghamton, NY: MRTS, 1985), 667–673 (the volume hereafter cited in the text as Schoeck); and Copeland suggests that grammar restores rhetoric in these treatises (1991, 160–178). In fact, the aforementioned e-seminar's actual panel discussion at the New Chaucer Society 2000 Congress out of which many of the articles in this book grew focused on precisely the issues of defining medieval rhetoric and its purview. Clearly, the issue is persisent and central to the meaning of these texts.
4. While the scholarly works below do not address these arts of poetry in particular, the reader can gain a sense of the variety of analyses and applications of medieval constructions of gender, language, and the body in the following works completed in a little over a decade alone: Carolyn Dinshaw, *Chaucer's Sexual Poetics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989)—hereafter cited in the text as Dinshaw; Alexandre Leupin, *Barbarolexis: Medieval Writing and Sexuality* (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 1989)—hereafter cited in the text as Leupin 1989; E. Jane Burns, *Bodytalk: When Women Speak in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993)—hereafter cited in the text as Burns; Linda Lomperis and Sarah Stanbury, ed., *Feminist Approaches to the Body in Medieval Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); John H. Baldwin, *The Language of Sex: Five Voices from Northern France around 1200* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Susan Crane, *Gender and Romance in*

Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), especially 3–15; Sarah Kay and Miri Rubin, ed., *Framing Medieval Bodies* (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1994); Karma Lochrie, *Margery Kempe and Translations of the Flesh* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), especially 13–53—hereafter cited in the text as Lochrie; Clare A. Lees, *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); Jennifer Carpenter and Sally-Beth MacLean, ed., *Power of the Weak: Studies on Medieval Women* (Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995); *Premodern Sexualities*, ed. Louise Fradenburg and Carla Freccero (New York: Routledge, 1995); Anne Laskaya, *Chaucer's Approach to Gender in "The Canterbury Tales"* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1995), especially 1–43—hereafter cited in the text as Laskaya; Angela Jane Weisl, *Conquering the Reign of Femeny* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1995), especially 1–20; Catherine S. Cox, *Gender and Language in Chaucer* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997), especially 1–17—hereafter cited in the text as Cox; *Desiring Discourse: The Literature of Love Ovid through Chaucer*, ed. James J. Paxson and Cynthia A. Gravlee (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 1998); and *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Bonnie Wheeler (New York, London: Garland, 2000)—the volume hereafter cited in the text as Cohen and Wheeler.

5. Copeland 1991.
6. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 117; hereafter cited in the text as Foucault.
7. Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975), 27–28; hereafter cited in the text as Barthes.
8. For a discussion of the commentaries on Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova* as indicative of the school and university approaches, see Marjorie Curry Woods, "A Medieval Rhetoric Goes to School—and to the University: The Commentaries on the *Poetria nova*," *Rhetorica* 9.1 (1991), 55–65. In addition, see Ruth Mazo Karras, "Sharing Wine, Women and Song: Masculine Identity Formation in Medieval European Universities" (Cohen and Wheeler, 187–202), and *From Boys to Men*: *Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), especially 1–19 and 67–108, both of which address the university milieu's effect on masculine identity formation.
9. See Arthur W. Frank, "For a Sociology of the Body: An Analytical Review," in *The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory*, ed. Mike Featherstone, Mike Hepworth, and Bryan S. Turner (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991), 37–102. In *Body Talk: Philosophical Reflections on Sex and Gender* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), Jacquelyn N. Zita explicates her "borrow[ing] and reshap[ing]" of Frank's concepts as they apply to both embodiment and discursive practice: "I adapt Frank's notion of 'recursive structuration' to open a way of understanding the body as constituted by institutions, discourses, and corporeality. The corporeality of the body provides both a resource and a limit for embodiment. . . . Discursive practices provide cognitive mappings of the body's possibilities and limitations, which embodied subjectivities experience as if

already there by nature. Institutions are constituted in and through discursive practices that secure sites of enunciation, transformation, and legitimation through embodied social relations . . . this body is always already constituted in and through cultural discursivities and institutional practices. Thus, all three aspects—discursivities, institutions, corporealities—are in a relationship of mutual structuration that is always in the process of constituting itself. Hence, the action and effects of the bodies, are recursive, moving through and continuously re-constituting all three levels, as social structures both inform and make possible embodiments that in turn inform and make possible social structures and relations. This materially recursive process is the body" (223–224 note 16); hereafter cited in the text as Zita.

10. Judith Butler, "How Can I Deny That These Hands and This Body Are Mine?" in *Material Events: Paul de Man and the Afterlife of Theory*, ed. Tom Cohen, Barbara Cohen, J. Hillis Miller, and Andrzej Warminski (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 255; hereafter cited in the text as Butler 2001.
11. As Zita notes, this statement is an explanation of Elizabeth Meese's term "(sem)erotics," which Meese coined in relation to lesbian bodies in *(Sem)Erotics: Theorizing Lesbian Writing* (New York: New York University Press, 1992).
12. In "'Language lined with flesh': Rhetoric, Desire, and Pleasure in Medieval Arts of Poetry," a paper presented at the 2003 MMLA Convention in Chicago on November 9, 2003, I addressed the attention to pleasure and the potential for bliss in the compositional theories of Matthew, Geoffrey, and John: The rhetoricians materialize the pleasure of the text, creating analogies to other pleasurable aspects of life (primarily food, music, and the female body), actualize Barthes "writing aloud," provide rationale for specific pleasurable appeals (knowledge/understanding, enticement, relief of boredom, and avoidance of the reader's displeasure), and/or privilege avoidance of appetitive pleasure in the search for its spritual counterpart. Whether concerned with the pleasure of the word or a denial of a type of bliss it can afford, the rhetoricians do present an aesthetic of textual pleasure pointing to the possibility of bliss in their "language lined with flesh."
13. See Butler's discussion of the manner in which the body is simultaneously given and withheld through language (2001, 257).
14. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York, London: Routledge, 1990), 139; hereafter cited in the text as Butler 1990. In a later work, addressing Husserl's conception of "the intentionality of the act of imagining" in which he suggests that "objects appear to the imagination in some specific modality of their essence," Butler notes, "If this is so, then the imagination does not merely invent bodies, but its inventiveness is also a form of referentiality, that is, of contemplating the figure or image of bodies in their essential possibility" (Butler 2001, 265).
15. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. I (New York: Vintage, 1980), and Teresa De Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987). For further representative readings in the social construction of gender and embodiment, see Sherry Ortner and Harriet Whitehead, ed., *Sexual Meanings: The Cultural Construction*

of Gender and Sexuality (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Susan Rubin Suleiman, ed., *The Female Body in Western Culture* (Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press, 1985); Butler 1990 and *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993)—hereafter cited in the text as Butler 1993; Thomas Laquer, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press, 1990); Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994); Juliet Flower MacCannell and Laura Zakarin, ed., *Thinking Bodies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994); Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift, ed., *Mapping the Subject: Geographies of Cultural Transformation* (London, New York: Routledge, 1995), especially 3–11, 19–37; and Suzannah Biernoff, *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002)—hereafter cited in the text as Biernoff.

16. Ruth Evans, "Body Politics: Engendering Medieval Cycle Drama," in *Feminist Readings in Middle English Literature*, ed. Ruth Evans and Lesley Johnson (London, New York: Routledge, 1994), 125.
17. For general discussions of the Platonic influence in the poetic of the later Middle Ages, see J. Parent's *La doctrine de la création dans l'école de Chartres* (Paris, Ottawa: Institut d'Etudes Medievales d'Ottawa, 1938); Raymond Klibansky's *The Continuity of the Platonic Tradition during the Middle Ages* (London: Warburg Institute, 1939, reprinted Munchen: Kraus-Thomson Organization, 1981); Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny's "Le cosmos symbolique du xiie siècle" *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 28 (1953), 31–81; M-D. Chenu's *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, trans. Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1957); Winthrop Wetherbee's *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century: The Literary Influence of the School of Chartres* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1972); Brian Stock's *Myth and Science in the Twelfth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972); and Robert W. Hanning's "Ut Enim Faber . . . Sic Creator': Divine Creation as Context for Human Creativity in the Twelfth Century," in *Word, Picture, Spectacle*, ed. Clifford Davidson (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publication, 1984). Likewise, note Kelly's extended analysis of the Neoplatonic parallels between the divine and human creative acts as they are manifest in the arts of poetry (1991, 64–68, 92–96).
18. For an analysis of the manner in which Geoffrey's conception of the author as *artifex* and imagination as the site of invention and John's focus on the *causa efficiens*, reason, and the ethical purposes of texts necessarily lead to disparate embodiments of feminized language, see Hass 1997, 16–38. Further explication of the epistemological theories espoused in the arts of poetry occurs in Hass 1995.
19. According to Butler, "Although one might accept the proposition that the body is only knowable through language, that the body is given through language, it is never fully given in that way, and to say that it is given partially can only be understood if we also acknowledge that it is given, when it is given, in parts, that is, as it were, given and withheld at the same time, and language might be said to perform both of these operations" (Butler 2001, 257).

20. Marcia Colish, *The Mirror of Language: A Study in Medieval Theory of Knowledge* (Lincoln, London: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), 3; hereafter cited in the text as Colish. See also David L. Jeffrey's *By Things Seen: Reference and Recognition in Medieval Thought* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1979), especially his discussion of the difference between divine and human creation (33–34); hereafter cited in the text as Jeffrey.
21. All citations of Geoffrey's *Poetria nova* in English are from Kopp (hereafter cited in the text as Kopp); all Latin citations are taken from Faral. For general discussions of Geoffrey's treatise and compositional theory, see J. W. H. Atkins's *English Literary Criticism: The Medieval Phase* (London: Methuen, 1943); Murphy 74, 168–173; Kelly 1966, and "Theory of Composition in Medieval Narrative Poetry and Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova*," *Medieval Studies* 31 (1969), 117–148, and Kelly 1991; Ernest Gallo's "The *Poetria nova* of Geoffrey of Vinsauf," in *Medieval Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Medieval Eloquence*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978), 68–84; Peter Dronke's *The Medieval Poet and His World* (Rome: Edizioni Di Storia e Letteratura, 1984), 21–32; Alexandre Leupin, "Absolute Reflexivity: Geoffroi de Vinsauf," trans. Kate M. Cooper, in *Medieval Texts and Contemporary Readers*, ed. Laura A. Finke and Martin B. Shictman (Ithaca, NY, London: Cornell University Press, 1987), 120–141; and Marjorie Curry Woods's *An Early Commentary on the Poetria Nova of Geoffrey of Vinsauf* (New York, London: Garland, 1985).
22. This ability to signify an abstract body through reference to a material body is the subject of D. Vance Smith's introductory paragraph of "Body Doubles: Producing the Masculine *Corpus*," in Cohen and Wheeler: "From Christ himself came the notion that a man could inhabit a physical body yet signify another abstract, powerful corpus" (3); hereafter cited in the text as Smith.
23. Glen C. Arbery, "Adam's First Word and the Failure of Language in *Paradisio* XXXIII," in *Sign, Sentence, Discourse: Language in Medieval Thought and Literature*, ed. Julian Wasserman and Lois Roney (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1989), 36.
24. Despite the distinct possibility of further physical description given the period in which Geoffrey wrote his treatise, the sense of Christ's body without articulated form contrasts with the descriptions informed by affective spirituality as discussed in Carolyn Walker Bynum's *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1982)—hereafter cited in the text as Bynum 1982—and *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1991). See also Biernoff, 133—164.
25. For discussions of this Pauline concept, see Jeffrey, 8–10.
26. Butler notes, "After all, the text quite literally leaves the authorial body behind, and yet there one is, on the page, strange to oneself" (2001, 263).
27. As Leupin argues, "The new spirit of Christ ('Spiritus emissus, noves hospes,' [1215]) thus becomes the anologon of Geoffroi's poetics, or vice versa. Further, the assimilation smacks of a certain perversity: though the *Poetria* has assumed an eschatological tone here, its primary intention is to resuscitate ancient

textuality rather than save souls" (1989, 132). Addressing Augustinian exegesis on the Incarnation, Colish states: "God creates the world and man through his Word, and he takes on humanity in the Word made flesh so that human words may take on divinity, thereby bringing man and the world back to God" (26).

28. For an extensive analysis of the manner in which medieval authors "used the Fall to address practical and theoretical problems of language relating to literature, knowledge, power, society, and eros," see Eric Jager, *The Tempter's Voice: Language and the Fall in Medieval Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 1; hereafter cited in the text as Jager. Note also Stephen G. Nichols's extensive analysis of discursive aspects of the Fall in "An Intellectual Anthropology of Marriage in the Middle Ages," in *The New Medievalism*, ed. Marina S. Brownlee, Kevin Brownleee, and Stephen G. Nichols (Baltimore, London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 70–95. In addition, see Dyan Elliott, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), in which she addresses the postlapersian body and defilement, especially 1–34, treating the male body—hereafter cited in the text as Elliott.
29. See Jager's discussion of nakedness and artificial covering in the patristic exegesis of Ambrose of Milan and Augustine (123–130) and Howard Bloch's analysis of gender and language in Genesis in *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 13–35; hereafter cited in the text as Bloch.
30. Jager notes that "'naked truth' and verbal 'clothing' are ancient tropes" that "Ambrose [and Augustine] invest[ ] with patristic values" (125). See also Jager's footnote 22 wherein he cites the *The Oxford Latin Dictionary* ([8b, 14a–b] Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933. Supplement, 1986) to illustrate that "classical Latin authors used the term *nudus* ("naked") for the absence of deceit in general as well as for unadorned language in particular" (125). For general discussions of John's treatise, see Faral, 40–46, 48–103; Atkins, 91–118, 119–141; Baldwin, 191–195; Murphy 1974, 175–180; and Kelly 1966, 275–278, and 1991.
31. Kelly notes that "like Geoffrey's *Poetria nova*, John's treatise covers the traditional divisions of composition in rhetoric. However, John of Garland's treatment of invention and disposition differs from Geoffrey's in that he allows the poet less freedom in the choice of his *materia*" (1966, 275).
32. Tzvetan Todorov, "The Splendour and Misery of Rhetoric," *Theories of the Symbol*, trans. Catherine Porter (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 74; hereafter cited in the text as Todorov. See also Patricia Parker, "Virile Style" (Frandenberg and Freccero 201–222) in which she addresses the praise of stylistic *vivilitis* in the ancient Roman tradition and that of early modern Europe.
33. For an extended analysis of the distinction between "body" and "flesh," see Lochrie, 13–53. As Cox notes in relation to Lochrie's distinction, "body metaphors call attention to the flesh, and, by extension, to the feminine" (135 note 25). See also Biernoff, especially 17–59.
34. All translations from Matthew of Vendôme are taken from Galyon with citations listed parenthetically by page number; all Latin citations are from Faral listed

parenthetically by page number. For general discussions of Matthew's treatise and compositional theory, see Faral, 1–14, 55–103, and consult the introductions to Galyon's translation as well as the following translations: Ernest Gallo's "Matthew of Vendôme: Introductory Treatise on the Art of Poetry," *Proceedings of the American Philosophic Society* 118 (1974), 51–92; and Parr. While Murphy provides an outline and brief discussion of Matthew's treatise (1974, 163–168), Kelly analyzes the genre, evolution, and influence of the treatise in relation to the other arts of poetry and prose (1991, 34–57, 64–88; as well as in his earlier works: 1966, and 1972, 29–32, 70–74). For a specific focus on the theory of description in the arts of poetry, see Alice M. Colby, *The Portrait in Twelfth-Century French Literature* (Geneve: Librairie Droz, 1965), 89–103.

35. As Kelly suggests, epithets "refer to the type represented by the individual," and "[t]he epithets derive their significance, their import, from authorial intention (affectus sermocinantis, ad maneriem rei, ex sensu quo fiunt) rather than their sense independent of context (effectus sermonis, ad rem maneriei, ex sensu quem faciunt)" (1972, 71, 73).
36. While I discovered Zita's chapter titled "Heterosexual Anti-Biotics" long after I initially conceived of this formulation of medieval rhetorical embodiment in the process of writing my dissertation and well into the construction of this manuscript and her analysis relates to homophobia in modern culture, I feel compelled to note and credit her articulation and explication of the term "antibody": "I realize that I am playing with the ambiguity of this term: 'antibiotic' or 'antibody' as an induced or injected response to what is not self and 'antibiotic' as a cultural formation of attitudes and beliefs about bodies that is decidedly anti-body or rejecting of certain kinds of bodies" (222 note 12).
37. See also Matthew's concluding verse in which he addresses his own compositional practices as being informed by the Trinity (Galyon, 112; Faral, 192–193).
38. For discussions of "border bodies," see Mary Pouvey, "Speaking of the Body: A Discursive Division of Labor in Mid-Victorian Britain," in *Body/Politics: Women and the Discourse of Science*, ed. Jacobus, Evelyn Fox Keller, and Shally Shuttleworth (New York: Routledge, 1990), 29–46; Butler 1993, 1–23.
39. See *Alain of Lille: The Plaint of Nature*, trans. James J. Sheridan (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1980). For discussions related to the conflation of homosexuality and poetic excess, see Maureen Quilligan, "Words and Sex: The Language of Allegory in the *De planctu naturae*, the *Roman de la Rose*, and Book III of *The Fairie Queene*," *Allegorica* 2 (1977), 195–216, and "Allegory, Allegoresis, and the Deallegorization of Language in *The Roman de la Rose*, the *De planctu naturae*, and the *Parlement of Foules*," in *Allegory, Myth, and Symbol*, ed. Morton W. Bloomfield (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 160–185; John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1980), especially 310–313; Jan Ziolkowski, *Alain of Lille's Grammar of Sex* (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1985), and Elizabeth Pittenger, "Explicit Ink" (Fradenburg and Frecuro 223–242).
40. Garrett P. J. Epp, "The Vicious Guise: Effeminacy, Sodomy, and *Mankind*," in Cohen and Wheeler, 303–320. See also Epp's "Learning to Write with Venus's

Pen: Sexual Regulation in Matthew of Vendôme's *Ars versificatoria*," in *Desire and Discipline: Sex and Sexuality in the Premodern West*, ed. Jacqueline Murray and Konrad Eisenbichler (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 307.

41. For general discussions of the feminization of language, see Dinshaw, 3–27; Elaine Tuttle Hansen, *Chaucer and the Fictions of Gender* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 1–25; and Bloch. For an analysis of the feminization of language in the medieval arts of poetry, see Hass 1997, 16–38.
42. Saint Jerome, *Commentariorum in Epistolam ad Ephesios* III, 5 in PL 26, col. 567. As Laskaya notes, "The Virgin Mother (chaste and yet a mother) spells out the primary tension in the cultural discourses of the Middle Ages surrounding femininity, and that tension revolved around the body. She also established an ideal no woman could attain—for if a woman were a virginal nun, she would have no son; and if she had a son, she could not be virginal" (42). See also Elliott (5 and 108–114) in which she addresses the relations among "pollution beliefs," "sources of contamination," and the Virgin Mary(s).
43. In *The Shape of Things Known* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), Forrest G. Robinson suggests that the Augustinian basis for a theory of knowledge, to which John, I would argue, ascribes, divides the soul's faculties according to three kinds of vision, all of which were clear before the Fall; however, after the Fall the eye of contemplation ("oculis contemplationis") has been blinded, the eye of reason ("oculis rationis") has been blurred, and the eye of the flesh maintained its original clarity. The theory also suggests that through the study of philosophy, one regains the sight of reason and can, therefore, contemplate God and the primordial exemplars (40). See also Biernoff, 41–46 and 111–132.
44. The full lines of Latin in this passage form a square around different centerlines, while the half lines of this passage are broken up and placed within a circle around the whole.
45. These lines occur in the center of those cited immediately above.
46. See the introduction to Burns where she defines "bodytalk" (7).
47. For a discussion of desire as a formative element of poetic discourse in Matthew, Geoffrey, and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, see my "'A Picture of Such Beauty in Their Minds': The Medieval Rhetoricians, Chaucer, and Evocative *Effictio*," *Exemplaria* 14.2 (October 2002), 383–422.
48. Vickers as quoted in Patricia Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property* (London, New York: Methuen, 1987), 128; hereafter cited in the text as Parker, 1987.
49. See Kelly 1991 for a brief discussion of Helen as "the consummate exemplar of beauty" (74–75).
50. As Kelly states, "Amplification as a compositional device taught by the twelfth- and thirteenth-century arts of poetry . . . is not merely additional material added to no obvious purpose; rather it lays stress on a given subject, dwells upon it in order to elicit the sense desired by the author"; furthermore, Kelly adds, "This is obviously rudimentary psychology as motivation" (1972, 70). While Kelly subsequently asserts that "[f]or Matthew and Geoffrey of Vinsauf, description is not psychological, but topical," he does continue his discussion, "identify[ing] the language in which the notion [of the psychological] was expressed" and

suggesting that "rhetoric provided the terms" (70–71). But I would argue, as Kelly seems to imply, that these descriptions are psychological even in their topicality and typicality: The reader is to derive a particular response out of the very desire that is generalized in a form like Helen's.

51. See I.63 (Galyon, 45–46; Faral, 133).
52. On rhetorical dilation of the feminized text, see Parker, 8–17.
53. "Femineum plene si vis formare decorum" (Faral, 214).
54. For a discussion of reading through the clothing of courtly literature, see E. Jane Burns, *Courtly Love Undressed: Reading through Clothes in Medieval French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).
55. John's tendencies herein would mimic those of patristic exegesis in what Bloch terms a "Christian construction of gender" that includes the following: "(1) a feminization of the flesh, that is, the association, according to the metaphor of mind and body, of man with *mens* or *ratio* and of woman with the corporeal; (2) the estheticization of femininity, that is, the association of woman with the cosmetic, the supervenient, or the decorative, which includes not only the arts but what Saint Jerome calls 'life's little idle shows'; and (3) the theologizing of esthetics, or the condemnation in ontological terms not only of the realm of simulation or representations, of 'all that is plastered on' in Tertullian's phrase, but of almost anything pleasurable attached to material embodiment" (9). Similarly, Cox suggests, "the overtly sexual woman suggests the threat of unleashed carnality, the potential of the feminine to corrupt inherently vulnerable patriarchal decorums. Corruption owing to feminine sexuality finds representation in images, for example, of the temptress . . . who lures the unwary man away from the path of God. This stereotype further reinforces the correlation of flesh and language, for the carnal woman is said to corrupt man's appreciation of the spiritual Word by enticing him to the flesh, thereby obstructing his course toward the spirit" (5). While Cox's comments follow analysis specifically of Augustinian exegesis, they correspond likewise to John's statements in both meaning and use of similar images. See also Elliott, 35–60, in which she treats the body of "Libidinous Female in the Later Middle Ages" (35), and Biernoff, 46–48, in which she addresses the influence of the feminine flesh on the mind.
56. For discussions of "ideal" ugliness and the influence of Matthew's description of Beroe on Latin and vernacular traditions, see Faral, 54–55, and Colby, 72–88, 93.
57. For examples of the manner in which the authors allude to decorated discourse's potential to cover up faulty material, see Geoffrey's introductory comments on tropes wherein he states, "To paint the surface of an expression is like a picture made of mud, a thing fabricated, a false beauty, a whitewashed wall" (Kopp, 60), although Beroe's essence is most likely closer to what John describes as "blackness" that he fears could be covered by "snow," a reference that follows a list of negative entities similar to those Geoffrey includes (Lawler, 91), or the depths of wormwood to which John refers as residing underneath the whore's honey (Lawler, 15) ["fociem depingere verbi/Est pictura luti, res est falsaria, ficta/Forma, dealbatus paries" (Faral, 220), "non tegit atra niue" (Lawler, 90), and "Sed absinthium eins nouissima subministrant" (Lawler, 14)].

58. For all English citations, see Carlson. For general discussions of Eberhard's treatise, see the introduction to the aforementioned translation (1–4); Faral, 38–39; Baldwin, 189–191; Kelly 1966, 268–289; and Murphy 1974, 180–183. See also Catherine Yodice Giles's "Gervais of Melkley's Treatise on the Art of Versifying and the Method in Composing Prose: Translation and Commentary" (Diss., Rutgers University, 1973), in which Gervais refers to "Master John of Hanville, the breasts of whose teaching nourished my rough infancy" (4). For a discussion of "maternal imagery" and its productive use, see Bynum 1982, 110–169, and *Fragmentation and Redemption* (New York: Zone Books, 1991) 151–179.

10

Unwritten between the Lines
The Unspoken History of Rhetoric[1]

Scott D. Troyan

The hermeneutic understanding is always lagging behind [literary form understanding]: to understand something is to realize that one had always known it, but, at the same time, to face the mystery of this hidden knowledge.

—Paul de Man

Paul de Man's comments regarding the nature of hermeneutic understanding resonate with scholars trying to more fully comprehend the impact rhetoric had on medieval hermeneutics. While much work has clearly demonstrated the significance of adapting "the traditional 'pagan' art of rhetoric to Christian purposes,"[2] little to date has explicated the underlying assumptions. Attempts at interpreting medieval literature more thoroughly by applying medieval rhetorical practices have long fallen short of their potential. They have been more explanatory than interpretive, more prescriptive than descriptive. According to de Man, though, we would expect to a certain degree that our understanding of hermeneutics would lag behind our understanding of form. Nonetheless, it seems apparent that the time lag has arisen more from misunderstanding medieval rhetoric than understanding it.

Medieval rhetoricians did not explicitly address the nature of textual interpretation, thereby unknowingly inventing a major stumbling block to understanding medieval hermeneutics. Many hold the view that we can't know what someone didn't tell us, even though we constantly strive to do so in other circumstances.[3] Georgiana Donavin, for one, notes that "George Kennedy emphasizes the 'technical' nature of medieval Latin rhetoric rather than the theories upon which medieval techniques were based."[4] Donavin accurately points to a tendency to stay at the surface level when analyzing medieval rhetoric. Unfortunately, the tendency to stay at the surface level overlooks the legacy left us regarding hermeneutics that is implicit—rather

than explicit—within the rhetorical tradition itself, not to mention the literature. Closer examination of the manuals, for example, reveals de Man's assessment to be accurate: The knowledge of medieval hermeneutics has always been present; we need only confront its hidden mysteries. And, yes, hermeneutic understanding has definitely lagged behind literary form understanding.[5] I do not suggest that we overlook the valuable work that has been done, but rather that we apply it in a different context to better explicate medieval hermeneutics.[6] This paper will examine five key points in an attempt to begin generating a more clearly articulated hermeneutic understanding by (1) defining the history of medieval rhetoric per se; (2) investigating misconceptions in our approach to medieval rhetoric; (3) discussing the unaddressed concerns for hermeneutics raised by rhetoric; (4) examining more closely the influence that the manuals exerted upon rhetoric; and (5) discussing the function of texts in the larger context of medieval hermeneutics.

As virtually anyone familiar with the history of medieval rhetoric undoubtedly knows, there really is no history of medieval rhetoric, at least not in a codified sense. Unlike its Greek and Roman predecessors,[7] medieval rhetoric was at once stable and mercurial.[8] Stable in that its status quo—advice concerning how, when, and often why modes of organization, types of wordplay, and approaches to memory were employed—was rarely, if ever, significantly challenged.[9] Mercurial in that the emphases and foci of the status quo advice subtly shifts from author to author, manual to manual, and ultimately text to text.[10] While the schemes and tropes mentioned in a particular manual, for instance, resemble those mentioned by almost everyone, they nonetheless offer a great diversity concerning the specifics of textual invention.[11] Rhetoric's dichotomous nature has therefore left us to wonder what specifically its relation is to the arts themselves because it is unclear how medieval rhetoricians conceived of the relationship between how to invent and how to interpret texts. Thus rhetoric's nature leaves us also to wonder what its value is as a hermeneutic.[12]

No one can say for certain that medieval rhetoric was intended to be employed as a hermeneutic. Clearly it was intended to be instructive, since it was part of the curriculum. Clearly it was intended to be purposive; many provided clear advice on how to employ rhetorical figures. Yet the manuals' focus on samples with simple instructions and little or no discussion specifically relevant to affecting and/or interpreting audience response(s) leaves us with little evidence from which to reconstitute a medieval hermeneutic of textual invention. Consequently, we've developed a skewed perception of rhetoric, one that tends to understand its value largely as an instructional tool teaching one how to invent.[13] This view has been further propagated by the manner in which medieval rhetoric is taught or, maybe more appropriately, not taught.[14] As a result, medieval rhetoric has not been given its due. Few have posited explanations as to *why*

medieval rhetoric evolved as it did. Doing so would help us better understand *how* textual invention evolved, offering clues to *how* texts were meant to be interpreted.

But in order to better understand the history of hermeneutics in the Middle Ages, we need to understand rhetoric's evolution. Moreover, we need to understand this evolution without unilaterally linking an approach to rhetoric with a particular genre.[15] Instead, many have chosen to pigeonhole rhetoric, viewing it as defined through its relationship with a single subject. McKeon was one of the first to hold a different view: "Yet if rhetoric is defined in terms of a single subject matter—such as style, or literature, or discourse—it has no history during the Middle Ages; the many innovations which are recorded during that period in the arts with which it is related suggest that their histories might profitably be considered without unique attachment to the field in which their advances are celebrated" (32). But especially since the publication of *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, there has been a tendency to link a particular genre discussed by a rhetorical manual with a particular approach to textual invention. Doing so codifies rhetorical practices with regard to textual invention, overlooking the inherent importance that a holistic approach to medieval rhetoric posits for better interpreting medieval texts. For example, the Third Fitt of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* apparently borrows heavily from the thematic sermon tradition.[16] While this is certainly not the only interpretation—and probably not even the primary one—one could suggest for *Sir Gawain*, recognizing it opens up additional levels of meaning consonant with the overall rhetorical tradition.

Inclusion is the underlying subtext. While it's important when speaking of medieval hermeneutics that we include all types of rhetoric, it's equally important to include as many rhetorical texts as possible to gain as balanced and complete a view as possible. To date, we only have a significant understanding of the major medieval rhetorical texts that is sometimes based on the number of extant manuscripts.[17] One concern is that while large numbers of a particular text might indeed argue for popularity, it might not necessarily argue for doctrinal influence. Similarly, we cannot allow the "peak of popularity in the twelfth century"[18] to cause us to overlook the importance of rhetoric's evolution providing clues to help understand texts more fully. Viewing medieval rhetoric in such a full context enables us to better understand two key points regarding medieval rhetoric. First, it helps us more fully appreciate how medieval rhetoricians adapted Classical rhetoric to their circumstances. Second, and perhaps more importantly, it helps us better understand what those adaptations suggest regarding medieval hermeneutics. "The Middle Ages," as Bliese reminds us, "had not the same potential for the use of eloquence that the ancient world had. Yet rhetoric was studied throughout the Middle Ages, from various points of view and with varying amounts of interest" (364).

Naturally, medieval rhetoricians adapted rhetoric to their own needs. In doing so, "they developed four separate fields of study based on the ancient rhetorical principles" (Bliese, 364). My contention and focus here is that in order to understand medieval rhetoric's value as a hermeneutic, we must first understand how medieval rhetoricians extended Classical rhetoric during the Middle Ages, and second understand what significance that extension holds for how to invent and analyze texts. That is, how do theories of textual invention influence textual meaning, and how does understanding this issue influence textual explication? For now, I intend to focus on how the medieval rhetorical tradition reveals an underlying hermeneutic that is ultimately appropriated and adapted by medieval authors.[19]

The first challenge facing us is whether to try reconstituting from the surviving documents a medieval hermeneutic. The second challenge (often precluded by deciding against doing so in the first place) is how to do so. Because we have no clear concrete evidence in which medieval theorists explained or prescribed their sense of hermeneutics—how they conceived of meaning being made manifest in texts—many today act as though they simply didn't worry about such matters. The first challenge regarding further and more careful investigations regarding medieval hermeneutics thus answered, the second is never engaged.

First one must dispel general misconceptions that are prevalent regarding the lack of a medieval hermeneutic. Because medieval rhetoric is not always sufficiently distanced from Classical rhetoric, one misconception is that rhetoric is only forensic: "The forensic rhetoric of ancient Rome is treated along with the *artes poetriae* and the *artes dictaminis* of the high Middle Ages as if they were all likely to apply with equal validity to medieval vernacular prologues" (Schultz, 1). But as Jody Enders has ably demonstrated, the forensic component of medieval rhetoric had tremendous influence regarding the development of drama.[20] Additionally, "[t]he authors of the medieval *artes poetriae*, although certainly indebted to the Ciceronian rhetorical tradition, especially for their teaching on *figurae*, belong in other regards to the tradition of Horace" (Schultz, 4). Even though the general perception is that medieval rhetoric was forensic and in some ways clinical, there is nonetheless evidence that it was more organic, making it simultaneously static and mercurial.

More importantly for understanding textual invention, though, is that medieval rhetoric pushes the envelope by forcing Classical rhetoric outside of its familiar context: "Clearly the authors of the medieval *artes poetriae* knew their authorities very well. They recognized that the elaborate exordial doctrine developed in the works of the Ciceronian rhetorical tradition was not intended to apply, and in fact did not apply, to written narrative. In formulating their own prescriptions for the beginning of a poetic composition they recognized their place in the tradition of Horace, a tradition that might allow a few more words on beginning but that had no interest in exordia or prologues" (Schultz, 5–6).

Such adaptation suggests more than simply placing their works in the tradition of Horace; it implies a more or less deliberate attempt to move rhetoric in a different direction. However, this raises the question of whether students, and perhaps by extension authors in general, realized what the theorists were doing and applied similar strategies. It also raises questions concerning how this knowledge affected students, both as authors and as audience(s).

Clearly, students understood not only the current tradition, but also its antecedents. "If the classical rhetorical and poetic treatises were so well known by Matthew of Vendôme and his fellow teachers," Schultz argues, then "we must assume that they were also known, to some degree at least, by their students" (6). While this is attested to by the number of extant copies of various Classical rhetorical texts—not to mention the commentaries concerning them—it does not necessarily account for the evolution of rhetoric. Moreover, evidence suggests that medieval rhetoric was more of a reaction intended to mold Classical rhetoric into a medieval context.[21] To that end, as McKeon and later Murphy so clearly pointed out, rhetoric developed as three seemingly distinct arts. McKeon remarks, for instance, that "This tradition of rhetoric took form . . . in a vast number of textbooks which grew in three distinct groups differentiated according to the subject matters once treated by rhetoric but now concerned with verbal forms employed in those three fields in lieu of direct treatment of subject matter" (27). But again, it's not so much the tradition that begs the question of how texts mean. Rather, it's the alterations to the tradition that beg this question. For example, why is it that Matthew of Vendôme stresses inner meaning and its relation to description, while Geoffrey of Vinsauf privileges amplification and abbreviation as a scheme?[22]

While what Geoffrey and Matthew wrote is important, the differences between what they wrote suggest a shift in frame of mind or approach, not only to textual invention, but to textual interpretation as well. Thus, what they *didn't* write almost becomes more important than what they *did* write. Unfortunately, we sometimes hesitate to speculate sufficiently regarding what we cannot prove. For instance, if we do not have a term from medieval rhetoric to describe a particular strategy, rather than speculate, we tend to borrow terms or simply avoid the issue altogether. At best, this produces an interpretation that is suspect; at worst it produces one that is downright deceiving.[23] While the methodological sense seems clear, the applicability does not. Because medieval rhetoricians were not given to discussing the rationale informing their methodological choices, modern understanding of interpretive practices suffers. Regardless, it seems clear that noting the shifts in perspectives among rhetoricians should provide us ample evidence to suggest how textual invention was intended to convey textual meaning.

One of the common misconceptions regarding medieval rhetoric has been our inability to adequately trace its lineage. This is largely due to the fact that

traditionally "rhetoric is treated as a simple verbal discipline, in histories which touch upon it, as the art of speaking well, applied either as it was in Rome to forensic oratory and associated with the interpretation of laws or, more frequently, applied as it was in the Renaissance in the interpretation and use of the works of orators and poets, and associated with or even indistinguishable from poetic and literary criticism. The history of rhetoric as it has been written since the Renaissance is therefore in part the distressing record of obtuseness of writers who failed to study the classics and to apply rhetoric to literature, and in part the monotonous enumeration of doctrines, or preferably sentences, repeated from Cicero or commentators on Cicero" (McKeon, 1). Such an approach causes us to lose sight of what might have been obvious on some level to the medieval rhetorician, as well as to his audience.

Reconstituting the medieval conception of the author–audience interaction becomes difficult at best, particularly in the context of the modern university. Mostly, modern universities have marginalized medieval rhetoric. Georgiana Donavin concludes that "unfortunately, in many American survey courses, medieval Latin rhetoric is still presented with Elizabethan disgust. It is typically introduced as a wrongheaded excursion away from classical principles toward the slavish study of rhetorical formulae" (Donavin, 51). For proof, one need look no further than studies of medieval rhetoric dating to the first three-quarters of the twentieth century. And while the end of the millennium has generated renewed interest, it has yet to spark significant studies probing questions underlying medieval rhetorical principles, especially regarding hermeneutics. What was left unwritten between the lines that helps us interpret what was actually written? What was it about a particular rhetorician's approach that gives rise to a particular approach to invention that better enables audience(s) to comprehend the author's point of view?

Ignoring questions raised by the rhetorician's adaptation of his subject matter (i.e., rhetoric, in this case) is compounded by our ignoring how an author's adaptation of accepted or widespread rhetorical practices informed his audience's response(s). "The very multiplicity of ranks and orders in an emerging feudal society had the effect of increasing the number of relationships—both social and legal—which came to be reflected in writing in one way or another. One ready solution to the problem of writing about such recurring situations was to draft a formula. . . ." (Murphy 1974, 199). That is, for us to truly understand how medieval rhetoricians and authors alike viewed their subject matter (and by extension, how they might want their audiences to view such a world), one need explore the unstated significance of said adaptations. Understanding rhetorical practices without understanding the significance of their adaptations divorces content from style. It focuses our attention on *what* is said, rather than *how* it is said, which runs contrary to rhetoric. The sheer number and variety of both rhetorical manuals and their accompanying commentaries suggest that one must

read the rhetorical manuals in a manner other than strictly literally. From doing so, we might begin postulating a medieval hermeneutic.

Before beginning such considerations, we need to raise two additional issues: writing itself and the nature of instruction. Writing was a new technology in the Middle Ages, which raises the question of the extent to which it may have been used for recording important ideas during instruction. Instruction was commonly an oral enterprise. Consequently, it's entirely possible that much of the important information was never written down in a single coherent, cogent form. What seems likely, though, is that this instruction was taken to heart and captured at least indirectly. Suzanne Reynolds, for instance, observes that "if we are prepared to shift the ground, to move from a study of philology to a study of strategies, Latin glosses can reveal an enormous amount about reading and pedagogic practice . . . they are firmly grounded in the *trivium* arts of grammar and rhetoric, and demonstrate forcibly the need to see our form of medieval reading as one manifestation of a wider set of textual disciplines and concerns."[24] Reynolds's point that the glosses are as revealing about the nature of strategies as the texts being glossed leads one to posit a similar relationship with the unspoken text, the strategy conceived mentally, but never captured textually. Together, these two issues provide compelling evidence suggesting that the history of medieval rhetoric was indeed never explicitly written. Instead, it is implicit within the tradition itself. While manuals may not differ significantly from their predecessors, they nonetheless exhibit subtle shifts in presentation of material, in both how and what material is presented. And as any good rhetorician would remind us, how you say something is at least as important as what you say. But in order to posit this significance as a hermeneutic, we must first view the manuals side by side to better grasp the fundamental differences exhibited by the various authors and texts.

More significantly, we need to gain a more substantial understanding of the unstated, unaddressed concerns. Understanding the significance rhetoric played in textual interpretation implies that we must understand not only the significance that rhetoric played in the sciences and society, but also how it influenced the conceptions of text. We must additionally understand what this influence suggests concerning the scope and influence of the theory and practice of rhetoric. Rhetoric in the Middle Ages was a shifting landscape. Rhetoricians were concerned not only with saying something, but also with repositioning it.[25] By repositioning itself, rhetoric came to say something new. It also came to suggest different ways of interpreting.

At the same time as rhetoric was repositioned, it began to reflect the changing needs of its contexts. For example, rhetoric began to reflect a society exemplified by the emerging feudal class. Rhetoricians accordingly responded by inventing new formulas.[26] The contention that the emerging feudal society gave rise to new approaches to inventing formulas suggests the possibility that it gave

rise to a new way of interpreting text, as well. When the ground rules for writing change, it's inevitable that the ground rules for interpreting need to change.[27] While this is only one example, it is nonetheless obvious that society—whether consciously or unconsciously—influenced the direction in which rhetoric evolved. As a result, it challenged audiences to interpret texts differently. Perhaps more importantly, these changes suggest that by recognizing them and postulating their significance might facilitate a better understanding of medieval hermeneutics. Geoffrey tends to offer vague examples, whereas Matthew—and to a lesser extent, Bede—tends to use examples that are more pointed and specific. Geoffrey might offer a simple example, while Matthew would attempt incorporating an example that might have its own hidden agenda. For example, Matthew presents a more developed discussion in which he carefully defines *zeugma*, then analyzes two main types: (1) the verb understood being repeated in subsequent clauses, and (2) the verb in the last clause being understood as repeated in the previous clause.[28] Matthew provides examples of each type of *zeugma*, in much the same manner that Bede does.[29] By contrast, Geoffrey treats repetition very quickly as part of amplification.[30] His advice is simple and unadorned. The most notable difference between Bede and Matthew is that Bede's examples come from the Bible, while Matthew's come from Ovid.

It might be tempting to try enforcing a sort of revisionist history on rhetoric based on an analysis of these texts; however, doing so overlooks some significant issues that may well have been a product of each text's context. The general approach to explicating *zeugma* is similar in Bede and Matthew, although Matthew is more explicit. The key is the fact that Bede pushes his text toward a Christian goal with his examples from the Bible. Matthew, on the other hand, harkens back to the Ovidian tradition. Later on, Geoffrey truncates the discussion of *how* to incorporate repetition. The evolution appears to be from explicit explanations directed toward a Christian purpose, to explicit explanations again that call upon the Classical tradition, and finally to implicit explanations with little concern for subject matter. The subliminal advice offered seems to support Murphy's view regarding the feudalization of rhetoric in the Middle Ages: Later in the Middle Ages, rhetoric was more feudal. Furthermore, the subliminal advice suggests that audiences need to modify interpretive procedures accordingly as the text teaches us how to read it.[31] Since the text in this case is rhetoric itself, it teaches us how to read other texts; hence, the medieval hermeneutic begins emerging implicitly from the rhetorical manuals.

So how are we then to make a hermeneutic out of the history of rhetorical manuals in the Middle Ages? The most reasonable approach seems to be to explore the implications of each rhetorician's approach to rhetoric, in addition to each author's appropriation of rhetoric. We need to understand each rhetorician's operating procedures before we can understand how to interpret medieval texts.[32] Indeed, we have to question the assumptions standing behind medieval

rhetorical manuals.[33] For the most part, we've avoided engaging issues implicitly raised by the practices of medieval rhetoricians and poets alike.[34] Consequently, we've codified an ever-evolving tradition that essentially defies codification.[35]

Codifying the medieval rhetorical tradition has led us to an uneasy situation in which medieval rhetoric and its practices are seen as somehow unrelated to hermeneutics, when in fact little could be farther from the truth. Even though recent studies have proven the validity of scholarship undervaluing the usefulness of medieval rhetoric, little has been done to rectify the situation, as Donavin suggests.[36] She believes that Kenneth Burke is the key to understanding how medieval rhetoric and its applications help us better understand how to investigate texts. The central issue seems to be "the establishment of rhetorical community, or 'consubstantiality' between rhetor and audience. If for our new students of medieval rhetoric we were to emphasize this motion toward Burkian identification, the next generation of American rhetorical scholars would avoid the misconception that the Middle Ages is a 'trivial' aberration" (63). It seems obvious that the sort of "rhetorical community" Donavin discusses is not unlikely. One might argue that attempts at blending Christianity with rhetoric constitute a "rhetorical community,"[37] much in the same manner that textual communities arose during the Middle Ages.[38] However, even these theories can be pushed further, better enabling us to comprehend in what measure: (1) adaptations by rhetoricians of the rhetorical tradition help reshape the rhetor or author's relationship with his audience, and (2) adaptations by rhetors or authors of the same rhetorical traditions help reshape the text's relationship with its audience.[39]

Accepted thought maintains that the poet's job was to make the old new: "[t]he poet has to work more or less within the traditional framework, but he is free to make it new, to elicit possibilities left undeveloped by earlier writers and to abbreviate material *not relevant* to his new purpose" (Gallo, 81 [my emphasis]). As previously noted, Geoffrey states that the purpose of repetition in part is to "let it not come with one set of apparel" (24). He illustrates this by resituating the same material, employing different approaches to invention.[40] Likewise, Matthew offers several approaches to explicating the same matter, much in the manner that Bede does. The key difference is methodological: Geoffrey encourages the poet to invent multiple perspectives, while Matthew and Bede encourage one chosen from several. For Geoffrey, repetition resides more at the sentence level than it does for Bede or Matthew. He thus locates meaning to be generated more by the macro-level of the text, rather than the micro-level. As a result, authors following his advice would follow suit. Doing so, though, would also necessitate altering the interpretative procedure. Bede would have audiences look for Christian meaning in the minutiae of the text. Matthew, though, returns audiences to Bede's attention to detail, at the same time refocusing their attention onto details of a heroic, distant past, one drawn from Classical literature. Geoffrey would have them seek meaning in the overall impact,

regardless of the religious content. The distinctions are slight, but significant. There appears to be a movement from rhetoric motivated by Christian concerns, to Christian rhetoric motivated by references to the lettered past, to a generalized rhetoric. This means that in interpreting medieval texts, we must always be cognizant of the time period, whether the text was invented with Christian rhetoric as the underlying rhetoric, or Christian rhetoric steeped in the lettered past, or somewhere in between.

Even as we witness the hermeneutics of textual invention evolve through analyses of the rhetorical manuals, it is also equally clear from the placement of rhetoric with respect to dialectic that rhetoricians were attempting to suggest "new functions for the discipline." Rita Copeland remarks that "twelfth-century scholars introduced some variations in their placement of rhetoric and in so doing suggested new functions for the discipline. But the numerous attempts to classify it and to match its putative function to some real application serve to displace it further and expose the unreality of its value" (61). Therefore, we begin sensing that what is not stated directly is perhaps as important as, if not more important than, what is said. That is, the ways in which the rhetoricians composed their rhetorical manuals are in and of themselves meaningful, especially to the studious mind, one trained to carefully consider the implications of how something is said and its relationship with what is said, a point sometimes overlooked.

The relationship between what is said and how it is said has drawn some attention. Schultz, for example, remarks that "[t]he distinction between prologues and the kind of beginning the theorists had in mind will become clear if we attend carefully to what the treatises actually say and compare this to the practice of vernacular poets" (8). Unfortunately, this approach further frustrates our attempts to arrive at a hermeneutic for textual invention because it further complicates the issue by introducing the poet as part of the problem. I would agree that carefully explicating what the treatises say and comparing that to the practice of vernacular poets would no doubt yield important understanding concerning the hermeneutic premise; however, I would argue that it is crucial to first study the distinction between what theorists write regarding textual invention. While Geoffrey may express the importance of multiple points of view concerning the application of repetition, and Matthew may prefer choosing one approach, how do we determine the significance of a particular poet in a particular text choosing one method over the other? Furthermore, how do we determine the significance when the same author alternately applies both approaches, although not necessarily simultaneously? Perhaps the most reasonable and speculative approach is trying to determine what the underlying assumptions posited by the manuals may be.

Part of the difficulty of such an approach lies in the diachronic nature of language and society. We sometimes view history as a continuum, a progression

or movement from one moment to another, when in fact this presupposes an assumed rhyme and reason that is no more established and accepted than patterns of cause and effect. "The theoretic presuppositions which underlie the shifts and alterations of rhetorical doctrines," writes McKeon, "are readily made to seem verbal and arbitrary preferences, for in the course of discussion all of the terms are altered in meanings, and the contents and methods of each of the arts are transformed when grammar, rhetoric, poetic, dialectic, and logic change places or are identified one with another, or are distinguished from each other, or are subsumed one under another" (3). For example, Geoffrey concerns himself more with types of ornaments, while Matthew appears to be more concerned with their function in context.[41] Accordingly, one might conclude that a student of Geoffrey's would be more likely to consider more carefully how to invent an image employing a particular ornament, while a student of Matthew's might be more concerned with which ornament is more appropriate to the anticipated situation. Either approach enables one to invent a text; however, Geoffrey focuses more on matching a description with an ornament, while Matthew focuses more on choosing an ornament appropriate to the description.

Interpretive approaches suggested by differences in adaptation of subject matter between Geoffrey and Matthew have far-reaching consequences. These changes point up not only shifting attitudes toward textual invention, but also the implicit need for authors and audiences to follow suit. McKeon notes that "the theories implicated in the shifts of its subject matter will emerge . . . in concrete application, each at least defensible and each a challenge to the conception of intellectual history as the simple record of the development of a body of knowledge by more or less adequate investigations of a constant subject matter" (3). Despite the fact that writing codifies texts, it nonetheless offers ample opportunity to more fully and carefully explicate the implications that textual invention theory and textual invention held. Thus, once one better understands the significance of issues raised by alterations in and adaptations of rhetorical practices, one can then begin to better understand how authors worked with and against the accepted traditions. In turn, recognizing, admitting, and understanding these alterations lead to a clearer understanding of how texts were intended to "mean" to audiences.

To understand how texts were intended to "mean" to audiences, we must begin with an examination of the ways in which the manuals reshaped the history and conception of rhetoric. The manuals were largely responsible for training students how to invent texts and invest texts with meaning. Any attempt to recover the unspoken hermeneutics of the Middle Ages needs to begin with the issue of how the manuals reshape rhetoric and what their shifting, mercurial discussions represent to understanding how texts were invented, in addition to how texts were understood as being interpreted. Perhaps more importantly, the rhetorical manuals also invented the basis for compositional practices in the

future, be it for poetry, preaching, or letter writing.[42] The fact that the manuals were intended for generations of future poets suggests their unstated hermeneutic by begging the question of "the future poet." It is precisely the perceptive spirit that Murphy notes as characteristic of rhetoric (135)—especially with regard to medieval poetic texts—that has been lacking in understanding the implications of "the future poem." Medievalists have long admitted and investigated the significance of identifying and cataloguing schemes and tropes, etc., in medieval literature, yet few have accepted the challenge of investigating the reasoning behind the authorial choices in textual invention. Partly this is due to our having overlooked "the future audience," which complements "the future poet" that is necessitated by "the future poem."

For example, even though the rhetorical manuals offer limited information concerning interpreting openings invented in the manner(s) that they suggest, there is nonetheless ample evidence to suggest ways in which the future audience should interpret them. Medieval authors were presented with few options; consequently, explicating the manuals in relation to one another in chronological order will better enable us to understand how the future poet was to invent and how his future audience was to interpret.[43] It might be tempting to leave well enough alone, but it seems that what the rhetorical manuals are implicitly trying to accomplish is instilling both authors and audience(s) with a purposefulness that transcends their advice. That is, by providing the basic tools by which to lay the foundation for a more complete text, they also provide the tools with which to interpret texts. We might at this point be reminded of Saint Augustine's advice that although he points toward a star, he cannot supply the vision by which it might be seen,[44] or of Geoffrey reminding his audience that a well-built house has to be planned.[45] Regardless, even though medieval rhetorical manuals point toward methods by which a text can be invented, they do not directly provide the understanding by which they might be interpreted.

The manuals taken as a whole exemplify the wide-ranging advice prevalent during the Middle Ages, but that is in some measure only partially employed not only by authors, but by other rhetoricians as well. There is no single compendium of medieval rhetoric that provides one with everything necessary to invent the future poem. One rhetorician might, for example, privilege a particular aspect of rhetorical invention that another might not. This may alter rhetoric's path, but rather than undermining either approach, it enriches the information available for understanding interpretive means, as well as inventing texts.[46] Regardless, the individual author is responsible for applying the advice offered by rhetoricians. Hence, the individual author (of a rhetorical manual) is responsible for generating the reaction to rhetoric that shapes meaning in the minds of the audience(s). Because medieval manuals fail to discuss the relationship between how rhetoricians reshape rhetoric and how authors respond to the challenges this reshaping presents, modern authors are left without a clear,

single rhetoric of the Middle Ages describing how texts were meant to be invented, and how they were meant to be interpreted.

But medieval rhetorical manuals do leave us with clues regarding how we might approach medieval textual interpretation. Schultz notes that "Geoffrey of Vinsauf and John of Garland consider the ways of beginning in terms of the opposition between the *principium naturale* and the *principium artifiale*," a notion that medieval invention breaks from the Classical tradition (8). More importantly, Schultz's work looks to the underlying principles rhetorical manuals suggest in order to better understand the tradition. Schultz's comments also imply that for one to interpret medieval literature on its own terms, one need necessarily look to the rhetorical tradition, specifically to its evolution. Furthermore, one need look to the evolution of medieval rhetoric because it was not simply static; it was mercurial.

It is easy to observe situations in which rhetoricians developed distinct ways of approaching similar material. While the influence of one upon another is easily seen, one would not necessarily ascribe such an evolution to cause and effect. Glendinning, for one, has traced Geoffrey's influence on Gervase, with the point of departure being Gervase's treatment of oxymoron, which reflects a growing "preoccupation with antithesis": "It is certain that Gervase of Melkley . . . was a beneficiary of Geoffrey's *Poetria nova*, and it is Gervase who is the real casuist of contrariety in this period. His *Ars poetica*, written between 1208 and 1216, is our final piece of evidence of the age's increasing preoccupation with antithesis, leading finally to the conceptualization and reception of oxymoron in rhetorical theory" (905). Glendinning recognizes that Gervase's treatment of antithesis possibly leads to oxymoron playing a more significant role in the evolution of rhetorical theory. But Gervase articulates neither how authors should incorporate oxymoron, nor how audiences are supposed to respond. He does not even necessarily exemplify a conscious movement in rhetorical theory. However, he does articulate a shift in rhetorical practices that provides additional clues regarding how texts are invented and how they should be interpreted. His treatment of oxymoron offers at least two distinct possibilities: (1) He was concerned with inherent contradictions as a means of representing *materia*, and (2) audiences need to pay attention to those seeming or apparent contradictions in order to explicate a text. I'll return to the latter issue later, but only to raise some of the inherent possibilities that such an approach holds for inventing a hermeneutic. Gervase's tendencies thus establish oxymoron as a topos of invention in a manner that his predecessors didn't, thereby suggesting that audiences need to be more cognizant of it when reading.

It would be impossible—and perhaps ultimately useless—to argue an intentionality guiding the shifts in the focus of the manuals. Nevertheless, these shifts underscore the importance of being sensitive to what the authors of the manuals deemed significant for *their* audiences. Interpretations of medieval texts

by extension need to account for such alterations in rhetorical advice. Glendinning's underlying point suggests that in order for us to understand rhetorical theory in the Middle Ages, we have to first understand the subtle shifts suggested by changes in the advice. I suggest that we push this even further in order to unearth the hermeneutics underlying the manuals themselves.[47] Rhetorical manuals adapting practices to particular instances is not uncommon and begins with Saint Augustine advising authors to bend (*flectere*) an audience to a particular way of thinking.[48] Yet it is easy to assume that Augustine's advice is reserved for authors and perhaps audiences, thereby overlooking its inherent significance for authors of the rhetorical manuals. Little could be farther from the truth, and there is ample evidence that rhetoricians took Augustine's advice to heart.[49] The extent to which rhetoricians adapted and altered traditional rhetorical practices becomes significant because it suggests how they conceived of texts as presenting meaning. What medieval rhetoricians don't say concerning rhetoric, what they leave unwritten between the lines, is as important as—if not more important than—what they do say. As I will suggest later, our examination of rhetorical practices in the hope of generating a medieval hermeneutic should not be limited to rhetorical treatises. In fact, there is much to be gained from similar investigations of poetic works. Edgar H. Duncan, for one, has argued this point.[50] Duncan notes that "Chaucer adopted a means of amplification which he found described and illustrated in the *Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi* attributed to Geoffrey of Vinsauf" (199).

Adaptation of rhetorical practices is not simply limited to amplification. However, this is not to suggest that all evidence of textual interpretation is limited to a single rhetorical device or set of devices. In fact, little could be farther from the truth, which is what complicates this approach—one must look at the totality of how authors employ rhetorical strategies in order to understand how they (however unconsciously) determine the ways in which we should interpret their texts. For example, as Duncan also argues, Chaucer employs more than a variation of amplification to create his dramatic effect. "But something more dramatic than this repetition with variation occurs: the very device becomes dramatic" (Duncan, 207). Yet it seems that if one were to begin arguing for a hermeneutic of textual invention, it would be more useful to begin with the most elemental of rhetorical devices: the commonplaces, the topoi.

A logical starting point is the concepts that the manuals share in common with each other and the tradition, especially ones that exhibit some diversity of opinion in their formulation. For example, the notion of topos is an area of medieval rhetoric in which rhetorical advice is abundantly varied and amorphous. It's also an area that clearly illustrates the degree to which rhetorical manuals potentially influence textual invention, while offering clues to interpretation. Throughout the Middle Ages, topoi were perhaps more mercurial than any other rhetorical concept. "Thus, topics," as Michael C. Leff comments, "should lead

through art to nature, and the genuine art of invention does not reside in the pages of the theorist's book, but in the mind of the speaker."[51] Part of the reason for this seems to be that the commonplaces lose their value as methods by which a rhetor discovers an argument. They instead become subservient to rhetorical schemes and tropes partly because the study of rhetoric fragments into "three distinct groups differentiated according to the subject matters once treated by rhetoric but now concerned with verbal forms employed in those three fields in lieu of direct treatment of subject matter" (McKeon, 27). McKeon continues, commenting that "these three tendencies continue the terms and some points of the organization of the *Ad Herenium* and of Cicero's *De Inventione*, but the commonplaces which have been put to so many uses are no longer devices for discovering arguments of things and their traits, but devices for remembering, for amplifying, for describing, and for constructing figures" (McKeon, 28–29). The three tendencies to which McKeon refers are that (1) rhetoric had contributed to the study of law, which was being pushed toward theology; (2) preaching had taken on the trappings of ancient deliberative oratory; and (3) poetry oscillated between persuasion and composition, rather than grammar (McKeon 27–28). McKeon describes a crucial moment in rhetoric, one that clearly places the rhetor in the position of influencing the ways in which authors make meaning manifest.

To a large extent, this view situates the commonplaces at a distance from the actual invention of the text, instead moving them closer to a mnemonic device intended to aid in the invention of a text, rather than instilling it with overarching signification. But by subtly shifting the importance of the commonplaces from the macro- to the micro-level, medieval rhetoricians shifted the locus within which meaning resides and is constituted. Such a shift calls for audiences to interpret texts based on specific instances in the text, rather than the overall structure. To that end, inconsistencies with plot, for example, become less troublesome to the medieval audience than the ways in which the plots evolve.[52]

Furthermore, the reduced emphasis of commonplaces in the Middle Ages for generating the overall argument of the text establishes them as methods for developing or exhibiting the mental acuity of the author. "Approached in this spirit, the topics can enhance native ability and enlarge the capacity to recognize the argumentative possibilities in any case whatsoever. The topics, then are less important as molds for producing a type of argument than as exercises for developing the intellectual faculty of making arguments in general" (Leff, 34). Such a shift in emphasis suggests that audiences must refocus attention when interpreting medieval literature. That is, rather than resolving textual inconsistencies (especially at the plot or macro-level), audiences need pay closer attention to what meaning those inconsistencies might suggest. For example, what do the two clearly separate stories combined in *The Awntyrs of Arthure* share in common

that makes them necessary in the mind of the author or compiler to be so conjoined? Why is it that Chrétien de Troyes feels compelled to remind us that he's said all there is to say and anything additional is a lie? Is it simply because he indeed has said everything that he needs to say to make his point? But just because we as the audience can't make complete sense of his text doesn't mean that it's not complete or finished.

Implications raised by resituating the commonplaces suggest interpretive procedures that are closely related to author's state of mind. While scholars of Classical rhetoric might disagree, it is nonetheless clear that as rhetoric evolved toward and during the Middle Ages, a tendency to promote commonplaces as a means to demonstrate rhetorical skills also evolved. Despite the foundation laid by Cicero and others, the Middle Ages increased the tendency to utilize topoi as a means to an end on the micro-level. Quintilian "implies [the topics] have limited value in and of themselves. Their authentic function is to help promote the argumentative skills of the student, to foster the development of natural talents and to sharpen insight into cases that arise in the public arena" (Leff, 33). Leff's approach suggests that topoi are therefore a means to an end, and as such the exact usage constitutes a definition of the author's state of mind made manifest as meaning in the process of textual invention. The residue of such invention subliminally shapes the manner in which the text constitutes or, perhaps more appropriately, reconstitutes meaning in the mind of the audience. Shifting the focus of topics toward the micro-level creates a greater sense of allowing details to tell the story. Just as in life, invention becomes a string of more or less random events that requires the audience to supply the connections.

Altering the significance of topics in rhetorical invention, though, does not undermine their importance as tool for either invention or interpretation. Rather, it emphasizes their importance for both invention and interpretation. Consider for a moment the Classical definition of commonplaces: "rhetorical argumentation normally does not begin with fixed axioms in the manner of demonstrative reasoning. Instead rhetoricians must draw their starting points from accepted beliefs and values relative to the audience and the subject of discourse. When these beliefs and values are considered at a high level of generality, they become 'commonplaces' or 'common topics' for argumentation: the attempt to render a systematic account of such topics therefore has been a major concern of rhetorical theory from antiquity to the present" (Leff, 23). Clearly the intent is for rhetors to draw out their subject matter in a manner consonant with their intended effect upon the audience. Just as clearly, the spirit of this is transmogrified during the Middle Ages to allow the commonplaces to play a more prominent role throughout the invention of a text. Rather than being subjugated to the role of organizer—in the sense of bringing order to chaos—commonplaces in the Middle Ages take the place of generators, instigating how meaning is made manifest in texts. As a result, the "rules" of interpretation must change to

embrace such a change. Unfortunately, in the manuals, practice outstrips theory and leaves modern audiences holding the proverbial bag because the keys to interpretation lie not in what the text says, but rather in what it implies. Because practice so clearly and quickly implements theory, practice drives theory, leaving no clearly articulated record that bridges the gap between textual invention and interpretation.

But it is not only the mutation of the application of commonplaces that informs us regarding the shift from theory to practice as our guide for understanding the hermeneutics of textual invention. In fact, the process and implementation of invention itself plays a central role in revealing how we should approach medieval literature. "Invention is the technique whereby material is identified as suitable for treatment in the literary work; it also covers the adaptation of that material to authorial intention. It therefore includes both raw source material (*material remota*) and authorial changes in, and adaptation of, that material (*material propinqua*)."[53] Leff raises an important issue for textual invention: In addition to recognizing adaptations of rhetorical advice for its hermeneutic value, we must do the same with adaptations of the material itself. Medieval literature offers numerous examples of the transmission of common themes, such as the stories of the fall of Troy, or King Arthur and his knights. While many have focused on the lines of transmission as evidence of the importance of such stories, many times these studies overlook the importance and significance of the adaptations to a particular context to our understanding of the text. Overdetermining the importance of the source in the retelling sometimes can cause us to overlook the significance of changes to the source invented during the retelling as relevant to interpretation.[54]

Finally, we need to better understand what place rhetorical literary texts held in their historical context. Recognizing rhetoric's role in invention raises a second complementary issue that needs to be considered when trying to determine the hermeneutic underpinnings of rhetoric itself: To what extent can an author's adaptation of rhetorical practices be indicative of making meaning manifest in a text?[55] Since rhetoric in the Middle Ages becomes concerned with classifying signs and their uses independent of things (McKeon, 6), it follows that in order to better understand the signs, one need understand them in their particular contexts. Consider Martin Camargo's comments: "What little the *artes dictandi* do say about the context that defines a letter's function tends to be idealized and oversimplified: theory, as I shall show, is often at odds with practice. Yet that very gap between the theory and practice serves to expose certain tensions that both explicitly and implicitly preoccupied medieval writers and readers of letters."[56] Camargo clearly locates the necessity for audiences of the manuals to generate their own understanding of hermeneutics based on what the manuals don't tell us. Just as adaptations of rhetorical practices suggest an author's approach to making meaning manifest, an author's application of a

particular aspect of rhetorical training will likely reveal the intentions behind the invention. Glendinning reminds us of the importance of analyzing not only rhetorical manuals, but also the context(s) that gave rise to them.[57] This complicates the issue of interpretation, but it also significantly deepens our understanding of hermeneutics. In addition, it leads us to understand the importance of viewing rhetoric's relationship with text, particularly the ways in which rhetoric is appropriated, applied, and asserted.

Edgar H. Duncan, for instance, views Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Prologue" as adopting a form of amplification from Geoffrey's *Documentum*. He makes the point that Chaucer's application serves two complementary functions: (1) on a thematic level to invent "the means and denouement for Alice and Jankyn's struggle toward the experiential discovery of the true state of wedded bliss," and (2) on a structural level to invent the series of "stories of 'wikked wyves' of which the antifeminist tradition had supplied to Chaucer so rich a store" (Duncan, 211). Duncan has also pointed up the significance that viewing an author's adaptation of a particular rhetorical work's advice holds for hermeneutic understanding.[58] His focus was to explicate a source for Chaucer's application of amplification. At the same time, he implicitly demonstrates the importance such an adaptation has for bettering the audience's understanding and analysis of the text. Chaucer likely recognized that amplification would enable him to sum up before moving on; however, by situating his summation within an amplification focused on the topos of antifeminism, his text realizes a prevailing attitude toward women. Such an attitude invests the Wife of Bath with a certain amount of sympathy. At the same time, though, it generates irony. It was typical to practice rhetorical exercises by describing a woman. Here Chaucer subverts that notion by describing cultural attitudes toward women, rather than describing a woman, thereby juxtaposing the rhetorical tradition against itself. One might even suggest that the subversion of the expected rhetorical exercise might surprise the audience familiar with the rhetorical tradition, breaking the anticipated decorum. Chaucer in this manner facilitates meaning to manifest itself from the cultural context of persons and actions.[59]

Duncan's article also points up an inherent challenge that faces anyone employing medieval rhetoric as hermeneutic: As we move from the theory to the practice of rhetoric, it becomes more difficult to understand the significance for hermeneutics.[60] As a result, our understanding of hermeneutics lags behind our understanding of text and textual invention because while we struggle to understand the static text, we are continually confronted by the mercurial evolution of the rhetorical tradition itself. As discussed above, there is no consensus regarding the definition of topos. One might follow Geoffrey, describing his conception of topoi as focusing on "certain parts of speech used as topics of invention" (Gallo, 71), whereas it might be equally valid to view topoi of invention as being

derived from the "material element" of "argumentative content" (Leff, 29). The slippage occurs when attempting to reconcile an incomplete understanding of the evolution of the theory with the interpretive process.

One possible way to reconcile theory with interpretation is attempting to find an elemental, common ground that gives rise to rhetorical issues. Leff suggests that the key to understanding rhetoric is in understanding it on the propositional level: "In rhetoric, however, it is the proposition and not the term which emerges as the atomic unit of discourse. Apparently, any attempt to refine analysis below the propositional level would badly distort the way that speakers present and audiences process rhetorical arguments. The predicables play no role in rhetorical invention, since inference depends upon perceived connections between propositions taken as whole units. Moreover, in rhetorical argumentation, the required connectives are relative to the audience addressed, and thus they arise from and are verified by social knowledge existing within a community. Rhetorical topics are mechanisms for generating these connectives" (25). Thus, the topics of invention are not confined to being determined by any single type of invention; rather, they exist without reference to particular moments. They exist in and are derived from attempts to bridge the relation between author and audience as the author attempts to particularize the universal.

The relation of the particular to the universal implies that by studying the particular in context, we arrive at a notion of how authors conceived not only of their craft, but also of themselves, their audiences, and composition/interpretation theory in general. The debate surrounding which rhetorical manuals were employed to study—among other things—the relation between the particular and the universal in rhetoric further complicates the issue.[61] Because we cannot say for certain which rhetorical texts were studied by whom and at what time, we cannot with any certainty determine what influences existed at any given moment for any given author or group of authors. The theory and the practice of rhetoric in the Middle Ages are at odds. The result is that hermeneutic understanding suffers because it isn't obvious how the particular relates to the universal in medieval textual invention, or even how the curriculum tried to establish such a relationship.

Little is known relevant to the instruction of textual invention, apart from a general consensus concerning the prescriptive. The aspects of rhetorical instruction that we can describe with some certainty offer little insight for hermeneutics.[62] Consider Murphy's description of Latin grammar's influence: "As an accurate reflection of accepted Latin grammar at the end of the twelfth century, then, the *Doctrinale* deserves careful study by any serious student of medieval communication. The seemingly dry sections on such matters as the formation of verbs (Cap. VII, vv. 1048–1073), for instance, can provide revealing insights into the doctrines of language use that were standard during the

lifetimes of men like Geoffrey of Vinsauf and John of Garland. All the writers of the *ars poetriae* urge their readers to go beyond the 'ordinary' uses of language to devise new ways of expression. How can any of us gauge their efforts if we do not determine what was, for their time, the 'ordinary' use of language? Alexander's *Doctrinale*, and particularly his third section, provides a statement of the accepted doctrine" (1974, 149). Murphy's assertion that these documents provide clear indications for which doctrines of language were accepted during the twelfth century provides a keen insight into the dilemma posed by an investigation of medieval hermeneutics: How is it possible to understand interpretive practices when they weren't explicated? The answer lies in the texts themselves, both the manuals and the literary works.[63]

One final consideration needs to be raised at this point, the issue of textuality. Prior to the Middle Ages, the product of rhetoric (i.e., the text) existed apart from its context because many medieval texts were originally oral.[64] Not only did textuality forever alter the conception of rhetoric, but it also forever altered the scene of interaction between rhetor and audience, although not completely.[65] To more fully understand the nature of this interaction, though, requires that we better understand the influence that rereading a text had upon the ways in which authors and audiences conceived of texts as transmitting meaning. This issue will ultimately require closer consideration, once scholars have given due attention to the other clues regarding hermeneutics that the rhetorical tradition has left us with.

The Middle Ages did not leave us with a clear, concise hermeneutic. Far from it, the Middle Ages left us with a variety of texts describing how to invent meaning, in addition to texts that invented meaning without clearly discussing how to understand the invented meaning. But while it might be tempting to take this as an invitation to focus strictly on the manuals, the evidence suggests that rhetoric must always be discussed in relation to some subject.[66] In order for us to fully come to terms with how meaning was made manifest in texts during the Middle Ages, we must first come to terms with how authors and audiences understood meaning as being made manifest in texts. The only way to accomplish this, though, is to pay attention to what is not written, what is not explicated by the theorists and practitioners. The true history of rhetoric that many feel is lacking has actually always already been there, as de Man suggests. But in order to us to understand the unspoken history of rhetoric as hermeneutic, we must be able to read what is unwritten between the lines.

Notes

1. I would like to dedicate this to Fannie J. LeMoine. *Vaya con dios*.
2. Gerald A. Press, "Doctrina in Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 17.2 (1984), 98; hereafter cited in the text as Press. See especially the references in Press's first note (115).

3. John Miles Foley has articulated a parallel concern regarding the state of studies of oral literature ("Orality, Textuality, and Interpretation," in *Vox Intexta: Orality and Textuality in the Middle Ages*, ed. A. N. Doane and Carol Braun Pasternack [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991], 34–46, especially 35–36).
4. Georgiana Donavin, "The Medieval Rhetoric of Identification: A Burkean Reconception," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 26.2 (spring 1996), 52; hereafter cited in the text as Donavin. The embedded reference is to George Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 161.
5. The work that has been done tends to describe a rhetorician's approach, rather than suggesting what that approach might suggest for how we should interpret texts. Calvin B. Kendall, for instance, notes that in his discussion of tropes, Bede pays close attention to semantics ("Bede's *Historia eccesiastical*," in *Medieval Eloquence: Studies in the Theories and Practice of Medieval Rhetoric*, ed. James J. Murphy [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978], 162–172; hereafter cited in the text as Kendall; *Medieval Eloquence* hereafter cited in the text as Murphy 1978). Kendall's description of Bede's approach raises the question of to what extent a rhetorician's approach influences how an audience interprets a text without engaging it.
6. Speculative work regarding medieval rhetoric is made possible through the foundation laid by works by Edmond Faral (*Les arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle: recherches et documents sur la techniques littéraire du moyen âge* [Paris: Champion, 1924, 1958], and *Recherches sur les sources latines des contes et romans courtois du moyen âge* [Paris: Champion, 1913]); E. R. Curtius (*European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. W. R. Trask [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953]—hereafter cited in the text as Curtius); and James J. Murphy (*Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974])—hereafter cited in the text as Murphy 1974, in addition to Murphy 1978, among many others.
7. The fact that there was no overt theoretical discussion of medieval rhetoric capable of supplanting that of the Greeks and Romans has already been capably demonstrated by Richard McKeon, "Rhetoric in the Middle Ages," *Speculum* 17 (January 1942), 1–32; hereafter cited in the text as McKeon.
8. Press points toward a similar view when he discusses *doctrina*: "This brief survey of the meanings of *doctrina* suggests two relevant observations: first, the word has a variety of meanings—teaching, doctrine, the arts, and learning—that are not simply different; they are logically related to each other in an order, as I have arranged them, of increasing generality or inclusiveness. . . . In addition to the simply logical differences among a word's meanings, there is a second aspect to be considered; this could be called 'historical semantics,' because it has to do with changes in a term's meanings over time" (102–103). Press's observation is significant here for two reasons: (1) He recognizes the inherent ambiguity invented by the first Christian rhetorician, and (2) he points up the slippage that occurs over time regarding that same term.
9. Karin Margareta Fredborg notes that during the twelfth century, commentaries focused on invention and style with some attention given to other aspects

("Twelfth-Century Ciceronian Rhetoric, Its Doctrinal Development and Influences," in *Rhetoric Revalued: Papers from the International Society for the History of Rhetoric*, ed. Brian Vickers [Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1982], 88; hereafter cited in the text as Fredborg). I think it's important to note her assertion that this focus remains largely the same throughout the Middle Ages.

10. Fredborg also makes the important point that the doctrinal development in the twelfth century also required a substantial knowledge of Classical tradition that is presupposed (88). Her comment makes it clear that while the tradition developed, its developments were in approaches to rhetoric; hence, the dichotomous nature, whereby the material was both static and mercurial.
11. Murphy (1978) and McKeon both acknowledge this situation—Murphy by analyzing the three distinct arts that evolve employing the same or similar tools; McKeon by suggesting that rhetoric should not and, in fact, cannot be tied to any specific discipline because the techniques for invention cut across the disciplines. The implication is that the symbiotic relationship between rhetoric and subject might be more accurately be described as a situational one, determined at least in part by the exact circumstances of invention, rather than by the techniques chosen for invention. Murphy also discusses the distinctions between application of common rhetorical practices in a variety of contexts in some detail in "Introduction: The Medieval Background," in *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), vii–xxiii.
12. Eugene Vance holds similar views, although he focuses more on the text (*From Topic to Tale: Logic and Narrativity in the Middle Ages* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987], especially the introduction and Chapter 4; hereafter cited in the text as Vance). It seems important, though, to take a step back so we might begin by investigating the manuals themselves.
13. Vance articulates a similar concern, but situates the disjunction as "the incompatibility between topical theory itself and the cognitive paradigms of romantic philology and of classical and medieval studies in modern times" (42). His point is that topical theory has been largely been "neglected by intellectual historians and by literary critics" (41–42). The underlying premise, though, is that to overcome this perceived lacuna in our understanding, we must first link theory with cognitive paradigms.
14. See Donavin, 51–66.
15. It's entirely possible that poetry and rhetoric existed apart from a specific attachment to any particular genre. Two articles that attempt to bridge this gap are Murphy's "Poetry without Genre: The Metapoetics of the Middle Ages," *Poetics* (Tokyo) 11 (1979), 1–8, and my "Rhetoric without Genre: Orality, Textuality, and the Shifting Scene of the Rhetorical Situation in the Middle Ages," *Romanic Review* 82.4 (November 1990), 377–395; hereafter cited in the text as Troyan 1990. Murphy's main point was that the theory of poetic invention existed apart from any notion of genre, while my main point was rhetoric as a discipline exists apart from a preconceived notion of text. A. Kibédĭ-Varga goes even farther, suggesting that unlike Murphy's view that rhetoric developed during the Middle Ages into three distinct arts (cf. Murphy 1974), rhetoric is

actually all part of the same system, regardless of its specific applications ("L'histoire de la rhétorique et la rhétorique de genres," *Rhetorica* 3.3 (summer 1985), 201. Such a view supports the notion that we need to view medieval rhetoric from a more holistic perspective, rather than a compartmentalizing one.

16. See my "*Gawain* My Way: The *Ars Praedicandi*'s Influence on the Rhetoric of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," a paper presented at the Southeast Medieval Association in New Orleans, October 2001.
17. For an overview of medieval texts and their poetic theory antecedents, see James A. Schultz, "Classical Rhetoric, Medieval Poetics, and the Medieval Vernacular Prologue," *Speculum* 59 (January 1984), 1–15, especially 2–3; hereafter cited in the text as Schultz. Schultz discusses many of the popular texts among medieval rhetoricians. The caveat, though, that I would add to Schultz's premise is that popularity does not necessarily translate to or derive from theoretical importance.
18. John Bliese, "The Study of Rhetoric in the Twelfth Century," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 63 (1977), 366; hereafter cited in the text as Bliese.
19. Appropriation, as Schultz points out, though, is not evidence in and of itself to suggest authorial intentionality: "If I can easily show that Chrétien, in praising Philip of Flanders, violates part of Cicero's doctrine, then there is no reason to suppose, from the mere fact that Chrétien writes an encomium, that he has Cicero in mind at all" (7). Schultz's point is well taken, but this is a discussion for another time and place. All of which leads to speculation that medieval authors would also have adapted medieval rhetorical practices. This would imply a way of looking at the world that not only would naturally lead us to a clearer understanding of how authors conceived of inventing their texts, but also might offer some clue as to how we could interpret them.
20. For a full discussion of this topic, see Jody Enders, *Rhetoric and the Origins of Medieval Drama* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992).
21. See, for example, Press, 98.
22. Matthew of Vendôme, *Ars versificatoria* I.1–118; Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria nova*, III.
23. Schultz remarks, "Thus the strategy of modern scholars with regard to the parts of a prologue is rather like their strategy with regard to classical rhetoric. In each case they borrow categories from the prescriptive treatises and use these to describe medieval vernacular prologues. This procedure lends the scholarly discussion an air of authority; and yet, since the borrowed terms are used out of context, the implied authority is deceptive" (14, with embedded reference to Sam Jaffe, "Rhetoric in German Literature: Gottfried von Strassburg and the Rhetoric of History," in Murphy 1978, 288–295).
24. Suzanne Reynolds, *Medieval Reading: Grammar, Rhetoric and the Classical Text* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 73; hereafter cited in the text as Reynolds.
25. Rita Copeland makes this point regarding the sciences: "Thus for a medieval writer to change the role of rhetoric demanded not only saying something new about the art itself but repositioning it among the sciences" ("Lydgate, Hawes,

and the Sciences of Rhetoric in the Middle Ages," *Modern Language Quarterly* 53.1 [March 1992], 58; hereafter cited in text as Copeland).

26. For example, Murphy writes that "The very multiplicity of ranks and orders in an emerging feudal society had the effect of increasing the number of relationships—both social and legal—which came to be reflected in writing in one way or another. One ready solution to the problem of writing about such recurring situations was to draft a *formula*. . . ." (1974, 199).
27. Martin Nystrand's *The Structure of Written Communication: Studies in Reciprocity between Writers and Readers* (Orlando, FL: Academic Press, 1986) elaborates on this point, demonstrating the importance that the interaction(s) between text and audience hold.
28. Matthew of Vendôme, *Ars versifactoria*, 1.2.1.
29. Matthew of Vendôme, *Ars versificatoria* I.6–13: "ZEUGMA, id est, dicitur figura, quando multa pendentia aut in uno verbo aut in una sentential concluduntur. Verbo, ut Apostolus: ≪Omnis amaritudo et ira et indignation et clamor et blasphemia tollatur a vois.≫ Sententia autem, ut psalmista preponens: ≪Qui ingreditur sine macula et operator iustitiam; qui locatur veritatem in [p. 259] corde suo,≫ et cetera, ad ultimum ita concludit: ≪Qui facit haec non movebitur in aeternum.≫ ("2. ZEUGMA, that is to say, ≪yoking,≫ is the name for the figure when a number of dependent constructions are completed either by a single verb or by a single clause. An example of the former is when the apostle Paul says [Eph. 4:31]:≪Let all bitterness and anger and indignation and clamor and blasphemy *be put away (tollatur)* from you≫. An example of the latter is when the Psalmist, who begins [Ps. 14:2–3]: ≪He that walks without blemish and works justice; he that speaks truth in his heart≫, etc., finally concludes in this way [Ps. 14:5]: ≪*he that does these things shall not be moved for ever*≫." [Bede, *Libri II De Arte Metrica et De Schematibus et Tropis: The Art of Poetry and Rhetoric*, translated with an introduction and notes by Calvin B. Kendall (Saarbrücken: AQ-Verlag, 1991, 170, trans. 171)]).
30. "If you choose an amplified form, proceed first of all by this step; although the meaning is one, let it not come content with one set of apparel. Let it vary its robes and assume different raiment. Let it take up again in other words what has already been said; let it reiterate, in a number of clauses, a single thought. Let one and the same thing be concealed under multiple forms—be varied and yet the same" (Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria nova of Geoffrey of Vinsauf*, trans. Margaret F. Nims [Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1967], 24).
31. For a more complete discussion, see my *Textual Decorum: A Rhetoric of Attitudes in the Middle Ages* (New York: Garland, 1994).
32. John Gallo makes an important point that "[w]e have to ask ourselves how we are to understand the doctrines of the *Poetria nova*. We must not consider them simply as establishing procedures which every right-thinking medieval poet strove to follow" ("The Grammarian's Rhetoric: The *Poetria Nova* of Geoffrey of Vinsauf," in Murphy 1978, 71; hereafter cited in the text as Gallo).
33. Gallo continues, saying that "we will have to question the doctrines for the implications, the assumptions that stand behind them. In doing so we may have to

turn to other medieval arts of discourse, and we will certainly have to consider the actual practice of medieval poets" (71).

34. For examples of analyses of rhetorical texts that set the stage for the sort of analysis that I'm recommending, see Murphy 1978, 145–331. The second part of *Medieval Eloquence* provides a compendium of strong analyses of influential rhetorical texts that demonstrate both the rhetorician's and author's approach to textual invention. They also raise issues that lead us to further question and examine the underlying, unstated issues, such as how a rhetorician's or author's approach to invention informs an audience's interpretation.
35. This has been due in part to Murphy's *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*. While this groundbreaking work unquestionably invigorated interest in studies related to medieval rhetoric, it had the side effect of codifying that same rhetoric as three distinct parts. Rhetoric is—at its most elemental level—situational by nature and definition. Such codification as has occurred in Murphy's wake denies rhetoric's very nature.
36. Donavin asserts that "Recent scholarship in the history of rhetoric has uncovered the assumptions which contribute to the undervaluing of medieval rhetoric, although such scholarship has not seemed to restructure the way that medieval rhetoric is taught in survey courses" (51). Her concern is that medieval rhetoric is currently not given its proper due in college courses; however, the same could be said for current scholarship.
37. Paul E. Prill, for instance, argues for blending of rhetoric and poetry during the Carolingian period ("Rhetoric and Poetics in the Early Middle Ages," *Rhetorica* 5.2 [spring 1987], 129–147; hereafter cited in the text as Prill).
38. For a complete description of this phenomenon, see Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the 11th and 12th Centuries* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983).
39. Little has been written concerning the former issue, although Reynolds touches upon this issue some when discussing reading practices (especially Chapters 5 and 6). Concerning syntax, she notes, for example, that there is a failure in the grammarians "to acknowledge the different kinds of combinations at work," and that few "[pay] attention to issues of semantics or the hierarchy of relationships at work in any syntactical combination," which ultimately led to dissatisfaction formulations that led "to developing a series of concepts—government, restriction, determination—which account better for the complex forms of linguistic interaction that constituted the Latin phrase" (90). We might posit that a similar lacuna exists in the rhetorical manuals, as well. Vance has handled the latter issue well, especially Chapter 4.
40. *Poetria nova*, III.
41. Geoffrey, for instance, refers briefly to the importance of repetition before moving quickly on to periphrasis (*Poetria nova*, III), while Matthew lingers to discuss various forms and types of repetition, as well as their applications (*Ars versificatoria*, I.1–13). It is important to note that Matthew does not discuss repetition per se; rather, he discusses applications of types of repetition in a specific context. This may well indicate a shift toward a clearer understanding—at least in the manuals—of the importance of instructing how to affect a

response. This then of course begs the question of what significance this holds for someone interpreting medieval literature.

42. As Murphy has written regarding the differences among Matthew, Geoffrey, Gervase of Melkley, and John of Garland: "Each one attempts to provide advice for a writer wishing to compose verse in the future. To the extent that each work distills the precepts born of experience and observation and transmits these as injunctions for discovery, order, plan, and wording, then to that extent each of the six shares in the essence of that perceptive spirit which has always characterized rhetoric" (1978, 135). The line preceding this quote makes reference to Douglas Kelly, "Scope and Treatment of Composition in the Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Arts of Poetry," *Speculum* 41 (1966), 261–278, which coins the term "future poem" (273).
43. Schultz notes that "[i]f we add the recommendation to open with zeugma, hypozeuxis, or metonymy that is offered by Matthew of Vendôme and repeated by Eberhard the German to the treatment of natural and artificial order in Geoffrey of Vinsauf and John of Garland and to the unanimous recommendations of *sententiae* and *exempla*, then we have noted all that the prescriptive poetics of the Middle Ages have to say on the subject of beginnings" (10). While his view is limited to and focuses on offering a more complete understanding of beginnings in medieval rhetoric, it points up the importance of utilizing all of the available primary texts that we have. I would argue that we extend Schultz's premise in order to encompass more areas of rhetoric, so as to generate as complete and well rounded a view of hermeneutics as possible.
44. *De Doctrina Christiana*, I.
45. *Poetria nova*, v. 43–55.
46. Robert Glendinning, for one, has recognized this phenomenon, exemplified by his discussion of Matthew ("Eros, Agape, and Rhetoric around 1200: Gervase of Melkley's *Ars Poetria* and Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan*," *Speculum* 67 [1992], 903; hereafter cited in the text as Glendinning).
47. Glendinning mentions that "Geoffrey of Vinsauf, in his *Poetria nova*, makes far less practical use of the oxymoron than Matthew had done, but we find definite progress in his recognition of the device as a distinct aspect of metaphorical usage (*transumptio*)" (903). Later, he writes that "[i]t is important to observe the *route* by which Gervase arrives at his theory of the oxymoron" (908, my emphasis), and continues by noting that Gervase seems somewhat preoccupied with the sphere of love (Glendinning, 908), which would undoubtedly color Gervase's approach to rhetorical invention, let alone the approach of anyone reading and/or following his advice.
48. *De Doctrina Christiana*, I.
49. Again, we need only look to the ways in which medieval rhetoricians adapted Classical rhetoric as a starting point. Most rhetoricians color the potential author's approach to textual invention. For instance, opening "a poem with a proverb or example is made not only by Geoffrey, in both his treatises, and John, but also by Matthew of Vendôme and Eberhard the German" (Schultz, 8). Nonetheless, each has his own approach to how the opening makes meaning

manifest. Schultz continues his analysis to demonstrate how Classical rhetoric was remade by medieval rhetoric.

50. Edgar H. Duncan, "Chaucer's 'Wife of Bath's Prologue,' Lines 193–828, and Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Documentum*," *Modern Philology* 66.3 (1969), 199–211; hereafter cited in the text as Duncan.
51. Michael C. Leff, "The Topics of Argumentative Invention in Latin Rhetorical Theory from Cicero to Boethius," *Rhetorica* 1.1 (1983), 33; hereafter cited in the text as Leff.
52. See, for example, Douglas Kelly, "The Source and Meaning of *conjointure* in Chrétien's *Erec* 14," *Viator* 1 (1970), 179–200.
53. Douglas Kelly, "Topical Invention in Medieval French Literature," in Murphy 1978, 233.
54. As I've argued elsewhere in a much different context (1990), adaptation of the beheading story in two distinct contexts (*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and the story of Caradoc from the *Gauvain* continuation) suggests adaptation of a "generic" rhetoric to the constraints of oral or lettered rhetoric. Yet on another level, it becomes clear that the significance of the adaptation of similar source material (because, let's face it, no one can say with any real certainty that either or both authors were working from the same or even similar sources) suggests some important interpretive possibilities, not only for interpreting these particular texts, but also for strategies to employ when interpreting medieval texts in general. The *Gauvain* Continuation presents a more or less straightforward tale, in which beheading plays a role. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* places the beheading front and center, sometimes taking on an almost sermonlike quality (Troyan 2001). While the stories share a similar tradition, they nonetheless share dissimilar foci: One is more episodic, the other more overarching. *Caradoc* employs the beheading to make a point; *Sir Gawain* makes the beheading the point. Thus, they exemplify one of the primary differences between Classical and medieval rhetoric on at least one level: One employs the commonplace as a means to an end, while the other employs the commonplace as the end itself.
55. Looking more closely at the ways in which alterations in medieval rhetoric suggest interpretive practices, and recognizing these changes as making meaning manifest in text, enable us to push medieval hermeneutics farther in the future. Texts were invented not simply to entertain, but also to instruct. One area for further investigation that is overlooked in the context of interpreting medieval literature is the sense of texts teaching morals. This is not to suggest a lack of analyses concerning the moral aspect of literature so important from Saint Augustine on, but rather an abundance of analyses making texts make sense, rather than making sense of texts. "The latter emphasis [i.e., the judicial genre] leads to a series of questions, which were much discussed during the Middle Ages, concerning the relation of morals and eloquence, concerning the relation of art and wisdom, concerning the definition of rhetoric as a virtue or an art or a discipline" (McKeon, 14–15). As a result, the means by which morals are made manifest become central to our understanding of medieval hermeneutics.

56. Martin Camargo, "Where's the Brief?: The *Ars Dictaminis* and Reading/Writing between the Lines," *Disputatio* 1 (1996), 1; hereafter cited in the text as Camargo.
57. "The relationship between the two kinds of texts (i.e., rhetorical manuals and literary texts and their use of love and sex) appears to be closer than would be expected solely on the grounds that they were written in an age interested in both eros and rhetoric, and I have suggested that the relationship is symbiotic" (Glendinning, 892).
58. Schultz raises a similar point regarding Chrétien de Troyes: "What, scholars of this second group have asked, can the classical rhetorical treatises teach us about Chrétien's prologues? And what help might the medieval *artes poetriae* offer in studying the German prologues of the thirteenth century?" (Schultz, 1).
59. Leff comments, "[t]hus, when rhetorical argument is considered at the broadest, most general level, its subject matter consists of persons and acts. But since an argument must proceed from what is better known or more readily believed to that which is doubtful, the very subjects of the argument (the matters that are in doubt) cannot themselves furnish the resources of argument. Consequently, the argument must proceed from the attributes of persons and acts in order to resolve doubt about the particular person and act in question" (27). In a similar manner, Chaucer allows his antifeminist take on the Wife of Bath to be drawn from the general, broad level of literature existing during the latter part of the Middle Ages.
60. Camargo makes a similar point regarding the *ars dictaminis*: "Yet as soon as we move from theory to practice, inserting the static text into the dynamic context within which medieval letters circulated, the reality becomes much more complicated" (3).
61. Bliese investigates this issue: "When one turns to the major secondary sources that deal with the twelfth century, one finds their assertions so varied, so contradictory, that the whole subject [i.e., rhetoric as a part of the liberal arts] needs to be investigated. The problem centers around the seemingly simple questions: What textbooks were read in the study of rhetoric? Where? And to what extent? These questions are important because studying a subject in the Middle Ages normally meant hearing a teacher read a text and add comments as he went along. To determine what rhetorical principles were taught during a given period, one must first determine which textbooks were used" (365).
62. As Donavin points up' through her discussion of Woods, texts were employed primarily as vehicles for practice to prepare themselves to invent texts—and by extension, meaning: "For instance, the *litteratuizzazione* of rhetoric, which Kennedy describes as the bellettristic appropriation of rhetoric's principles for literary modes, must be seen as 'the genesis of communication, not its decadent offshoot' (Woods 93). When medieval schoolboys imitated the rhetorical ploys in literary passages, they were preparing themselves for invention theory and original composition, not suffering from a lack of opportunity in public speaking (Woods 87)" (52, with embedded reference to Marjorie Curry Woods, "The Teaching of Writing in Medieval Europe," in *A Short History of Writing Instruction from Ancient Greece to Twentieth-Century America*, ed. James. J. Murphy [Davis, CA: Hermagoras, 1990]).

63. Following Curtius's notion of the "'rhetorization' of Roman Poetry" (148), Prill concludes that "Poetry became a natural outlet for rhetorical training, especially after the establishment of the Republic" (131).
64. Camargo point makes a similar claim with regard to medieval letter writing: "But the clear distinction being made between presence/speech and absence/writing holds only if the letter is considered as an object rather than as part of a communication act, since the production as well as the reception of medieval letters was largely oral" (3). It is important to note that for Camargo the production as well as the reception of the message is central, even if the message is written.
65. "A speech and a poem, in the view of scholiast, can be written and analyzed in essentially the same way. The doctrines of style and order which were developed in the rhetoric handbooks apply equally well to poetry, and the ideal of wisdom and eloquence, so fundamental to Roman history, is preserved, albeit adapted for the writing of Christian poetry. Although it is not a theory of poetics, this commentary represents a clear and conscious effort to explain poetics in terms borrowed from rhetoric" (Prill, 138).
66. McKeon makes this point abundantly clear, when he states that "[t]he history of rhetoric should have as subject an art which, although it has no special subject matter according to most rhetoricians, nonetheless must be discussed in application to some subject matter: rhetoric is applied to many incommensurate subject matters; it borrows devices from other arts and its technical terms and methods become, without trace of their origin, parts of other arts and sciences; its own devices may be bent back upon themselves in such a way that any part of rhetoric or any matter incidentally involved in it—words and style, character and passion, reason and imagination, the kinds of orations, civil philosophy, practical action—may become basic to the definition of all technical terms and distinctions" (3).

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