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Article abstract

Mobility in learned circles was a reality in the Europe of the Middle Ages, and it is only when we consider the reception of well-known works, such as the thirteenth-century Roman de la rose, in the countries where they circulated in the local language that we are able to gain a more complete understanding of their impact on literary and cultural currents even after the authors had passed away. Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun's conjoined Roman de la rose (1236, 1269-78) is without a doubt one of the foundational works of French medieval literature with over 360 extant manuscripts. Focusing on two non-French adaptations of this work that appeared within a century of the date of its composition, I show that these translations, or more accurately rewritings, enabled its survival and contributed to its sustained popularity in medieval Europe. The adaptations that are the subject of this analysis are Il Fiore, a thirteenth-century translation and adaptation into Italian often attributed to Dante, and the Romaunt of the Rose, commonly attributed to Geoffrey Chaucer. I conclude that through the medieval practice of interpretatio, the authors of the Fiore, and the Romaunt of the Rose adapt the original text to reflect their own contemporary cultural realities.

The Afterlife of the *Roman de la rose*

Christine McWebb

Few medieval works have enjoyed the same popularity and renown as Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun's conjoined *Roman de la rose,* which is without a doubt one of the foundational works of French medieval literature with over 360 extant manuscripts. This work has provoked much controversy, debate, and scholarship in the past as well as today.[1] It is comprised of two fundamentally different parts; the first 4000 lines composed by Guillaume de Lorris in 1236[2] as a conventional dream allegory is followed forty years later (1269-78) by Jean de Meun's continuation, who adds another 17,000 to the poem, deploying markedly different rhetorical strategies.[3]

In this article, I will examine how non-French adaptations of the *Roman de la rose*, particularly those that appeared within a century of the date of its composition, enabled its survival and contributed to its sustained popularity in medieval Europe. In this context, I will focus on two such adaptations: *Il Fiore*, a thirteenth-century translation and adaptation into Italian often attributed to Dante, and the *Romaunt of the Rose,* commonly attributed to Geoffrey Chaucer.[4] I am particularly interested in the work's adaptation into cultural

1 Much has been written about the reception of the *Rose*, mostly focusing on Jean de Meun's continuation and in particular the issues surrounding the Quarrel about the *Roman de la rose* (1401-1402). I will list some of the more important contributions only: Pierre-Yves Badel. *Le roman de la rose au XIVe siècle. Etude de la réception de l'oeuvre* (Geneva: Droz, 1980); Kevin Brownlee and Sylvia Huot (eds.), *Rethinking the Romance of the Rose: Text, Image, Reception* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1992); Sylvia Huot, *The Romance of the Rose and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993); Susan Stakel, *False Roses: Structures of Duality and Deceit in Jean de Meun's Roman de la Rose* (Stanford: Anma Libri, 1991); Eric Hicks (ed.) *Le débat sur le Roman de la rose* (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1996); Marilynn Desmond, "The *Querelle de la Rose* and the Ethics of Reading," in *Christine de Pizan: A Casebook*, eds. Barbara K. Altmann and Deborah L. McGrady (New York: Routledge, 2003), 167-80; David F. Hult, "The *Roman de la Rose*, Christine de Pizan, and the querelle des femmes," in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Women's Writing,* eds. Carolyn Dinshaw and David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003) 184-94; Daniel Heller-Roazen, *Fortune's Face: The Roman de la Rose and the Poetics of Contingency* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2003); Christine McWebb, *Debating the Roman de la rose. A Critical Anthology* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

2 The date of composition and indeed the existence of Guillaume de Lorris have never conclusively been proven. Most recently, Christopher Lucken, "Jean de Meun, continuateur, remanieur et auteur du *Roman de la rose* de Guillaume de Lorris," in *Jean de Meun et la culture médiévale. Littérature, art, sciences et droit aux derniers siècles du moyen âge* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2017), 81-106 suggests that instead of considering the two *Romans* as notably different, such as has been argued by Paul Zumthor in "Récit et anti-récit. Le *Roman de la rose*," *Langue, texte, énigme* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1975), 249-64, 249, and Daniel Poirion, *Le Roman de la rose* (Paris: Hatier, 1975), 5, we might arrive at more meaningful conclusions if we focus instead on the coherence between the two works, a theory A.M.F. Gunn already defended in 1952, in *The Mirror of Love. A Reinterpretation of The Romance of the Rose* (Lubock, Texas: Texas Tech P), 144. After demonstrating that Guillaume's poem did indeed enjoy great success, proven by the multiplication of manuscripts that preceded Jean de Meun's continuation, Lucken suggests that Jean de Meun, however, was responsible for both poems. He bases his conclusion on a range of thematic commonalities between the two works, which seem to prepare the reader of the first poem for its continuation. Ultimately, we can never be certain of the authorship of the first *Rose*.

3 It is commonly accepted today that Jean de Meun continued the *Roman de la rose* and finished it between 1269 and 1278. On this topic see *Le roman de la rose*, ed. Félix Lecoy, vi–viii. All quotes are from this edition.

4 The *Roman de la rose* has also been adapted into Middle Dutch by two translators, who worked independently from one another; the first titled *Tweede Rose* (Second Rose, approximately 1290) and the second, *Die Rose* (approximately 1325). I will not include these adaptations in my study because they have been analysed in detail by Dieuwke E. van der Poel in "A Romance of a Rose and Florentine: The Flemish Adaptation of the *Romance of the Rose*," in *Rethinking the Romance of the Rose. Text, Image, Reception*, 304-15; and van der Poel, *De Vlaamse Rose en Die Rose van Heinric: Onderzoekingen over twee Middelnerlandse bewerkingen van de Roman de la rose (avec un résumé en français)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1989).

contexts that made sense to contemporary readers of Northern Italy and Chaucer's England respectively. In addition to these foreign rewritings/translations, the *Rose*, especially Jean de Meun's continuation, has been the subject of many rewritings in its country and language of composition, such as Gui de Mori's *Remaniement du Roman de la rose* composed at the same time as the *Fiore,* or Guillaume de Digulleville's *Pèlerinage de vie humaine* (1355), creating a vibrant and varied afterlife, to use Walter Benjamin's term:

> Just as the manifestations of life are intimately connected with the phenomenon of life without being of importance to it, a translation issues from the original — not so much from its life as from its afterlife. For a translation comes later than the original, and since the important works of world literature never find their chosen translators at the time of their origin, their translation marks their stage of continued life. (71)

An afterlife presupposes an altered state of the original work of art, though the connection to the original and its continued existence is guaranteed by means of the translation. The medieval translation of poetic text is no exception in this regard, though 'translation' is to be understood in the medieval sense of *interpretatio*. More than Horace's *fides interpres*, the translation of a text must be considered as part of the original's reception history alongside analyses of its adaptations, citations, rewritings. Indeed, and as Douglas Kelly has shown, "translation and *interpretatio* are fundamental strategies in medieval composition," (58) a concept which arguably would elevate translations of the *Rose,* for example, on the same generic level as the multitude of adaptations of the Graal-cycle. Translation, in the foundational sense of *mouvance,* now a commonplace term coined by Paul Zumthor, must be seen in the medieval context as literary invention, as a fluid reconstruction of a source text.[5] Before turning in more detail to the *Rose's* translations in Italian and in English, however, a brief description of their source is useful.

The *Roman de la rose*

The *Roman de la rose* boasts of employing the formal tradition of dream visions and encapsulating Ovid's *Ars amatoria*. However, originality rather than slavish imitation characterizes Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun's conjoined *Roman de la rose.* The unifying thread that binds both parts of the *Roman de la rose* together is the amorous quest of the Rose and the exploration of love in its varied facets. To support their claims, both authors rely heavily on the *auctores* in the art of love, among them Ovid's *Ars amatoria* and his *Metamorphoses*, Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae*, the *De amore* by Andreas Capellanus, and finally the *Anticlaudianus* by Alanus de Insulis. Though not a translation in which the author translates closely from one language into another, the *Roman de la rose*, especially Jean de Meun's continuation, rewrites selected passages from *auctores* whom Jean admires. One such *auctor* is Boethius, and the statement uttered by *Raison* (Reason) in praise of Boethius and the need for a translation of *De consolatione philisophiae* is significant:

> n'est pas vostre païs en terre,
> [c]e peut l'en bien des clers enquerre,
> qui Boece *de Confort* lisent

5 For a more detailed discussion of this terminology see Claude Buridant, "*Translatio medievalis*. Théorie et pratique de la traduction médiévale," in *Travaux de linguistique et de littérature* 21.1 (1983), 81–136; Elizabeth Drayson MacDonald, "Translation or Re-Creation? A Textual Comparison between Two Sections of Juan Ruiz's *Libre de buen amor* and Their Latin and French Counterparts," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 35.4 (1999), 372–85; Brenda Hosington, "From 'Theory' to Practice: The Middle English Translation of the *Romans of Partenay*, or of *Lusignen*," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 35.4 (1999), 408–20; and Douglas Kelly, "The *Fidus interpres*."

> et les sentences qui la gisent,
> donc granz biens aus gens lais feroit
> qui bien le leur translateroit. (Lecoy, ll.5005-10)
> (your country is not here on earth, as you can learn from the clerks who explain Boethius' *Consolation* and the thoughts contained in it. If someone were to translate this book for the laity, he would do them a great service.) (Horgan, 77)

Jean de Meun did in fact go on to make a complete prose translation of Boethius's *De consolatione* later in his literary career, although not in the *Roman de la rose*. As such, Jean de Meun inserts the *Roman de la rose* itself into the tradition of *interpretatio* before it becomes in its turn a source for further rewritings and adaptations.

The first two lines of a brief prologue in Guillaume de Lorris' *Rose* assert the truth of dream visions, which are neither "fables" (fables) nor "mençonges" (lies). After twenty lines validating dreams and citing Macrobius, the narrator embarks on a dream voyage during which he falls in love with a rose, enclosed and protected by a walled garden. The narration allegorizes courtly conventions in the framework of a battle between *Bel Accueil* (Fair Welcoming), *Vénus* (Venus), *Franchise* (Generosity of Spirit), and *Pitiez* (Pity) on the one hand, and their opponents fighting in defence of virginal modesty and chastity on the other: *Dangier* (Danger), *Honte* (Shame), *Peur* (Fear), *Jalousie* (Jealousy), and *Male Bouche* (Foul Mouth). The rosebud, symbol of virginity, the most valued and precious object in the hierarchy of female virtues, must not be plucked but must be protected and defended. Guillaume de Lorris depicts the lover's sufferings and longings, his enduring yet vain efforts (most clearly seen in the second part of the text) to conquer the heart and body of the young maid, epitomized in the Rose. All the courtly topoi designed to enchant the medieval reader with the magic of a springtime world are present. But Guillaume's text ends abruptly upon a scene in which *Jalousie* has locked the *Rose* in a tower in order to secure her from the lover's advances.

With Jean de Meun the tone moves from the courtly to the philosophical, thus reflecting the interests of late thirteenth-century scholasticism. Although de Meun continues the narration of the protagonist's love quest, the reader now finds that it is all too easy to lose the narrative thread, interrupted as it is by a flood of digressions in the form of philosophical dissertations. The allegory of courtly love becomes a battle between various other allegorical figures, some of whom, for example, *Genyus* and *Nature* are Jean's additions to Guillaume's narrative. In the course of the battle, many subjects such as love, friendship, and fortune's arbitrariness, and various political issues are treated. The reader is reminded of the main plot from time to time, but is forced to wait until the end of the text for the final outcome when the Rose reaches her final destiny, namely defeat. After multiple attacks on the fortress built by *Jalousie*, the lover plucks the rosebud.

Guillaume expressed his desire that the work be called the *Romanz de la rose*: "Et se nule ne nus demande/comant je veil que li romanz/soit apelez que je comanz, ce est li *Romanz de la Rose,*/ou l'art d'Amors est tote enclose" (Lecoy, ll.37-38) (And if any woman or man asks what this romance that I am beginning should be called, it is the *Romance of the rose* in which the whole art of love is contained) (Horgan, 3). The title might suggest that we are simply dealing with a chivalric or courtly fictional work written in the vernacular; however, Jean de Meun added complexity by referring to the *Rose* as *Miroër aus Amoreus* (*Mirror of Lovers*) (l. 10621, 163), situating not only his continuation, but the entire work in the literary genre of the medieval mirror as a moralistic work of instruction.

The *speculum* genre was born with Saint Augustine's *Speculum Augustini,* a florilegium of moral texts from the Old and the New Testament, which expanded its range in the Middle Ages to encompass a variety of works written for the moral edification of its readers. With Thomas Aquinas and Saint Bonaventure, both contemporaries of Jean de Meun, the moral or didactic mirror undergoes a generic transformation in that it is inserted

into the discipline of philosophy where "speculum" refers to an encyclopedic text, such as the *Speculum mundi* or Vincent de Beauvais's *Speculum maius* (Bradley, 113). In Jean de Meun's *Miroër aus Amoreus,* a plethora of topics is discussed by the many allegorical personifications*,* so that Laurent de Premierfait in *De casibus virorum illustrium* (1409) describes it as resembling an encyclopedia rather than a courtly romance:

> Cestui poete Dant, entre plusieurs volumes nouveaulx estans lors a Paris, rencontra le noble *Livre de la rose*, en quoy Jehan Clopinel de Meung, homme d'engin celeste, peigny une vraye mappemonde de toutes choses celestes et terriennes. (McWebb, 422)
> (This poet, Dante, discovered among several new volumes, which were in Paris at that time, the noble *Book of the Rose,* in which Jean Clopinel de Meun, a man of celestial intelligence, depicts a veritable *mappamundi* of all things heavenly and worldly.) (McWebb, 423)

More than merely a courtly narrative therefore, the *Roman de la rose* must be treated as a didactic work for lovers as well as an encyclopedia providing a wealth of knowledge to its readers.

As the Quarrel about the *Roman de la rose* between the work's proponents, most notably the clerics Jean de Montreuil and the brothers Gontier and Pierre Col and its opponents, the writer Christine de Pizan and Jean Gerson (1401-1402) attests, the *Rose* retained its popularity throughout the fourteenth century and still enjoyed influence in the early fifteenth and well into the sixteenth century.[6] According to the *Archives littéraires du moyen âge (ARLIMA)*, there are 43 print editions from c.1480 to 1538 before the popularity of the work begins to wane.[7] For the purpose of this article, I will turn my attention to the two adaptations that introduced the *Roman de la rose* into Italy and England respectively.

The *Roman de la rose* and the *Fiore*

The *Fiore* has survived in only one manuscript H. 438 housed at the Bibliothèque universitaire de Montpellier (fols 111r-139v), where it is bound together with a copy of the *Roman de la rose* (fols 1r-110r). There are no miniatures in this manuscript, and it has been dated to the fourteenth century, though the original *Fiore* was composed between 1282-1293, so only a few years after Jean de Meun completed his continuation. According to the editors of the most recent edition and translation into English, Santa Casciani and Christopher Kleinhenz, *The Fiore and the Detto d'Amore*, the handwriting is in a style that was used in Tuscany (6).[8] As pointed out by Earl Jeffrey Richards (265) and the editors of the *Fiore* (7), ever since the publication of the first edition in 1881 by Ferdinand Castets, the dating (and the authorship) of the translation has been controversial and has never been conclusively confirmed.[9]

The 109 folios taken up by the *Rose* in this manuscript, contrasted with the 28 folios for the *Fiore,* indicate that the latter represents a much abridged version of the original work, and a much changed one, since the poem in Italian has been rendered in sonnet style instead of the original verse form consisting of 232 sonnets. Both parts of the *Rose* are of

6 For a thorough analysis of this epistolary debate, I refer to McWebb, *Debating the Roman de la rose*.

7 https://www.arlima.n3et/il/jean_de_meun.html#ros

8 Gianfranco Contini's 1984 edition, *Il Fiore e Il Detto d'amore/attribuibili a Dante Alighieri* (Milan: Mondadori, 1984) should also be mentioned.

9 Much of the scholarship on the *Fiore* focuses on the possible attribution of this poem to Dante; see in particular E. Jeffrey Richards, "The *Fiore* and the *Roman de la rose*;" John Took, *Dante, Lyric Poet and Philosopher: An Introduction to the Minor Works* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990); Peter Armour, "The *Roman de la rose* and the *Fiore*," *Journal of the Institute of Romance Studies* 2 (1993): 63-81; and Patrick Boyde, "*Summus Minimusve Poeta*? Arguments for and against Attributing the *Fiore* to Dante," in Barański and Boyde, eds. *The Fiore in Context*, 13-48. Since this question is not the main focus of my article, I shall not pursue this issue further.

course written in rhyming couplets. It is easy to overlook the fact that the sonnet was introduced into the Italian vernacular about 100 years prior to Petrarch's seminal collection of 317 sonnets. Invented in southern Italy, the sonnet was quickly adopted all over the country and became a widely used and popular poetic form for the next three centuries.[10] Stylistically, the sonnet owes much to its Provençal counterpart, the *canzo*, favoured by the troubadours and frequently sung. A long poem with an identical rhyme scheme, it was one of the earlier forms of vernacular literary expression, another element it shares with the later sonnet.

As a poetic form of expression, the sonnet, through its brevity of fourteen lines, relays a certain immediacy, or as Michael Spiller says, the poet has to "come to the point" quickly if he wishes to express anything at all (11). Its preset closure through the sestet that follows the octet further reinforces its characteristic of 'coming to the point,' of urging the poet to formulate a concluding statement quickly and decisively. Arguably, the *Fiore* poet's abridged version of the *Rose* is mirrored then in the sonnet as a poetic means to focus on the essence of the original only. To this point, E. Jeffrey Richards shows that the *Fiore* poet was "deliberately selective and his radical recasting may be illustrated by a switch from macroscopic analysis to a microscopic comparison of the translation with the original" (267). It should be noted also that the *Roman de la rose* is never mentioned as the *Fiore's* source. Richards points to the vastly reduced presence of *Raison* (Reason) in the *Fiore*; the varied attention given to *Ami* (Friend), *Faus Semblant* (False Seeming), and *Vieille* (Old Woman) — the passage of the *Vec[c]hia* (Old Woman) extends from sonnet 139 to sonnet 199 — and the total absence of *Nature* (Nature) and *Genyus* (Genius).

In addition to selectively recasting the *Rose* to suit his own interests, the *Fiore* poet creates a more generic courtly romance. At the beginning of the translation in the second verse of sonnet 1, the lover instead of gazing at a Rose gazes at a generic flower:

> Lo Dio d'Amor con su' arco mi trasse
> Perch'I' guardava un fior che m'abellia
> Lo quale avea piantato Cortesia
> [...]
> (With this bow the God of Love pierced me
> while I was gazing at a Flower that pleased me,
> the Flower that Lady Courtesy had planted (36-37).

Castets emphasizes this change by titling the entire work *Il Fiore* in his 1881 edition.

Typical metaphors of courtly discourse follow: the God of Love, having pierced the lover with his bow, makes him his loyal and submissive servant; the arrows named *Bieltà* (Beauty), *Angelicanza* (Angel-Like), *Cortesia* (Courtesy), *Compagnia* (Social Grace) and *Buona Speranza* (Good Hope) penetrate his body. It is worth noting that Guillaume de Lorris uses the terms *Simpleice* and *Biau Samblant* instead of *Angelicanza* and *Buona Speranza*. Omitted are the five ugly arrows that are listed by Guillaume de Lorris in the *Rose*: *Orguelz* (Pride), *Vilennie* (Baseness), *Honte* (Shame), *Desesperance* (Despair), and *Noviaus Pensers* (Inconstancy) (Lecoy, ll.961-69). The poet employs the feudal metaphors that are customary in courtly discourse to describe the relationship between the lover and his beloved, and between the lover and his lord, the God of Love:

> E per più sicurtà gli diedi in gaggio
> Il cor, ch'e' non avesse gelosia
> Ched'i' fedel e puro i' no·gli sia,
> E sempre lui tener a segnó·maggio.
> (And as further assurance, I gave him my heart

10 For an excellent introduction on the sonnet, I refer to Michael R.G. Spiller's *The Development of the Sonnet*.

> As a pledge, so that he would not worry
> That I might not be true and loyal to him
> And always hold him as my lord master.) (40-41)

I would argue that streamlining the original work into a more generic courtly romance affords the *Fiore* poet the liberty to appropriate the text culturally to contemporary life in Italy and specifically Tuscany, taking it out of its original French context.

In what follows, Chastity lauds Jealousy as the best guardian for the Rose (Flower):

> Donde vo' siete la miglior guardiana
> Ch'i' 'n esto mondo potes[s]e trovare.
> Gran luogo avete in Lombardia e 'n Toscana.
> (As a result, you are the best guardian
> that I could ever find in this world.
> You are well known in Lombardy and Tuscany.) (78-79)

These geographical references do not appear in the original text; nor do the mentions of Bologna as a place of learning, or Catalonia as a reference to a far-away place in sonnet 23. In sonnet 126, *Falsembiante* (False Seeming) threatens those who defy him with heresy, specifically the heresy of the Patarines, who used to be persecuted in Tuscany and in Florence around the time of composition of the *Fiore*. Jean de Meun limits his reference in the same passage to heretics from Milan without naming them or referring to a specific sect (ll.11693-709), though it is likely that he, too, could have intended the Patarines because their most ardent opponent was the Archbishop of Milan in the eleventh century.

As is well known, Tuscany in particular felt the influence of French culture in the Duecento, which suggests that the references to this region in the *Fiore* point to the author's insistence on creating an independent Italian literary work.[11] In his analysis of Italian responses to French cultural dominance, Kevin Brownlee concludes that,

> [t]he *Fiore* thus presents itself as an implicit continuation/rewriting of the *Roman de la rose* which simultaneously and explicitly conceals its direct link to its French model, in the interest. . . of a newly emergent Italian claim to literary and linguistic primacy and authority that must, paradoxically, be based on a French vernacular model that is both evoked and denied. (279)

I agree with this statement, but would like to push it further to state that the author stages the *Fiore* as an Italian work that is inserted into an Italian poetic tradition through the use of the recently popularized sonnet on the one hand and its insertion into a geo-cultural context of northern Italy on the other.

The *Roman de la rose* and the *Romaunt of the Rose*

The Middle English translation of the *Roman de la rose*, allegedly composed by Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400) has survived in a unique manuscript, MS Glasgow Hunterian Museum 409 (formerly V.3.7), though a relatively recently-found single leaf of this text testifies to the existence of at least one other complete manuscript: this is now among the papers of the Reverend Joass forming part of the Sutherland collection housed in the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh. Coincidentally, the lines on the leaf, 2395-442, are missing from MS Hunter 409 (Horobin, 210). Written on vellum, the manuscript is

11 On the relationship between Tuscan and French culture, see Carlo Dionisotti, *Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana* (Turin: Einaudi, 1967), 134-39; and Paul Meyer, "De l'expansion de la langue française en Italie pendant le Moyen Age," in *Atti del Congresso internazionale di scienze storiche. IV: Sezione storia delle letterature* (Rome: Tipografia della R. Accademia dei Licei, 1904), 4:61-104; both quoted in Barański and Boyde, 227.

extremely well preserved with numerous illuminated initials and colourful marginalia produced in the same style throughout. There are no miniatures.

Chaucer attests to the translation as being his in the prologue of the *Legend of Good Women*, where he proclaims: "For in pleyn text, withouten nede of glose, / Thou hast translated the Romaunce of the Rose," yet he has not managed to convince all modern scholars who are preoccupied with the reception history of this work (Benson, ll. 328-29, 597). The text of the *Romaunt* is typically referred to as fragments A, B, and C, and the current scholarly consensus is that Chaucer was responsible for fragment A only. Without going into the details of the authorship debate, suffice it to say that evidence of the change in translator between the fragments lies in the areas of lexis, dialect and source text. The question of the authorship of this early translation of the *Rose* has created much discussion and controversy since the nineteenth century, as outlined by Dahlberg (5-24) and Robinson (29).

In order to ascertain how MS Hunter fits within the framework of the *Rose*'s afterlife, it is necessary to look at the translation not as a collection of three fragments, but rather as a material artifact that ought to be considered as a whole. As Stephen G. Nichols and Siegfried Wenzel point out: "Beyond transmitting basic information about a given text, [the manuscript] speaks to us about its social, commercial, and intellectual organization at the moment of its inscription" (2).[12] With reference specifically to MS Hunter 409, Robinson confirms that, "codicologically speaking, the Glasgow manuscript is actually largely complete," and concludes that "[t]here is, then, no compelling reason to describe this manuscript as particularly codicologically 'fragmented'" (31-32). This argument would be strengthened by the discovery in 2009 of the single leaf fragment mentioned above. From a codicological point of view, the only elements that interrupt the regularity of the decorative scheme and the written text are, first, folio 57v, which boasts an unusually lavish decoration in the left margin zooming in on the beginning of the line: "The God of Love whanne al the day/. . ." (Benson, 718, l.2951), leading to the disappearance of the God of Love, and leaving the lover to fend for himself in the pursuit of his flower. Second, between folios 91r and 102v, red lettering indicates the names of characters and in the case of folio 102v there is a section title in French. And third, the section following folio 115v bears the title *Falssemblant* (False Seeming) in the top margin on each folio, suggesting that the scribe attempted to draw the reader's attention to this allegory, an editorial element that is worth exploring further.

Similar to the *Fiore*, the *Romaunt* represents a creatively interpretative response to the *Rose*, an *interpretatio*. According to Larry D. Benson, editor of the *Riverside Chaucer*, who based his own edition on Thynne's 1532 printed edition, which in turn used MS Hunter 409 as its source text, "Fragment A and B consist of all of Guillaume [de Lorris's] section of the *Rose* (1-4432) and Jean [de Meun's] continuation to verse 5810. C takes up the translation some 5000 lines later in Jean's work, with the [God of] Love's barons planning an attack on Jealousy's fortress and the confession of Faux-Semblant (False-Seeming)" (686). The corresponding verse lines for A and B in Lecoy's edition are lines 1-4028 for Guillaume de Lorris's section, 4029-5124 for Jean de Meun's section. Fragment C starts in line 10651 and extends to line 12323. Before the end of Fragment B, Reason in her attempt to deter the lover from his object of desire deliberates at length about the advantage of poverty, which, in her mind leads to honesty and virtue, whereas wealth, in turn, leads to vainglory and deception. She names lawyers, physicians, and preachers as examples of those who fall prey to the sin of deception in their pursuit of wealth. She then

12 However, notably in the field of translation studies, scholars have also focused on only one of the fragments, negating Nichols' and Wenzel's approach. To mention here is Laura Campbell's analysis of Fragment A, applying James S. Holmes' 'mapping' method in "Reinterpretation and Resignification: A Study of the English Translation of *Le Roman de la rose*," *Neophilologus* 93 (2009): 325-38.

goes on to condemn misers who are willing to sell their souls, and in the case of women their bodies, all in the interest of amassing wealth. In her view, deception and the selfish pursuit of wealth go hand in hand:

> For if this gredy, the sothe to seyn,
> Loveden and were loved ageyn,
> And good love regned overall,
> Such wikkidnesse ne shulde fall;
> But he shulde yeve that most good had
> To hem that weren in nede bistad,
> And lyve withoute false usure,
> For charite full clene and pure.
> Defendyng hem from ydelnesse,
> In all this world thanne pore noon
> We shulde fynde, I trowe, not oon. (747, ll.5791-5802)
> (If those who heap up riches loved and were loved, and true love reigned everywhere and such wickedness should not occur and he who had most gave more to those he knew to be in need, or lived not as a false usurer but in pure and simple charity, defending him from idleness, then there would be no poor men in the world, nor should there be any.) (Horgan, 78-79)

Fast forward to the beginning of Fragment C, some 5000 lines later in the original *Rose*, and the reader gets to the passage leading up to the sermon of *Fals-Semblant* who is about to launch into his plan of attacking the castle of Jealousy, concocting devious plans together with *Abstinence* to carry out the plot. *Fals-Semblant*, of course, is the allegorization of deception and lewdness, the child born of *Fraud* and *Hypocrisy*.

In this passage, all barons save *Wealth* are in support of letting *Fals-Semblant* and *Abstinence* back into the army and to lead them into battle. *Wealth*, however, is no longer welcomed, as she has discovered that the protagonist does not seek to acquire riches, but is only motivated by gaining access to the Flower. As sincere as this seems, the reader quickly learns of *Fals-Semblant's* scheming and deceptive behavior as the *God of Love* welcomes him into the army of barons with open arms inviting him to pledge loyalty to him precisely because of his traitorous nature:

> 'Fals-Semblant,' quod Love, 'in this wise
> I take thee heere to my servise,
> That thou oure freendis helpe alway,
> [...]
> Certeyn, thou art a fals traitour,
> And eke a theef; sith thou were born,
> A thousand tyme thou art forsworn. (750, ll.6061-72)
> (False Seeming, you are now mine, on the understanding that you help all our friends. . .You are without doubt an evil traitor and an utter scoundrel and have broken your word countless times.) (Horgan, 168)

Although the translation, as preserved in the Hunterian MS, has skipped some five thousand lines of Jean de Meun's continuation of the *Rose*, it connects the dots, so to say, nonetheless on a thematic level. Looking at the choice of sections Chaucer and possibly other translator-poets selected for their translation, though fragmentary when comparing it to the *Rose* text as a whole, there is a thematic coherence, which leads to the conclusion that the editor/scribe of the Hunterian manuscript or his source selected those *Rose* passages that were of interest to them, and which they felt would find resonance with the English-speaking public.

Fals-Semblant is disguised in the garb of a mendicant friar — antifraternal discourse was part of Chaucer's literary tradition, as it was of de Meun's, for example through the satire on the mendicants in his *Testament*. The reader is reminded here of the role of Pandarus in *Troilus and Criseyde*, for example, or Friar John's unwitting criticism of the hypocrisy of the mendicant friars in the *Summoner's Tale*.[13] Pandarus, the master rhetorician and Criseyde's uncle, fares as the go-between of his niece's love affair with Troilus and has more than once been associated, if in subtly different ways, with several allegories in the *Rose*, such as *Ami* (Friend), *Raison* (Reason), and *Vieille* (Old Woman).[14] Pandarus is often associated with traitorous, manipulative, deceptive, and evil behavior linked to antifraternal discourse. Havely points out that, "[i]f it seems odd to suggest that Chaucer is using the vocabulary and imagery of antifraternal satire to characterize the strategies of persuasion to love, then we should remember that this sort of procedure is even more explicit in one of his most familiar texts: the *Roman de la rose*" (255). It is no coincidence then that fragment C of the *Romaunt* is dedicated heavily to *Fals-Semblant's* tirade against religious orders and their hypocritical and fraudulent behavior. It concludes with *Fals-Semblant* being confirmed by *Wicked-Tonge* (Wicked-Tongue) as an excellent teacher and confessor, placing himself above the wisdom and knowledge of any prelate or priest:

> Of all this world I have the cure,
> And that hadde never yit persoun,
> Ne vicarie of no maner toun.
> And, God wot, I have of thee
> A thousand tyme more pitee
> Than hath thi preest parochial,
> Though he thy freend be special.
> I have avauntage, in o wise,
> That youre prelatis ben not so wise
> Ne half so lettred as am I.
> I am licenced boldely
> To reden in divinite,
> And longe have red... (767, ll.7680-93)
> (I have charge of all the world, which no parish priest ever had. And I have one hundred times more pity than your parish priest, however good a friend he may be. I have also one very great advantage: prelates are not nearly so wise nor so well instructed as I. I have a degree in theology; indeed, by God, I have taught it for a long time.) (Horgan, 190)

These words of self-praise lead right into the preparation for the assault of *Jealousy's* castle, but more importantly they are followed by the lengthy discourse of the *Old Woman*, a character no less devious than *Fals-Semblant* himself underscoring the lewdness of his character.

When we align the *Romaunt* with the long and popular tradition of antifraternal discourse in Chaucerian England, we note that particularly fragment C of this text creates a version of Jean de Meun's *Rose* that frees itself from its French origins. Within this framework and not unlike the author of the *Fiore*, Chaucer, though deeply indebted to the creators of the French *Rose*, specifically its second author, introduces the *Romaunt* to the English-speaking reader as a work in its own right.

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13 See Hardwick, John, "Chaucer's Friar John and the Place of the Cat," *Chaucer Review* 52.2 (2017): 237-52; and Havely.

14 For examples see, C.S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1958), 180-81.

Conclusion

Mobility in learned circles was a reality in the Europe of the Middle Ages, and it is only when we consider the reception of the *Rose* in the countries where it circulated in the local language that we are able to gain a more complete understanding of the impact this work had on literary and cultural currents even after its authors had passed away. The authors of the *Fiore*, and the *Romaunt of the Rose* share the practice of *interpretatio* that allowed them to adapt the original text to reflect their own contemporary cultural realities. The author of the *Fiore* seemed as much interested in providing his readers with a geo-cultural framework with which they were likely to identify as Chaucer was eager to offer his readers a critical view of the mendicant friars. Ironically, it is through the process of *interpretatio,* which in particular the author of the *Fiore* has taken to the extreme in the rewritings, that the *Roman de la rose* flourishes outside of France.

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