

ELZA C. TINER

Performance Spaces in Thomas Chaundler's *Liber apologeticus*

The manuscript of Thomas Chaundler's Latin play Liber apologeticus de omni statu humanae naturae [Apology in defence of human nature in every state] with fifteen semi-grisaille illustrations, held at Cambridge University, Trinity College Library, was presented between 1457 and 1461 to Thomas Bekynton, bishop of Bath and Wells. As a presentation gift, the manuscript not only guides a contemplative reader in visualizing or recalling the scenes but also suggests places where the play might have been performed: 1) the ante-chapel at New College; 2) a room in the interior of the bishop's palace at Wells; and 3) an area outside, with a view of the exterior of the bishop's palace.

Thomas Chaundler's Latin play *Liber apologeticus de omni statu humanae naturae* [Apology in Defence of Human Nature in Every State] was very likely performed, although exactly where remains a question. Dedicating this play to his patron Thomas Bekynton, bishop of Bath and Wells (d. 1465), Chaundler composed it sometime between 1457 and 1461. It survives in one elegant presentation manuscript at Cambridge University, Trinity College Library, ms R.14.5, ff 1–34r, and includes fourteen illustrations of scenes from the play and one of Chaundler offering the book to Bishop Bekynton (ff 1r-8r).¹ As a presentation gift, the manuscript not only guides a contemplative reader in visualizing or recalling the scenes but it also suggests places where the play might have been performed. By considering the play in the context of Chaundler's academic career, we may be able to identify clues to the following performance venues for this play: 1) the ante-chapel at New College (rather than the hall, as explained below); 2) a room in the interior of the bishop's palace at Wells; and 3) an area outside, with a view of the exterior of the bishop's palace.

Elza C. Tiner (tiner@lynchburg.edu) is professor of Latin and English at Lynchburg College, Lynchburg VA.

This play includes a dedicatory prologue, academic debate, trial, and letters, echoing the form of a morality play in portraying mankind's preparation for death. Following the *Argumentum* [dedicatory prologue] (ff 9r–10v), in act 1 (ff 10v–16v) the play opens with God's creation and lament over the fall of the angels, followed by his creation of Man in paradise and admonition to avoid the forbidden fruit, echoing the book of Genesis. Reason and Sensuality both try to persuade Man: the former urges him to refuse the forbidden fruit while the latter convinces him to accept it — and her.² In act 2 (ff 16v–21r) God interrogates Man as to why he has sinned: at first Man tries to blame God, who promptly reminds Man that he has misused his free will. Exiled from paradise, Man repents and laments. In act 3 (ff 21r–28v), in advance of the Last Judgment, a court trial takes place before God to determine Man's punishment, with the Four Daughters of God taking sides. Justice summons him to court and argues with Truth for severity; Mercy and Peace make speeches recommending clemency on behalf of Man's pardon and salvation. God decides to pardon Man, the Four Daughters kiss in accord, and God appears as Christ incarnate to forgive Man. In act 4 (ff 29r–34r) Man reads out a letter from Death, warning him of his coming end. The Four Cardinal Virtues, Justice, Temperance, Fortitude, and Prudence, present arguments about the value of Fear of Death as Man prepares for his final end. From Charity Man also receives a letter reminding him of the joys of eternal life in heaven. Fear of Death is banished and Man dies, receiving immortality. The Four Cardinal Virtues restore him to the former glory he once held in paradise at the start of the play. *Liber apologeticus* is clearly an academic drama, designed to instruct and entertain its audience, which may have included students, faculty, and clergy.

While the surviving text is a presentation book, purposed as a gift for Bishop Bekynton rather than a working copy for actors, the form and illustrations of the manuscript suggest performance. As Jessica Brantley points out, 'the theatrical status of the *Liber apologeticus* is ambiguous. It seems clear that the play was never staged from this manuscript — this copy must have been meant for private reading — but it does include act divisions and rubrics that can be understood as stage directions'.³ The illustrations depict scenes with what could be sets, costumes, and props. In support of the argument for contemplative reading of the manuscript, designed for Bishop Bekynton's private enjoyment, Davidson observes, 'While it is extremely doubtful that the artist had the stage in mind when producing the various illuminations which illustrate the various scenes of the play, the pictures are nevertheless

useful in establishing one way in which a drama would have been visualized by a contemporary'.⁴ Meanwhile, Thomas Meacham asserts that the play spans *both* contemplative reading *and* rhetorical performance, as it addresses both public and private audiences, including university students at Oxford and Bekynton, for whom the manuscript could serve as devotional reading guide, a contemplative *ductus*.⁵

Chaundler (ca 1417–90), born in the parish of St Cuthbert in Wells, was an Oxford theologian. Admitted to Winchester College on 26 May 1431, he advanced to New College in 1435, where he was elected fellow on 1 May 1437 and warden from 1454 to 1475. Having earned the degrees of master of arts in 1443 and of theology in 1455, two years later he was elected chancellor of the university (1457–61; 1472–9), 'in 1461 ceding his office to his young friend George Neville (d.1476), another humanist churchman, to whom he owed promotion as chancellor of York Minster (1467–86)'.⁶ Bekynton appointed him chancellor of Wells Cathedral (1452–67), during the period in which the manuscript of the play was completed, and certainly by 1465, the year of Bekynton's death. As chancellor there, Chaundler would have been responsible for presiding over ecclesiastical trials and the grammar school. His educational experience included opportunities to witness and participate in legal and academic performance.

Jane Cowling's preliminary transcriptions from the Winchester College chamberlains' accounts for the Records of Early English Drama (*REED*) *Hampshire* show that throughout the fifteenth century minstrels from great households and other entertainers were rewarded regularly for performances there. One entry in the chamberlains' accounts dated 1432–3 includes payment to minstrels of the bishop of Winchester.⁷ Davidson also mentions that 'At Winchester College, specific interludes are known to have been presented (one was *Occupation and Idleness*) in the fifteenth century, and in 1466–79 players were known to have visited the hall'.⁸ As well, the statutes of New College, founded in 1379 by William of Wykeham, make provision for performative activities, such as oral reading during meals and recitations in the college hall on holidays. After meals, the boys were not to linger except on major feast days or when disputations were taking place or, during winter, when a fire would be permitted to warm the hall. Reading, recitation, and discussion of texts across disciplines were encouraged, including 'mundi hujus mirabilia' [the marvels of this world], as fitting to those of clerical status.⁹ In 1460–1, during Chaundler's tenure as warden, the king's entertainers were

paid 3s 4d for a performance at New College, though the specific venue is not given in the bursar's accounts.¹⁰

Several researchers have proposed performance venues for Chaundler's play at Oxford University. Considering the play in comparison with popular entertainment in the Middle Ages, editor Doris Enright-Clark Shoukri asserts that the play was not intended for a popular audience but an academic one, quite possibly students at one of the colleges of Oxford University.¹¹ Likewise, Peter Happé contrasts the play with fifteenth-century vernacular drama, with emphasis on differences from morality and biblical plays in the context of anti-Wycliffite prohibitions following the constitutions of Archbishop Arundel in 1409. He suggests that it is suited to performance in an academic hall, unlike a civic production. Happé also notes that Chaundler was chancellor of York Minster (1467–86) during the period when the register containing the York plays was compiled and suggests that Chaundler may have seen the plays but chose to depart from the 'cycle' model, perhaps influenced by the 'post-Wyclif/Arundel' context in which he was writing.¹² In her discussion of the tools for allegorical workers in this play compared with those in Guillaume de Digulleville's *Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode*, Florence Bourgne comments that it was 'probably written for performance by New College students', and Davidson places it in the great hall at New College, Oxford.¹³

The use of the hall at New College, however, was, and still is, subject to restrictions, especially for anything involving action. The New College statutes forbid dancing and sports lest the sculptures, crucifix, stained glass windows, and other sacred objects be damaged on the other side of the wall adjoining the chapel.¹⁴ On the other hand, the same statutes specify that the ante-chapel 'could be used for disputations, business meetings, law-suits, and elections'.¹⁵ While disputations in arts were to take place in the hall at New College, disputations in canon and civil law each were to be held 'in navi capellae collegii nostri' [in the ante-chapel]. Disputations in theology were also to be held in the ante-chapel once a week during full term: 'Unam etiam disputationem theologicam faciant inter se collegii nostri Socii theologiae intendentes, in navi capellae collegii supradicti, una die singulis hebdomadis pleni termini, excepta Quadragesima, singulis annis perpetuo, usque ad festum Sancti Thomae praedictum' [The Fellows of our college studying theology should also conduct among themselves a theological disputation in the aforementioned ante-chapel, one day each week of full term, except for Lent, every year continually, until the aforementioned feast of St Thomas].¹⁶

All of the masters and students of theology were required to attend these disputations.

This space therefore would have been familiar to Chaundler as a student, master of theology, and warden of New College. In the ante-chapel he would have participated in and presided over theological disputations during the period in which he completed the play. In the ante-chapel, stained glass windows contain images of the nine orders of angels; Adam with a spade; Eve fully clothed (as is Sensuality); four virtues; and other biblical figures, many of which resonate with characters in the play.¹⁷ Interestingly, the ante-chapel is now a performance space available for hire. Figure 1, taken in July 2012, shows seating for a concert. The size and shape of the room allow the audience to hear well, making it suitable for lengthy speeches such as those in the *Liber apologeticus*. Behind the seats is a carved oak screen large enough to frame a small group of characters under three arches, with a side entrance to the right (figure 2).¹⁸ While the same structure was probably not there during the fifteenth century, the frames around the platforms in the indoor scenes of the *Liber apologeticus* (plates 8, 9, 11–14) create niches similar to the spaces under the present rood screen.

In addition to New College, another performance venue might have been at Wells, when Chaundler presented the completed manuscript to Bekynton. The prologue refers directly to Wells, outside the bishop's palace, where the audience can see Bekynton's improvements to the buildings. The Latin indicates a physical location and a group of people. After excusing himself as not wanting to take the place of the 'narrator', Chaundler urges the hearers to look around them: 'Ego autem non uicem narratoris sumpsi sed tetigisse hec placuit. Verumptamen que foris sunt circumspiciamus. Ibi quippe ne longius pretergrediamur. Primum datur intueri palacium episcopale innouata cuius edificia tuos sumptuosos labores et illius ornatum palacii sufficienter explicant qui loca edificiorum uetusta norunt' [Indeed I have not assumed the place of narrator, but I am glad to have touched on these matters. Nevertheless, let us look at what is outside. In fact, let us not walk past there any further. First of all let us turn our attention to the episcopal palace, whose renovated buildings and those who knew the former sites of the buildings sufficiently attest to your lavish works and the adornment of that palace] (f 9v, 14–18).¹⁹ The Latin for 'Let us look about us' is 'Verumptamen que foris sunt circumspiciamus', reinforced by the word *foris* meaning 'outside' or 'out of doors'. These words may refer to structures that the audience can see for themselves outside the building. Chaundler refers to a physical place, *ibi*



Fig. 1. Ante-chapel, New College, Oxford. Permission courtesy of the warden and scholars of New College, Oxford



Fig. 2. Right side entrance under rood screen. Permission courtesy of the warden and scholars of New College, Oxford

[there], and he urges the audience to stop walking, 'ne longius pretergrediamur' [Let us not walk past any further]. He also appeals to those who knew what the buildings were like before the renovations, the 'we', or people who are in Wells, 'qui loca edificiorum uetusta norunt' [who knew the former sites of the buildings] and who are standing near the newly built edifices.

After praising Bekynton's works and charity with deep gratitude, Chaundler also thanks his patron for appointing him chancellor of the cathedral in Chaundler's birthplace: 'Non autem excidere poterit a memoria quam bonus mihi semper quam gratus mihi semper et dominus et pater extiteras sed et singularis promotor ut in ea qua sum natus et educatus patria ecclesie Wellensis Ca[n]cellarium pones' [However, it will not be possible to forget how good, how pleasant you have always been to me [not only] both as lord and as a father but also as a singular patron, in that you have appointed me chancellor of Wells Cathedral in the fatherland where I was born and raised] (f 10r, 5–9).²⁰ This expression of gratitude, delivered in Latin, would resonate with a literate audience at Wells, perhaps from the grammar school and cathedral clergy. Through references to Bekynton's generosity to the community, Chaundler unites the audience in support of the bishop as their patron. The language suggests that they are standing where they can see the newly constructed buildings while listening to this speech.

Unlike the sequencing in Shoukri's edition, where the first plate is that of Chaundler presenting the book to Bekynton, in the manuscript, the first fourteen plates present scenes from the play followed by the presentation image. By putting text and images together, we can envisage the following possibility: that on the occasion of giving the book to Bekynton Chaundler first delivered the dedicatory speech outside of the palace where he pointed to Bekynton's improvements, the audience then walked to the place where the play was performed, and Chaundler presented the book to his patron following the performance. The language in the Argumentum indicates that it is a prologue as well as a dedication. In his rationale for his choice of title for the play, as explained in this dedication, Chaundler uses a word associated with plays in classical Latin: *prologo*: 'Titulus libri ex ipsa serie capitalium litterarum colligitur, prima earundem prologo seruiente, dicitur quidem Apologeticus' [The title of the book is put together from a sequence itself of capital letters, the first of these serving the prologue; indeed it is called *Apologeticus*] (f 10r).²¹ According to Lewis and Short's *A Latin Dictionary*, citing examples from Terence, *prologus* refers to an introduction to a play or the actor who delivers it.²² Thus the first word of the title, *Apologeticus*, refers

not only to the theme of the play as moral *apologia* on behalf of humanity (which Chaundler compares to Plato's *Apology of Socrates* in the same dedication), but also figuratively to the Argumentum as prologue to the play, with which it shares the first letter of the alphabet.

In his edition of Bekynton's correspondence, George Williams mentions that John Leland saw the manuscript containing the play at Wells before it was given to Thomas Neville, master of Trinity College, Cambridge, 1593–1615, and suggests that the architecture of the drawing depicting Chaundler presenting his book to Bekynton corresponds to the renovated bishop's palace.²³ Williams observes that the background of the presentation plate matches that of the interior of a room in the bishop's palace. A recent archaeological find further supports this connection. As reported on 6 February 2006 by Professor Mark Horton, department of archaeology and anthropology, University of Bristol, a wall painting in the bishop's palace at Wells, dated between 1460 and 1470, shows an image of a woman whose features are strikingly similar to those of Sensuality in plates 2–4 where she offers Man the forbidden fruit, leading to the injury of Reason and Man's expulsion from paradise. A photograph of this image can be accessed in the BBC *Inside Out — West* archives.²⁴ In a separate press release circulated at the University of Bristol, Horton has suggested that the image of the woman may be part of a scene in the garden of paradise.²⁵ Horton also observes correlations between the fruits and foliage in the wall painting and the ones in the background of the illustration of Chaundler presenting his play to Bekynton. It is possible that the same artist, or one from the same atelier, worked for both Bekynton and Chaundler. While this stylistic correlation does not prove that the play was performed at the bishop's palace, the prologue and the presentation plate point to this possibility.

Even though they are grouped separately at the beginning of the manuscript, the drawings may also indicate staging, or, for a private reader, a visualization of the play.²⁶ They are in semi-grisaille, or monochrome line drawing with colour added. Grisaille is paradoxical, fusing both representation and imagination. While it is a technique 'often used to represent an actual object rather than a re-created scene', according to J. Patrice Mirandel, it also 'reveals the illusionistic quality of this art — its necessary contradiction between real and pictorial space'.²⁷ She quotes Harry Bober from an unpublished document, where he compares the visual effect of grisaille to sculpture, or the appearance of actors on a stage.²⁸ The use of colour in these illustrations, which can be seen in the digitized manuscript, serves to render

them vivid and fluid. O. Elfrida Saunders suggests that these drawings may represent a 'regular school of English painting in grisaille, under Flemish influence, which finally bore fruit in the magnificent wall-paintings by Baker at Eton (1479–88)', and adds, 'Indeed the pictures by Chaundler are not at all far removed in style from the work of Baker'.²⁹ The wall paintings in Eton College chapel, which took about ten years to complete (1477–87), include the work of two English painters, Gilbert (1485–6) and William Baker (1486–7).³⁰ One was also paid for work associated with Christmas entertainment: in the Eton College audit roll, an entry in 1485–6 shows payment of 16d to Gilbert, 'pictori' [the painter], and William Pennyngton, for their work and 'ornamentis' [adornments] 'ludencium' [of those performing] at Christmas.³¹ Here too may be evidence of fluidity: book illustrations, wall paintings, and performance preparations might employ the same artists. It is not inconceivable, therefore, that the illustrations in Chaundler's manuscript reflect imagined or real staging.

In all of the illustrated scenes of the *Liber apologeticus*, the characters stand on or near what could be a moveable stage, a raised dais with tiled steps or covered with a painted cloth backdrop for the scenes in heaven or outdoors.³² A dais with a throne under a partially enclosed structure appears in the indoor scenes where Man faces trial and judgment (plates 8–9, 11–14). The scenes inside these structures depict the Four Daughters of God in his court (plates 8–9), Man preparing for death (plates 11–13), and his final coronation (plate 14). These plates show an arch, possibly wooden, with a roof supported by columns forming an enclosure where the judgment seat is set on the raised dais.

These enclosures may symbolize niches such as the ones enclosing statues of biblical figures, kings, and saints on the façade of Wells Cathedral. In *Façade as Spectacle: Ritual and Ideology at Wells Cathedral*, Carolyn Marino Malone gives a brief history of gabled niches. In Roman architecture, the niche, or *aedicula* [small house], held a ceremonial figure; with a gable it signified a house for the gods, or later, honour associated with the person represented by the statue.³³ In the Middle Ages, gabled niches came to signify holy places, and according to Malone, were 'probably borrowed from contemporaneous shrines or tombs which often combined the gable with a trefoil-headed arch, as on the façade'.³⁴ In the indoor scenes from the play, the columned enclosures may indicate sacred space, perhaps echoing the niches on the exterior of Wells Cathedral. Plates 12 and 13 show widened

trefoil-type arches supported by columns: in plate 12, the arch has a rectangular central section, and in plate 13, it is curved.

All of these drawings contain prominently displayed materials that relate to building, appropriate for praise of Bekynton in the prologue: timber ceilings, wooden frames, tiles, flooring, hangings, and tools. Timber roofs appear in plates 8, 9, and 12–14. In plate 8, where the Four Daughters of God argue, a wooden railing stands before God's throne, signifying their separation from God in discord. M.R. James comments, 'Note the wooden bar at which the personages stand. In the setting of this and the other scenes which show interiors, we may perhaps see an adopting of medieval stage effects'.³⁵ An ornate fabric canopy appears in plates 1–3 and 8–9: in plate 1, where God casts out the rebel angels; in plates 2 and 3, where Man is seated on his throne; and in plates 8 and 9, where God listens to the arguments of the Four Daughters. Plate 13 contains a cloth backdrop attached to the molding below the ceiling. Tools such as the spade that God gives Man in plate 7 and that he holds in plate 11 are reminders of mankind's fall. In plate 3, Reason hands Man a mirror so that he may reflect on his condition in resisting Sensuality, from whom Man also takes the forbidden fruit. In plate 4 he holds the mirror upright, facing the audience, as Sensuality leans toward him, thus cuing the actor playing Man to hold the mirror toward the audience and viewers or readers to reflect on the state of their souls. The illustrations suggest that the first two acts of the play might have taken place in a room in front of a wall with hangings depicting the heavens and natural world, images that would suggest outdoor scenes. A canopied bishop's throne or simulation thereof would serve as God's seat, as shown in plates 1–3. A carved wooden seat on a small platform, on and in front of which actors could move, provides the set for Man's dialogue with Sensuality and Reason as depicted in plate 4. The latter two acts could have taken place on a moveable stage with a small enclosure supported by columns, forming a raised dais with a seat, as shown in plates 11–14.

While some of the illustrations suggest an indoor performance, the backgrounds of the outdoor scenes may also resonate with the city of Wells. When Man is running from God in fear, as shown in plate 5, he is exiled in a dry wilderness; at the end of act 2, he exclaims 'Affligit me immensus dolor frigus et calorem et sitim et esuriem euitare non ualeo' [Immense sorrow afflicts me, and I cannot escape cold and heat and thirst and hunger] (f 20v, 35–f 21r, 1).³⁶ In plates 6 and 7, where God stands before Man and chastises him, a stream appears in the background, perhaps a reference to Bekynton's

water conduit for common use from the bishop's palace to the city of Wells (also famous for its streams). The audience there might have picked up on such visual references as part of the good works of their beloved bishop.

In addition to the illustrations, rubrics in the manuscript guide both readers and actors. The table of contents explains the purpose of the illustrations: 'Ymagines historialiter figurate pandentes ordinem processumque Apologeticum libri de omni statu humane nature docentis' [Images in narrative form showing the order and progression of the *Liber apologeticus* teaching about every condition of human nature] (f iiv, 2–3).³⁷ The word *docentis*, modifying *Apologetici libri*, indicates that the play is a form of instruction. According to Lewis and Short's *A Latin Dictionary*, *docere* also refers to rehearsing and performing, 'to teach a play to the actors, *to rehearse*; hence, *to produce, exhibit on the stage*'. The language describing the arrangement, *historialiter*, 'in an historical narrative' applies to performance as well as to private reading.³⁸ The table of contents in the manuscript, moreover, says that the play is 'divided into four acts', 'compiled by Thomas Chaundler, chancellor of Wells cathedral': 'Item prefatus Apologeticus liber in quatuor actus diuisus a Magistro Thoma Cancellario Wellensis Ecclesie compilatus' (f iiv, 4–5). In Lewis and Short, translations of *actus* include both a subdivision of a play and a performance by an actor or orator. Thus the Latin suggests that this is a text for performance, one that instructs as well as entertains.

Numbered act rubrics appear above each of the illustrations on folios 1r–7v and at the top of each folio of the play. Marginal and interlinear rubrics can be read as instructions for actors. For example, in act 1 a rubric in the margin gives an overview of the scene, the action, and the characters in the scene, cuing the actors needed: 'Collocuntur deus et homo. Item Racio, Sensualitas et homo. Primo deus quasi deflens Angelorum casum in restitutionem numeri eorundem format hominem' [God and Man converse. Likewise Reason, Sensuality, and Man. First God, as if weeping over the fall of the Angels forms Man in restoration of the number of the same] (f 10v).³⁹ From this rubric, actors would know who is to perform in act 1, what happens, and what emotion the actor playing God is to show, 'quasi deflens' [as if weeping]. On the next folio, a rubric in the margin cues the same actor, 'plangitur casus Angelorum' [the fall of the angels is mourned] (f 11r).⁴⁰ If there are angels present, as is shown in the illustration of the fall of the angels in plate 1, then the passive *plangitur*, rather than Shoukri's translation 'he laments' referring only to God, may indicate generalized wailing: the good angels

mourning, the bad ones howling. This rubric is opposite God's extended lamentation at Lucifer's fall.

Explanatory rubrics occur throughout the play, as when God creates Man: 'Quare de limo formatur homo' [Why Man is formed out of mud] and 'Dispositio humani corporis' [The arrangement of the human body].⁴¹ To a reader, this rubric describes God's actions and to an actor playing God, it directs gesture: 'Signat facies hominis' [He indicates the face of man] in features derived from the words *Omo dei* [Man of God] (f 11v).⁴² The lines next to these marginal rubrics give a detailed description of how both sides of the face spell this phrase: man's eyes (two Os), nose (M), ears (D), nostril (E), and mouth (I), (f 11v, 20–5).⁴³ After creating Man, God commands action, 'Sta rectus homo super pedes tuos et da gloriam deo' [Stand upright on your feet, Man, and give glory to God] (f 13r, 36).⁴⁴ There a rubric indicates Man's clothing and gesture: 'Homo creatus regalibus insigniis ornatus creatorem veneratur' [Created man adorned with royal insignias worships the creator] (f 13r, 36–13v, 1).⁴⁵

Later, an interlinear rubric both explains and directs Sensuality's action, 'Sensualitas homini fructum uetitum offert' [Sensuality offers Man the forbidden fruit] (f 14r, 8).⁴⁶ Below this rubric are her lines urging Man to accept it (f 14r, 9–13). Reason protests; she and Sensuality argue in alternating short speeches. After having accepted the fruit, in act 2 Man finally realizes that he has a problem. A rubric indicates what he is to do when God is calling him: 'Homo ruinam ac nuditatem suam erubescit' [Man blushes at his downfall and nakedness] (f 17r).⁴⁷ In act 4, when Man receives a letter from Fear of Death, an interlinear rubric describes his reaction: 'Conturbatur homo timore litteras mortis legens' [Man, reading the letter, is distraught with fear] (f 29v, 22).⁴⁸ Man's lines also contain internal cues, signifying oral delivery to the Four Cardinal Virtues, 'Itaque uos mei consules audite mortis litteras' [Therefore, you, my advisors, listen to the letter of death] (f 29v, 23–4),⁴⁹ and for the letter from Charity, 'Audite peto mei consules et litterarum tenorem intelligenter aduertite' [O my advisors, listen, I ask, and wisely give heed to the content of the letter] (f 31v, 33–5).⁵⁰ When Man is ready for his final end, assured of a place in heaven, however, rubrics describe and specify costumes and props: Justice gives him a cloak of immortality, Temperance a golden sceptre, and Prudence a golden orb; Fortitude clothes him in a mantle of brilliance and beauty; and Charity crowns him with a golden diadem. Significantly, these rubrics are in a different hand from the main body of the text. This hand matches that of the captions under the illustrations, both

characterized by a rounded 'd'; it is Chaundler's own hand, according to James.⁵¹ This suggests that Chaundler himself may have prepared the annotations, possibly from a working copy.

As a gift for private reading, this presentation manuscript sustains a duality: it serves as a memory aid for recalling or envisioning performance of the play in spaces familiar to Chaundler and Bekynton, such as New College and Wells, where theological debates and ecclesiastical trials were held. Continued research beyond the scope of the present article could explore the connections between disputations and court procedures and the language in the play. At the same time, for a reader considering how to instruct an audience, this manuscript provides hints for future performances of the play. It therefore invites readers to visualize and actors to instruct others in contemplation of Man's condition and final judgment. The next and most logical step is to test this play in performance, perhaps first as a dramatic reading exercise, like the oral readings of Chaucer's works sponsored by the Chaucer Studio. Then, comparative productions of this play in a larger space, such as a great hall, and in a smaller, more intimate space, like that of the ante-chapel at New College, could follow for analysis of performativity and audience reception.

Notes

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providing photos of the interior of the present bishop's palace and Wells Cathedral while he was there in the summer of 2012.

- 1 All transcriptions of the Latin are from Cambridge University, Trinity College Library, MS R.14.5, available online, together with a description of the contents of the entire manuscript, from the *James Catalogue of Western Manuscripts* (Cambridge, 2014), <http://sites.trin.cam.ac.uk/james/viewpage.php?index=1146>. The most recent printed edition is that of Doris Enright-Clark Shoukri, *Liber Apologeticus de Omni Statu Humanae Naturae: A Defence of Human Nature in Every State (c. 1460)* (London, 1974) with Latin text and English translation on facing pages. For her description of the manuscript, plus introduction about the life and works of Chaundler, see 1–40. Latin translations are mine with notes referencing Shoukri's transcriptions. Folio numbers correspond to those in the digital online manuscript; corresponding pages in Shoukri's edition appear in the notes below. Plate numbers correspond to black and white images in Shoukri's edition; the digital online manuscript should be consulted for the same images in colour. See also Clifford Davidson, *Illustrations of the Stage and Acting in England to 1580* (Kalamazoo, 1991), 56–64.
- 2 Names of characters such as Man, Reason, and Sensuality, are capitalized throughout to distinguish them from general terms.
- 3 Jessica Brantley, *Reading in the Wilderness: Private Devotion and Public Performance in Late Medieval England* (Chicago, 2007), 287.
- 4 Davidson, *Illustrations of the Stage*, 56.
- 5 See Thomas Meacham, 'Thomas Chaundler and Academic Drama: Performance Practices in the Medieval English University', PhD thesis (City University of New York, 2012) and his related article, 'Exchanging Performative Words: Epistolary Performance and University Drama in Late Medieval England', *Medieval English Theatre* 32 (2010), 12–25.
- 6 Jeremy Catto, 'Chaundler, Thomas (ca 1417–1490)', *Dictionary of National Biography (DNB)* (Oxford, 2004), doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/5200.
- 7 Prior to her decease, Jane Cowling (ed.), *Hampshire*, forthcoming in the REED series, granted me permission to consult her preliminary transcriptions of the chamberlains' accounts. See also 'The Chronicle of St. Mary Winton College and Commoners, near Winchester', Mackenzie E.C. Walcott (ed.), *William of Wykeham and His Colleges* (Winchester, 1852), 206–7.
- 8 Davidson, *Illustrations of the Stage*, 35. For a facsimile and transcription of *Occupation and Idleness*, see Norman Davis, *Non-Cycle Plays and the Winchester Fragments* (Leeds, 1979), 161–78, 192–208.
- 9 See New College Statutes, ca 1398, in John R. Elliott and Alan H. Nelson (eds), *REED: Oxford* (Toronto, 2004), 1.10–11; trans. Patrick Gregory, 2.911–12.

- 10 New College bursar's accounts, NC Arch. 7713, mb 5, in *REED: Oxford*, 1.17; trans. 2.917.
- 11 Shoukri, 'Introduction, Part 2', *Liber Apologeticus*, 14–15.
- 12 Peter Happé, 'Genre and Fifteenth-Century English Drama: The Case of Thomas Chaundler's *Liber Apologeticus*', *Medium Aevum* 82.1 (2013), 66–80. See also Andrew Cole, 'Staging Advice in Oxford, New College: ms 288: On Thomas Chaundler and Thomas Bekynton', Vincent Gillespie and Kantik Ghosh (eds), *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England* (Turnhout, 2011), 245–63.
- 13 Florence Bourgne, 'Calling a Spade a Spade: Allegorical Tools in the *Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode* and Chaundler's *Liber apologeticus*', *Études Anglaises* 66.3 (2013), par 41, <http://www.cairn.info/revue-etudes-anglaises-2013-3-page-323.htm>; see also Davidson, *Illustrations of the Stage*, 56.
- 14 *REED: Oxford*, 1.12–13; trans. 2.913–14.
- 15 Anthony Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales, 1300–1500. Southern England*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 2006), 3.140.
- 16 *Statutes of the Colleges of Oxford with Royal Patents of Foundation Injunctions of Visitors and Catalogues of Documents Relating to the University Preserved in the Public Record Office*. (Oxford, 1853), R31, 1.56–7.
- 17 Images of the figures in stained glass are available from 'Oxford: New College, Chapel', *Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi: Medieval Stained Glass in Great Britain* (London, 2010), <http://www.cvma.ac.uk/jsp/location.do?locationKey=426&mode=LOCATION>. On the symbolism of tools in late-medieval literature, wall painting, and illumination, see also Bourgne, 'Calling a Spade a Spade'.
- 18 Thanks are expressed to Jacqui Julier, college officers' secretary, New College, Oxford, for arrangements and permission to photograph the chapel.
- 19 See also Shoukri, *Liber Apologeticus*, 48.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 50.
- 21 See also *ibid.*, 53.
- 22 See Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1879), Perseus Digital Library, Gregory R. Crane (ed.), Tufts University, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>.
- 23 George Williams (ed.), *Official Correspondence of Thomas Bekynton, Secretary to King Henry VI, and Bishop of Bath and Wells* (London, 1872; rpt 1964), 1.xlix–1. See also Leland's description of the manuscript: *Joannis Lelandi antiquarii de rebus Britannicis collectanea. Cum Thomæ Hearnii præfatione notis et indice ad editionem primam. Editio altera. Accedunt de rebus Anglicanis opuscula varia è diversis Codd. Mss. descripta et nunc primum in lucem edita* (London, 1770), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)*, 4.156. The only discrepancy in Leland's description of the

- manuscript is that, instead of the name Thomas, Leland lists “Joannis” Chaundelarii cancelarii Wellensis, Apologeticus de statu humanae naturae ad Thomam Bekingtonam, episcopam Bathon’.
- 24 See ‘The Mystery of the Painted Lady’, *Inside Out — West*. BBC. 6 February 2006, http://www.bbc.co.uk/insideout/west/series9/week_five.shtml. Thanks to Professor Pamela King at the University of Bristol for sending this information and the press release of 6 February 2006, no 35.
- 25 Press release, University of Bristol, 6 February 2006.
- 26 Brantley interprets the separation of images and text as visualizations for contemplative reading, rather than precise representations of the scenes in the play (*Reading in the Wilderness*, 289).
- 27 *Grey Is the Color: An Exhibition of Grisaille Painting XIIIth–XXth Centuries Organized by the Institute for the Arts, Rice University*. Rice Museum, Houston, TX, 19 October 1973–19 January 1974 (Houston, 1974), 16. See also Shoukri, *Liber Apologeticus*, 25–6.
- 28 J. Patrice Mirandel, *Grey Is the Color*, 15–16.
- 29 O. Elfrida Saunders, *English Illumination* (Florence, 1933; rpt. New York, 1969), 1.120.
- 30 Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses*, 3.91. See also Andrew Martindale, ‘Wall-paintings in the Chapel of Eton College’, Caroline Barron and Nigel Saul (eds), *England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages* (Phoenix Mill, 1995), 133–52.
- 31 ‘Et domino Willelm pennyngton & Gilberto pictori pro laboribus suis & ornamentis ludencium in festo natalis xvj d,’ Eton Audit Roll, 1485–6 AR/F/1, mb 4 in Alexandra F. Johnston (ed.), *Buckinghamshire*, forthcoming in the REED series. Thanks are expressed to Alexandra F. Johnston for permission to consult these materials. See also M.R. James’s detailed analysis of the work and supplies for painting the chapel with reproductions in ‘The Wall Paintings in Eton College Chapel and in the Lady Chapel of Winchester Cathedral’, *The Walpole Society* 17 (1929), 1–43. James translates *ornamentis* as ‘properties’ for the Christmas play (3).
- 32 Meacham’s ‘Thomas Chaundler and Academic Drama’, 16, reports that in the Wells Cathedral escheator’s account rolls for 1445–6, one Nicholas Pelly received payment for making a ‘*locandi*’ in the Chapter House, which may be a stage of some sort. On the other hand, in James Stokes and Robert Alexander (eds), *REED Somerset including Bath* (Toronto, 1996), 2.930, n 246, which refers to the 1445–6 communars accounts, regarding the entry ‘pro factura unius locande in domo capitulari cum meremio ad idem’, Stokes suggests that the word begins ‘*foc*’ not ‘*loc*’ and refers to a hearth or fireplace. Nicholas Pelly is again mentioned in the Wells Cathedral fabric rolls, 1457, where he is paid for carpentry on the ‘Canipee’. See Royal Commission

- on Historical Manuscripts. *Report on the Manuscripts of Wells Cathedral* (London, 1885), 289.
- 33 Carolyn Marino Malone, *Façade as Spectacle: Ritual and Ideology at Wells Cathedral* (Leiden, 2004), 94–105.
- 34 Malone, *Façade as Spectacle*, 99. See also Pamela M. King, ‘The English Cadaver Tomb in the Late Fifteenth Century: Some Indications of a Lancastrian Connection’, Jane H.M. Taylor (ed.), *Dies Illa: Death in the Middle Ages* (Liverpool, 1984), 45–57.
- 35 M.R. James, ‘The Chaundler Manuscripts: Introduction on the Life and Writings of Thomas Chaundler and an Appendix Containing Descriptions of the Trinity College and New College mss with Extracts Therefrom’, Roxburghe Club (London, 1916), microform prepared by the British Library, 26.
- 36 See also Shoukri, *Liber Apologeticus*, 104.
- 37 Transcription and translation of the table of contents are not included in Shoukri’s edition.
- 38 *Historia* means ‘a narrative of past events, history’, as well as a tale or story, but unlike *fabula*, a fictional story, in *historia*, the emphasis is factual — here the facts of sacred history. See Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary*.
- 39 See also Shoukri, *Liber Apologeticus*, 54.
- 40 *Ibid.*
- 41 *Ibid.*, 56.
- 42 *Ibid.* Note that *facies, faciei*, f [face], has two forms for its accusative singular: *faciem* or *facies*, according to Lewis and Short, and thus is the direct object of *signat* [he indicates]. Shoukri translates *signat* even more actively as ‘stamps’.
- 43 *Ibid.*, 58.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 64.
- 45 *Ibid.*
- 46 *Ibid.*, 72.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 88.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 148. Shoukri represents this line as a rubric in the margin, whereas in the manuscript it appears in the text.
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 *Ibid.*, 156.
- 51 ‘The Chaundler Manuscripts’, 29–30.

