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Translation in the classroom: the evidence of Additional 60577

Abstract

MS Additional 60577 is a collection of didactic and scientific late-medieval literature, including love lyrics, medical recipes, a *lapidarium*, astrological notes, and pedagogic poems. The compilation of this volume began around 1478, but the last texts were added as late as the mid-sixteenth century. The earliest sections constitute a self-standing group, associated with William Waynflete, Headmaster of Winchester College from 1429 to 1441-2. In the present paper I analyse a collection of *vulgaria* in the fifteenth-century section of the manuscript. *Vulgaria* are collections of sentences in Latin and English intended for translation exercises, often connected to performance for didactic purposes. These *vulgaria* appear to present a subtler didactic agenda than the usual collections of this kind: inviting the pupils to imitate the best Latin style, they also introduce the need to find a good *English* style, and to use translation as a way of improving and enriching the target language.

Texts with interlinear translations have long been a staple of classrooms throughout Europe, and witnesses such as Aelfric's *Colloquy*, a dialogue in Latin between a schoolmaster and a pupil (which might have been intended to accompany his grammar) with an interlinear gloss in Old English, show the vitality of the genre as early as the tenth century; the fact that the Old English gloss is by a different scribe also shows how other users of the manuscript might find it useful to have the gloss ready for the purposes of teaching. Yet, as an educational system developed in England, the need to join linguistic and moral instruction was felt more and more, and texts such as Aelfric's were substituted by more sophisticated collections, catering to the needs of pupils at different levels of literacy and introducing them to a diversified range of examples – although the dialogue form proved its vitality for centuries, as shown by the fact that as late as 1720 John Clarke would

publish an often reprinted *Erasmi Colloquia selecta, or the select Colloquies of Erasmus, with an English translation as literal as possible*, designed for beginners in the use of Latin. In the present article I will look at a late medieval instance, examining the presence of this type of didactic material in a fifteenth-century anthology.

Among the surviving collections of educational texts, British Library, Additional 60577, also known as the Winchester Anthology, holds great interest for the cultural historian. Re-discovered in 1979, after four centuries of oblivion, it is a mainly fifteenth-century collection of verse and prose in English, French and Latin, all in the same English cursive hand, with some sixteenth-century interpolations, a few marginalia and small drawings.[1] A number of items are unique to this manuscript, and some are of exceptional interest: it is the case of the only extant version of an anonymous Middle English verse translation of the first book of Petrarch's *Secretum*,[2] appearing on fols 8r-22v; or of a Middle English version of the French poem "Au roy qui ne ment" (fols 95r-107v). Yet, apart from these two texts, the rest of the collection has remained largely unexplored. What is even more interesting is that we can reconstruct the history of the manuscript with a fair degree of accuracy, and find a unifying principle at least for the fifteenth-century portions of the text.

Textual and codicological evidence clearly shows that Additional 60577 was put together at St Swithun's Priory, Winchester, in the late fifteenth century (fol. 107v bears the date 1487); sixteenth-century items were added in the same environment. The connection with Winchester College is evident: founded between 1378 and 1382 by William Wykeham, then Bishop of Winchester (who in the same years was also founding New College in Oxford), the College, built near the episcopal palace, was meant, like its counterpart in Oxford, to educate seventy poor boys in grammar and in the

[1] The manuscript was published in facsimile shortly after its rediscovery: see *The Winchester Anthology* 1981.
[2] Until 2018 this text was the object of sporadic studies: see Wilson 1982, Wakelin 2012, Petrina 2013, Khalaf 2017, Petrina 2018. Very recently this text has also been edited (Wilson and Wakelin 2018), in a volume which also offers a full description of the manuscript (pp. xvi-xix).

liberal arts; the stress on grammar and on linguistic education appears to have been a result of Wykeham's own policy. Throughout the following century the College maintained both its connection with Oxford and its stress on the liberal arts, which may be said to be represented in the manuscript under examination, exactly as the stress on theology that characterised New College might be represented by the section of the manuscript focusing on religious texts, prayers and meditational texts (fols 120r-146r). The original binding, which has survived though the codex has lost a number of leaves, allows us to identify this as the work of the "Virgin and Child" binder, who worked in Winchester in the late fifteenth century. The connection with St Swithun's (the monastery attached to Winchester Cathedral) is underlined by two lines that can be found on the front pastedown:

Omnibus apertum fiat fiat quoque certum
Sancti cenobij veteris me esse swythuni.

(Let this be clear and certain to everybody: I am of the old Priory of St Swithun)[3]

Different names appear in the manuscript, testifying to its owners or to people associated with it: on fols 224v and 225r-v we find the name of William Wey (1405/06-1476), a scholar and pilgrim, as well as a fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, between 1430 and 1439, and then a fellow of Eton College until 1467. Wey was also a writer, composing a collection of Latin sermons and a series of writings on pilgrimages in Latin and English (now Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 565), a fact which reflects his didactic role, since we find in the Bodley manuscript useful phrases in Greek and Hebrew, information on currency exchange, and practical advice (Summerson 2004, online). All three pages bear an inscription which reads "God haue mercy on the sowle of William Wey", in different hands (in at least two cases the hand appears to be fifteenth century), which bears the dating suggested by fol. 107v. At the foot of fol. 1r, and again, at the end of the codex (fol. 226r) one may read what is probably a note of ownership, "I. Buryton Monacus Sancti Swithuuni" (Buryton being actually written as

[3] Translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

"Bury" complemented by a tiny drawing of a barrel, or "tun"): he may be identified with John Buriton, monk of Winchester and sacrist of the Priory in 1536-37 (de Hamel 1979, 52-53). Yet another name connected with Winchester is that of Thomas Dakcomb (1496-*c.*1572), Winchester priest and canon, and collector of manuscripts: his name appears both at the bottom of fol. 1r and at the top of fol. 2r, in the form of a note of ownership ("liber dni Thome dakcomb pr[eciu]m xxd", the second part of the sentence being less visible on fol. 1r). Further connection with Winchester is offered by John White (1509/10-1560), who first entered Winchester College in 1521, at the age of eleven, became then a fellow of New College, Oxford, and in 1537 came back to Winchester as the headmaster, then becoming Bishop of Winchester in 1556-59; he is known to have composed verses against the Pope, verses which he taught his students (Carleton 2004, online), and is the author of one of the sermons included in the anthology, though his name does not appear in the manuscript (Takamiya 1979, 143). Finally, the presence, on the final pastedown, of a series of payments to members of the Priory proves a further link with Winchester (de Hamel 1979, 53). These names add interest to the anthology, not only in so far as they help give it a history of ownership and a secure location, but as they support the idea of a collection born and developed in a specific cultural environment. Besides, a linguistic study has revealed some elements of interest: the main scribe did not originally belong to Winchester, but appears to hail from East Leicestershire on the Rutland border; as he went on with his compilation, he learnt humanistic script as well as southern forms of spelling (Benskin 1981, 12). This suggests not only a continuative and systematic work, but also a work that spanned some years,[4] if it gave the scribe the possibility of modifying his language and hand.

The most interesting name, establishing a definite connection with Winchester, is that of William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester (c.1400-1486), celebrated with a poem on fols 22v-24r. Waynflete is one of the protagonists of English humanism, especially as it entered the sphere of education and promoted a development that would find its greatest

[4] Benskin 1981 (12) suggests 1451 and 1487 as the earliest and latest possible dates.

representatives in the early Tudor humanists, Erasmus, Colet and More. As headmaster of Winchester College, co-founder of Eton College (where he was Provost), and then founder of Magdalen Hall (then re-founded, still under his supervision, as Magdalen College), as well as of two grammar schools associated with Magdalen, Waynflete used his power and his royal connections to further the cause of education from grammar school to university, and in many instances anticipated some of the changes promoted by the influence of humanism. Among the people who benefited from his patronage is John Anwykyll (d. 1487), who would become master of Magdalen College School, and who is now known as the author of an extremely successful *Compendium totius grammatice*, first published in Oxford in 1483. In the 1489 edition, the full title is given: *Compendium totius gramatice ex variis autoribus, laurentio, seruio, perotto diligenter collectum, et versibus cum eorum interpretatione conscriptum totius barbarici destructorium, et latine lingue ornamentum non minus preceptoribus qua[m] pueris necessarium*. The *Compendium* in fact was complemented by a section which bears the title "Vulgaria quedam abs Terentio in Anglicam linguam traducta". This section has particular bearing for our reading of the manuscript.

Given what we know about the circumstances in which Additional 60577 was compiled, it becomes particularly interesting to consider it in light of its role as a didactic tool. A good number of manuscript collections survive, especially from the fifteenth century, including school poems or other school material; yet, as has been observed, "most of the manuscripts appear to have been compiled by pupils rather than masters" (contemporary illumination does show pupils holding books in their hands; Orme 1999, 455), while Additional 60577 is a more articulate and mature collection, evidently of monastic origin and produced by and for teachers. If we accept this hypothesis, and see the Winchester Anthology as an educational tool, often handled in class, a number of elements, such as the meaningless and often childish drawings we find throughout, make sense: it may be noted that in his *Philobiblon*, a series of writings on the acquisition and handling of books composed in the first half of the fourteenth century, Richard of Bury fulminated on young students covering books with their nonsensical writings:

Sunt autem specialiter coercendi a contrectatione librorum iuvenes impudentes, qui cum litterarum figuras effigiare didicerint, mox pulcherrimorum voluminum, si copia concedatur, incipiunt fieri glossatores incongrui et ubi largiorem marginem circa textum perspexerint, monstruosis apparitant alphabetis; vel aliud frivolum qualecunque quod imaginationi occurrit celerius, incastigatus calamus protinus exarare praesumit. Ibi Latinista, ibi sophista, ibi quilibet scriba indoctus aptitudinem pennae probat, quod formosissimis codicibus quo ad usum et pretium creberrime vidimus obfuisse.

(But the handling of books is specially to be forbidden to those shameless youths, who as soon as they have learned to form the shapes of letters, straightway, if they have the opportunity, become unhappy commentators, and wherever they find an extra margin about the text, furnish it with monstrous alphabets, or if any other frivolity strikes their fancy, at once their pen begins to write it. There the Latinist and sophister and every unlearned writer tries the fitness of his pen, a practice that we have frequently seen injuring the usefulness and value of the most beautiful books.)[5]

If such practices were deplored as early as the fourteenth century, it may be assumed that they were still followed in later years.

Two elements are of particular interest in the context of the Winchester Anthology: the presence of multi-lingual material, and the presence of texts which, today, we would call literary. Beside the Petrarch translation mentioned above, and the Middle English version of "Au roy qui ne ment", we can find other texts that qualify as translations, such as a long excerpt from Lydgate and Burgh's *Secreta Secretorum*, and the *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers* in Earl Rivers' translation (fols 38r-44v).[6] In addition, not only does this collection include, among much Latin material, items in French such as a poem on the Castle of Love (fols 80v-81r) and Latin prayers (fols 77r-78r, 87r-89r, etc.) as well as prose texts in Latin (such as the notes on astrology to be found on fols 117r-118v); it also contains, throughout the collection, verses, tags or short phrases in Latin and English, occasionally alternating the Latin with the English translation, the latter sometimes being

[5] de Bury 1960, 158-59. I would like to thank Jennifer Goodman Wollock, who, with her customary courtesy and enthusiasm, drew my attention to this passage.

[6] This text is analysed in Khalaf 2018. The Petrarch translation, the *Secreta Secretorum* and the *Dictes and Sayings* appear in a quasi-continuous sequence.

added in a different ink, if not in a different hand: there is, for instance, on fols 93r-v, a comic, possibly goliardic song, alternating lines in Latin and English. Other sections are not specifically concerned with language learning, but nevertheless linked with education: thus we find medical recipes, a *lapidarium*, astrological notes, and pedagogical poems, as well as some (fairly easy) Biblical riddles in Latin. There are also a number of short texts which may be identified with *vulgaria*, or collections of sentences in Latin and English intended for translation exercises, often connected to performance for didactic purposes.[7]

The term *vulgaria* brings us back to the circle of Waynflete's educational effort, since it appears for the first time in the opening lines of the second part of John Anwykyll's volume.[8] Anwykyll's collection is based on short extracts from Terence's plays, and "by 1530 it formed a great part of the daily routine in the grammar schools of England" (Sullivan 2008, 180). The popularity of *vulgaria* at Winchester did not stop with Anwykyll's death: timetables for 1530 suggest this exercise for fourth form students: "hath a verb providyd ageyne vij og the ye Clok when the Scholem[aste]r comyth in. And hase the verbe examined among them with vulgares upon the same. And after they write the laten that one of them shall make by ye assygnyng of the master" (Ibid.: 184). Anwykyll's *Compendium* enjoyed great popularity, judging from the number of times it was printed: in England and abroad, "at least six times between 1483 and about 1517, and the *Vulgaria* at least five times, the last occasion being as late as 1529" (Orme 1999, 459).

Vulgaria simply offer excerpts of everyday life in Latin, enjoining the student to acquire a conversational use of Latin that might remind the modern reader of *Let's Learn Italian* or similar volumes. Thus a standard history of English education notes: "dealing often with schoolboy situations, these *vulgaria* throw vivid light on school conditions at the time – the boredom and coarseness, the high spirits and grim humour, most of all the

[7] On this last point see Sullivan 2008.

[8] There are varying definitions of *vulgaria*. Paul Sullivan calls them "schoolroom exercises that interpolate colloquial English and Latin phrases" (Sullivan 2008, 179); Nicholas Orme, perhaps more narrowly, calls them sentences in English that the pupil was asked to turn into Latin; the master would have a model translation into Latin (Orme 1973, 98).

fear and flogging"(Lawson and Silver 1973, 51). Often schoolroom performance and linguistic teaching are united in these exercises, and they constitute an excellent model for an approach to language learning that became standard throughout the sixteenth century, not only with reference to the learning of Latin in grammar schools, but also with the spreading popularity of modern vernaculars. This method appears to anticipate William Caxton's own *Dialogues in French and English*, published in 1480, and to find full development in Roger Ascham's celebrated method of double translation.[9] Though Caxton himself seems to have had very little interest in the printing of school texts, other printers were more active: in the ESTC we find 41 editions of *vulgaria* printed in England between 1480 and 1534. In 1512 John Rastell printed *Linacri progymansmata Grammatices vulgaria*, a collection redacted by Thomas Linacre, opening with dedicatory poems by Thomas More and the grammarian William Lily.

Anwykyll's effort appears to have been directed not at the mere teaching of Latin, but at the improvement of Latin style along classical models – an effort that seems to have met with the full approval of William Waynflete. Indeed, Anwykyll's collection of *vulgaria* was "the first to take the Latin phrases predominantly from an identified classical author" (Wakelin 2007, 137). It is tempting to see a connection between Anwykyll's book and the items in Additional 60577, a manuscript that was composed, in its fifteenth-century section, around the time of Anwykyll's untimely death. The collocation and nature of the *vulgaria* present in Additional 60577 may help us locate with more precision in time and in cultural environment these didactic tools in the context of the development of education, and might also help us get rid of some commonplaces associated with this micro-genre.

There are, of course, recurrent characteristics in these collections, given their purpose: thus Orme observes that "the earliest printed *vulgaria*, those of the early Tudor schoolmasters, show a consistent attempt to interest their readers by taking themes from everyday life, contemporary events and even schoolboy humour, but this method of enlivening lessons was not an

[9] In his *Scholemaster*, Ascham characteristically criticizes "such beggarly gatherings as Horman, Whittinton, and other like vulgars"; see Ascham 1967, 14, 107.

invention of the Tudor period and was indeed far older […] For this reason the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *vulgaria* collections are a treasury of allusions to the life and interests of the time" (Orme 1973, 99). Other critics, such as Paul Sullivan, have found subversive potential in Latin *vulgaria*, arguing that through the choice of examples linguistic education was linked with "rehearsal for social self-advancement" (Sullivan 2008, 180). It is indeed arguable that a form of indoctrination may be recurrent in all similar exercises, and it is tempting, when analysing early Tudor *vulgaria*, to link them to the Tudor policy of enforcing education in a humanist scheme in which learning is part of a political agenda, and answers the need of the monarch to forge a new ruling class; Linacre's collection, mentioned above, has a colophon in which the printer maintains that he has operated "with the priuylege of our most suuerayn lord kyng Henry the. viii. graunted to the compyler thereof. that noo man in thys hys realme sell none but such as the same compyler makyth pryntyd for ye space of ii. yeere" – a statement that expresses at the same time the king's alleged interest in the enterprise and the printer's fear of non-authorised versions competing with his on the book market. On the other hand, manuscript examples show that in fact the practice is much earlier and at the same time much more diversified, and is better known in its sixteenth-century development only because the spread of printing has made these texts more readily available and easier to consult for a modern scholar (when looking at a medieval manuscript anthology, *vulgaria* are probably the last thing that might capture a scholar's eye). We should also consider the possibility that many of the printed *vulgaria* collections contain material already available in the previous decades in manuscript: teaching is a fundamentally conservative occupation.

John Anwykyll's *Compendium* and *vulgaria* are nowadays considered among the most notable marks of the nascent interest in humanism; the former drew "not only on the established work of Alexander and Evrard but on the new Italian masters Perotto and Valla, and gave citations from Cicero, Horace, Quintilian and other classical authors" (Orme 1973, 107). Yet even Anwykyll's own printed *vulgaria*, in spite of his claim to use literary, classical

sources, offer very much the standard fare.[10] His sentences seem much more preoccupied with correct grammatical construction and everyday use than with memorability: the section opens with "God spede you. Save you or rest mery. Saluete. Salve. Saluus sis christo";[11] then the book continues with salutation formulas that may be supposed to be in common use, clearly distinguishing the English sentences (printed in much smaller type) from the Latin. Although the Latin phrases do come from Terence's comedies (even in the case of very simple sentences, such as the depressingly obvious "This I am sory fore. Hoc michi dolet"; Anwykyll 1483, sig. p.v v), the writer's attention obviously is on their suitability, and on maintaining a very basic level of syntactical complexity, with occasional flashes of homely wit such as what we find on sig. o.vii r, "They shall soon ete the out of house. Prope diem te exedent". Daniel Wakelin is right in noting that "Like many early founders of humanism, Waynflete apparently did see his school as a way of disseminating and enforcing a particular standard of Latin" (Wakelin 2007, 133), and his allusion to Terence in the opening page of his collection might be a shrewd business manoeuvre but also a reference to an authority on good Latin style, to be followed for everyday discourse. In following Wakelin's suggestion, one may trace a clear line of development in the learning of Latin in late medieval and early modern England, as the use of newly available classical sources and the new attention paid to style was finally perfected into the effort of acquiring this same classical style in one's own writing. Roger Ascham would suggest this explicitly, and contemporary English humanists such as Thomas More would do so implicitly. One may also see a clear development in the school curriculum, as the pupil passed from spelling and pronunciation to inflections, constructions, vocabulary, and then to composition.[12] John Florio would follow the same pattern of everyday conversational phrases in his *Firste Fruites.*

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[10] "The grammar contains mnemonic Latin verses of a long-established kind and the sentences in the *Vulgaria* resemble those which occur in earlier school manuscripts, so that much in his work was familiar. His presentation of new wine in old bottles was successful, for both works had a long life" (Orme 1999, 459).

[11] Sig. n.i r. I am quoting from the Bodleian Library copy of the 1483 edition.

[12] I am here summarizing the *cursus* suggested in Orme 1973, 87.

The analysis of the *vulgaria* appearing in Additional 60577 allows us to add a new element to this line of development, and to free *vulgaria* from their very restricted definition and scope. Of course, though much of the content of the Winchester Anthology supports our hypothesis that the manuscript was put together for teaching purposes, it is difficult to say at which level of teaching it worked, or whether it was meant for students at various levels of learning. Some of the items, in fact, appear to indicate quite an elementary readership: the most obvious cases are the alphabet followed by the three basic Christian prayers, *Pater Noster*, *Ave Maria*, and *Credo*, on fol. 120 (the standard fare of children's hornbooks), and the so-called *ABC of Aristotle*, an alliterating poem appearing on f. 56v, whose incipit runs thus:

† Crystys crosse be oure spede: I[esu]s grate mercye in all oure nede
A to amerous to aventurous avyse us ye aunswere.
b to busye to bolde bowrde not to broode.
c to crewelle to catchynge care nott to soore.
d to dulle to dredefulle drynke not to deepe.
e to eylynge to excellente loke untue ye selve[13]

This is a fairly common type of text in the very small corpus dedicated to children's education in late medieval England.[14] Other items, such as the text appearing on fols 50v-51r – the prose account of the appearance of a comet, beginning "Clerkys of Oxenford have determynyd" – or the *Carta Generis Humani*, a poem in which salvation is explained in the form of a charter in verse appearing on fols. 114v-115r,[15] may have been meant for a more mature audience, ready to turn an interested ear to a scientific or theological text. If we follow the guidelines offered by historians such as Nicholas Orme, *vulgaria* belong to a very early stage of Latin learning,[16] and offer little interest

[13] For the identification of this text see Wilson 2000, 296.
[14] The poem appears also, in slightly different versions, in London, Lambeth Palace Library, Lambeth MS 853, p. 39, and in London, British Library, Harley MS 5086, fol. 90v; these versions are printed in Furnivall 1868, 9-12.
[15] On this type of text, see Spalding 1914.
[16] Though Orme 1999, 468, specifies that even at University level, student might need some remedial instruction.

beside their linguistic purpose. Yet many of the *vulgaria* present in Additional 60577 may be of interest even for the modern reader.

The largest and most interesting group appears on fols 67r-77r, accompanied by occasional *manicula* and small marginal notes. Unfortunately, before fol. 67 some pages are missing, and the section opens with an incomplete sentence, "[vocabu]larium in gramatica disputationi optim[e] idiomatum doctissimum ab antiquitate est proponendum" ("one should propose a very learned dictionary, drawn from antiquity, for the better examination of words in grammar"). What follows is a long series of sentences in Latin, occasionally annotated in English on the margins or with interlinear glosses; for instance, on fol. 72v the Latin sentence "Janua nostra stant patefacta singulis noctibus" ("Our doors stand open every night") has the word *opyne* written over *patefacta* (a Ciceronian word, appearing in the *Catiline Orations*), and *euery* over *singulis*, thus giving students (or even teachers) help with the most difficult words of the sentence. Starting from fol. 72v, the English translations begin to be inserted as part of the main text, although in a different hand and ink from the Latin – sometimes the appropriate spaces have been left empty. The layout is similar to what we find in Anwykyll's printed work, in which the English version is in lighter ink and smaller type.

The translations in Additional 60577 are lively and precise: "Annus quem aliquis timet est bonus annus autem" is translated with "Drede yere good yere" (fol. 73v). Many of the Latin sentences are not attributable to a classical author, but appear in other children's books. For instance, the passage

Ingenium dolus est / amor omnis ceca voluptas / ludus scuritas [*rusticitas?*] et gula festa dies / Etas ridetur mulier pulsatur amore / Dives laudatur pauper adheret humo /

appears also in other manuscripts, such as Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, Kk.4.24, fol. 187v, but the translation varies. The CUL manuscript has only the first part, translated as:

Trewþe ys turnyd in-to trecherye
chast loue in-to lecherye
pleye and solas to velenye
and holyday to glotonye. (Wenzel 1974, 74)

Worcester Cathedral MS 85, fol. 110v, has a longer version, with a translation using the same semantic fields:

Wytte is trecherie, love is lecherie,
Playe is vylaynye and halyday glutonie.
Old men is schemed, women her wowed:
Riche men ys glosed, poore men is bowed. (Eloyer 1906, 84)

Additional 60577 offers an analogous version for the first half, but then opts for a completely different approach in the second half:

Wyt is trechery luff ys lechery play is vylany and holyday is glotony / Olde men ar stonyde & women ar woneyd / ryche men ar louyde & pore men are dampnyde / (fol. 75v)

The translation preserves the structure and brevity of the original, but also strives for an original recreation rather than a simple translation. Later on in the same page, we find the continuation of the Latin poem with this couplet, underlined by a marginal sign:

Prudentes ceci cognati degenerantur·
Mortus ignotus nullus amicus amat

This is a section which does not appear in the Cambridge or Worcester manuscripts, here translated thus:

Wysse men ar blynd / & kynnysmen ar unkynde / dethe ys oute of mynde / and frende can no man fynde / (fols 75v-76r)

It is evident that the writer has attempted to maintain the rhythm and syntactic construction of the previous section. Many sentences are without a translation, and in these cases too one can see the compiler striving for originality and the surprise effect. For instance, on fol. 73v we find the sentence, “Quanto pulchrior est virguncula tanto magis est agagula”, which can be translated with, “However beautiful the little virgin is, the little bawd is so much more beautiful”, a sentence which sounds startling in the context

of education. In this case, the sentence is also highlighted by an elaborate *maniculum* on the margin.

In comparison with the *vulgaria* collected by Anwykyll, these texts are notable for their poetic, gnomic élan, both in the choice of the Latin verses and, more notably, in the translation. The sophistication of the passages selected, and the freedom of the translations, make us suppose that manuscript collections of *vulgaria* had a variety and a search for originality that the printed versions did not possess. In his 2012 article, Daniel Wakelin offers an analysis of perhaps the most famous item of the Winchester Anthology, the Middle English translation of the first book of Petrarch's *Secretum*, seen in the context of fifteenth century English religious humanism. His conclusions re-state the close relation between items apparently so disparate in the collection: in the *Secretum* translation, for instance, a number of elements alert the reader to classical references and to the need of participating actively in the study of the text: thus the translation "challenges readers with some learned vocabulary for logic […] for philosophical schools […] for academic life […] and for psychology" (Wakelin 2012, 241), while, even more interesting from our point of view, the text contains classical quotations (from Cicero, Virgil, Ovid and Horace), not all of which are translated. The Petrarch translation works as a multipurpose text, inviting the reader/pupil to engage with it at various levels, requiring a degree of linguistic awareness that represents a step up from the *vulgaria* appearing forty folia later. Yet even these short texts strive not only for literacy but for what we would call a literary quality, thus offering a proof of what another fifteenth-century book of instruction for children, known as *Caxton's Buke of Curtesie*, enjoins its young readers to do:

Excersise your self also in redynge
Of bookes enornede with eloquence
Ther shal ye fynde / bothe plesir & lernynge
So that ye may / in euery good presence
Somwhat fynde / as in sentence
That shal acorde / the tyme to ocupy
That ye not nede / to stonden ydelly. (stanza 45)

Seth Lerer sees here an exhortation to find in books "examples of good topics of conversation and models of eloquence with which to shape [one's] speech".[17] Both this poem and the texts in Additional 60577 offer instances of the heightened attention towards a literary language in English that was developing in the second half of the fifteenth century, while, with Geoffrey Chaucer, John Gower, and the following generation of courtly poets, a canon of English literature was taking shape. William Caxton would take this development a step further, and it is no surprise that, along with Chaucer's poems or religious texts such as *The Golden Legend* or Mirk's *Festial*, he would also print this *Buke of Curtesie* and other educational poems. Thus didactic translation, and the effort to imitate a good Latin style, introduced the need to identify good models of English style – *ryme* and *sentence* were finally reunited.

The need for such a unification had been long felt, as we can see if we turn back a century, and look at what Thomas Usk, writing during the reign of Richard II, would state in the Prologue of his *Testament of Love* (printed for the first time in 1532):

> Many men there ben that with eeres openly sprad so moche swalowen the delyciousnesse of jestes and of ryme by queynt knyttyng coloures that of the goodnesse or of the badnesse of the sentence take they lytel hede or els none. (Usk 1998, Prologue, lines 1-3)

Thus Usk re-states the opposition between "elegance and stylistic lack, rhetoric as excess and as cultivation of meaning" (Wogan-Browne *et al.* 1999, 28), positing French and English as respective representatives of these two attitudes, and vindicating the uniqueness and richness of English vocabulary even in comparison with Latin and French:

> In Latyn and French hath many soverayne wyttes had gret delyte to endyte and have many noble thynges fulfylde; but, certes, there ben some that speken their poysye mater in Frenche of which speche the Frenche men have as good a fantasye as we have in heryng of Frenche mennes Englysshe. And many termes there ben in Englysshe whiche unneth we Englysshmen connen declare the knowlegynge: howe shulde than a Frenche man borne suche termes conne jumpere in his mater, but as the jay chatereth Englyssh? Right

[17] Lerer 2008, 77. See also Petrina 2011.

so, trewly, the understandyng of Englysshmen wol not stretche to the privy termes in Frenche whatsoever we bosten of straunge langage. Let than clerkes endyten in Latyn, for they have the propertie of science and the knowynge in that facultie; and lette Frenchmen in their Frenche also endyten their queynt termes, for it is kyndely to their mouthes; and let us shewe our fantasyes in such wordes as we lerneden of our dames tonge. (Prologue, lines 25-27)

Whilst defending an apparently uncouth language and proclaiming its specificity, Usk shows his awareness of the rhetorical possibilities of English; the last sentence in this quotation, with its elegant, tripartite structure, appears to project a model in which all three languages find their scope and identity in their association with different groups of speakers. Yet, if in the case of French and English the reference is to the speaker's physical origin (French is *kindely* to their *mouthes*, English is learnt *of our dames tonge*), in the case of Latin the writer is fully aware that the difference resides not in innate qualities, but in the process of learning: the vocabulary is no longer of body parts or blood relations, but of acquisition (the *propertie* of science) and intellectual range (the *knowynge* in that *facultie*). While the opposition with French is stated in terms of natural inclination, in the case of Latin Usk reminds us of the advantages of education; and if, in speaking of French, he alternates the Anglo-Norman *endyten* and *queynt* with the indigenous *kyndely* and *mouthes*, while speaking of Latin his vocabulary includes the Latinate, almost academic terms *science* and *facultie*; indeed, one might posit that, in celebrating the individual virtues of indigenous language, Usk is also subtly showing the advantages of lexical borrowing. His defence of the uniqueness of English exalts at the same time the results of a semantic exploration based upon a contrastive approach.

Usk's Prologue highlights two of the great themes underlying most reflections on writing on the part of late medieval English authors: in the first passage quoted above, it offers a meditation on the relation between form and matter, *ryme* and *sentence*, memorably illustrated by his near-contemporary Robert Henryson in the famous Prologue to his *Fables*:

The nuttis schell, thocht it be hard and teuch,
Haldis the kirnell, sueit and delectabill;

Sa lyis thair ane doctrine wyse aneuch
And full of frute, vnder ane fenyeit fabill.[18]

The metaphor is counterintuitive for modern readers who have developed a love of literature heavily coloured by the aesthetics of perception: as noted by James Simpson, "for the moralist who seeks abstract meanings in fiction, the shell is tough and the kernel sweet. For the lover of narrative, however, it's the other way around".[19] This passage shows the attention paid by late medieval writers to the outward form of the text – whether intended as style, as literary genre, or even as the *polysemy* Dante underlined as characteristic of his poem in his *Epistola XIII*, the letter written to Cangrande della Scala (Alighieri 2016, 346-51): the literal meaning (the *fenyeit fabill* of Henryson's prologue) might be nothing more than a cloak covering and disguising different and more complex meaning, whether allegorical, moral, or anagogical. At the same time the writer must carefully explore the relation between outward and inner meaning, the shell and the kernel of Henryson's metaphor, so as not to abandon the unaware reader to a fruitless contemplation of the *jestes* of the text.

In the second passage, Usk explores the relation between English and its two authoritative neighbours, French and Latin, cloaking his own English sentence in the same garments of Latinate rhetoric he appears to reject, exploring through style the possibilities of English. In so doing he draws attention to an issue specific to Anglophone writers. Contemporary poets and scholars, Chaucer *in primis*, obviously saw the advantage of opening the emerging national language to as many influences as possible: praised as *grant translateur* by his contemporary Eustace Deschamps,[20] Chaucer used not only themes and images but also the vocabulary of the Romance languages from which he was translating – Latin, French and Italian – to enrich literary English, while half-playfully encouraging its use in passages such as the Prologue to *A Treatise of the Astrolabe*. It is especially striking that he should

[18] Prologue, ll. 15-18. Henryson 1981, 3.
[19] Simpson 2003, 225-26. In his edition of Henryson, David Parkinson underlines that the allegory is a traditional one (Henryson 2010, 162).
[20] See Deschamps' ballad to Chaucer in Deschamps 1880, 138-40.

be so explicit about the use of the national language in writing for a young reader: an analogous attitude can be found in late medieval education, as shown in the *vulgaria* analysed here. English is used as a necessary intermediary while the pupil is achieving a basic knowledge of Latin.

Translation into the vernacular was a primary tool for the education of the young, since such education was based on the learning and use of classical Latin; as Roger Ellis has underlined, it became a vehicle for the learning of *sentence*, representing an "initiation into a world of knowledge and experience not readily available to them in their own tongue" (Ellis 2008, 53). In this context, the acquisition of linguistic ability was a means rather than an end, and the early exercises in translation strove to offer rudimental moral teaching under the guise of linguistic chores. By the end of the fifteenth century the emergence of English as the language of education and literary writing, prognosticated by Thomas Usk, was finally taking place.

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