Fro Wordes to Ymages: Reading Chaucer's Words with Morris's Visuals

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how William Morris visually reimagines the works of Geoffrey Chaucer in

The Kelmscott Chaucer. My focus is on how Chaucer uses the visual, rhetorically, and how

Morris's integrated translation of Chaucer's text, through visual representation, intersects and/or

interrupts the original work. I engage with theories of liminality to navigate the integration of

Chaucer's original works with Morris's visual, written, and editorial aspects. I demonstrate how

the text functions as a liminal space collectively yet also making the two texts inseparable

disclaiming the void of a transitional space and rather identifying how these liminal spaces form

bridges of access for intertextual connections of meaning and critique. In the process, I walk

readers across the borders on the page and into the images to examine the meanings, or absence

of meanings, therein. Drawing also on spectacle theory, I demonstrate how Morris uses the act of

spectatorship in these liminal spaces created on the page to create an alternate text within a text

that draws our attention to a more integrated meaning-making scene(s) embedded in the text yet

not always visual to the reader's eye. The forced gaze(s) functions within the realm of liminality

to create or deny new meaning between the text and the visual. This liminal space then allows a

transtextual reading of both texts while negotiating meaning *through* and *between* each text

simultaneously which is explicitly inherent with Morris's imaged text. These thresholds are

multi-layered on any given illustrated page in *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, creating an increased

number of boundaries to explore—boundaries that draw out the need for a reading within the

reading; to read Chaucer *with* the text, and to be seen *in* the image which offers a textual

transcendence of the text, collectively.

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DEDICATION

To my daddy, Danny Ray Craig, who was not able to see me through this journey,
but he walked with me every step of the way.

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His [Chaucer's] language was so fayr and pertynente /
It semeth vnto mannys heerynge /
Not only the worde / but verily the thynge.
William Caxton, from *Caxton's Book of Curtesye*

INTRODUCTION

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Chaucer in *The Kelmscott Chaucer*. My focus is on how Chaucer uses the visual, rhetorically,

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CHAUCER AND VISUAL CULTURE

Geoffrey Chaucer's England

Geoffrey Chaucer was born around 1342, presumably in London, England. He was sent to school early in life and later became a page in the household of the Countess of Ulster (Coghill xi). It was through his duty as a page that he met John of Gaunt who would become Chaucer's most faithful patron and protector. Chaucer was sent abroad to France in 1359 where he was taken prisoner but soon after ransomed by the King. After his return to England, he was promoted as a courtier in 1367. Soon thereafter, he married Philippa de Roet, a lady in attendance on the Queen, and sister to Catherine Swynford, third wife of John of Gaunt (Coghill xii).

Chaucer was an avid reader with a faultless memory. He learned to read in Latin, French, Anglo-Norman, and Italian. He was a self-made expert in the contemporary sciences, especially in astronomy, medicine, psychology, physics, and alchemy. He had several literary and historical favorites who influenced his writings, including Vergil, Ovid, Statius, Seneca, Cicero, Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch. He was also versed in the Bible and Apocrypha (Coghill xiii). Through business for the King, Chaucer traveled to Italy to the cities of Genoa and Milan. His professional life continued to grow in the Civil Service. In 1374, he became Comptroller of customs and subsidies on wools, skins, and hides at the Port of London, in 1382 Comptroller of

petty customs, in 1385 Justice of the Peace for the county of Kent, and in 1386 Knight of the Shire (Coghill xiv). Unfortunately, in 1386 John of Gaunt left England on a military expedition to Spain, and Chaucer was stripped of his courtly powers by Richard II. However, upon Gaunt's return in 1389, Chaucer's favor was restored. He was put in charge of the repair of walls, ditches, sewers, and bridges between Greenwich and Woolwich and of the fabric of St. George's Chapel at Windsor and he worked with the office of Sub-Forester of North Petherton. He was awarded a daily pitcher of wine by Edward III which he received for the duration of his life. Henry Bolingbroke presented him with a scarlet robe trimmed with fur (Coghill xiv). Geoffrey Chaucer died in October of 1400 and was buried at Westminster Abbey. He was the first of the greats laid to rest at what is now known as the Poets' Corner.

Chaucer documented the social and political climate for 14th-century England. The 14th century began with the Great Flood and Famine, which wiped out thousands of acres of croplands. Survivors were then hit by the Black Death twice, once in 1348 and then in 1362, wiping out 40-60% of the population of England. While people were dying from the plague, the campaigns of the Hundred Years War (1337-1453) halted, and death tolls created a shortage of labor, and in turn, a rise in and then suppression of wages leading to the Peasant's Revolt in 1381. Even though the Protestant Reformation technically does not begin until a century later, religious authority was being rattled, as the religious climate of Chaucer's day included concerns and challenges to Church authority, such as Lollardy, underpinning the later Protestant Reformation. The signs of the time created panic among the people and blame was cast on degrading morals as Chaucer vignettes in his *Tales*.

The historical information is relevant when discussing Chaucer and his works, especially in comparison with another, as it situates the author *with* the work, relatively. Chaucer witnessed

an upheaval of country, court, and church. Times were rough for everyone, but the biggest blow was to the lower-classed people. This group of people collectively were the marginalized voices, but Chaucer witnessed how these people were able to come together and push against the authority and question what it meant to be an authority. This resistance gave rise to the middle-class. Chaucer fit into this group; however, in understanding his privilege with the court in relation to his writing, allows for a deeper understanding of how and why his literature was so important. Chaucer himself, liminal between the middle-class and the court, was in a unique situation of seeing from a unique perspective. His writing documented perspectives of everyday people allowing voices to be attached to a group of people whose voices went unrecorded for the most part. This recording allows a modern-day reader to be informed past the Arthurian fairy tale or the godly men of the cloth. Chaucer allows the reader to see these people as individuals not just a class of people grouped together to represent one another thus allowing then the reader to also see into their everyday life.

William Morris's and Edward Burne-Jones's England

      William Morris was born March 1834, in Walthamstow, Essex (Thompson 1). He was the third of nine children in an upper-middle-class family. He was schooled at a young age. He spent spare time reading which is how he developed his love for landscape and architecture at a young age. In 1853, Morris began his studies in Theology at Exeter College, Oxford, to become a priest in line with his mother's wishes; however, his reading soon shifted from religious matters to his previous interests of history and architecture and, eventually to art criticism. He began writing poetry secretly. He met fellow student Edward Burne-Jones, a budding artist and designer, and their lifelong friendship sealed his fate as a creative. After graduation in 1856, Morris and Burne-Jones made a move to London where both worked with the arts. Morris began

an apprenticeship with Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who was a founding member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Even though the Brotherhood was disbanded two years prior, the influence of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic on the British arts and crafts movement forged by the meeting of Rosetti, Morris, and Burne-Jones would be impactful. Morris found himself among a sea of creatives admiring nature and the romantic chivalry of the medieval past which were both ideals he had envisioned, and worked towards, since childhood. He was in his element. He began piecing together the aesthetics and ethics of the Pre-Raphaelites, a love of nature, medieval aesthetics, gothic architecture, a hatred of mechanization, and how he could apply these ideas to various artforms and applied crafts. He moved these characteristics from paintings to other forms of crafts, including interior design with textiles and wallpapers leading to the founding of 'The Firm' with members including Rosetti, Burne-Jones, and other influential people. He later learned of his wife's long-term affair with mentor Rossetti. He turned to his writings for comfort and by the 1860s, had made a name for himself as a poet in England. In 1871, he, his wife and children, and Rossetti, oddly enough, moved to Kelmscott in Oxfordshire. Rosetti would eventually leave the household three years later.

While in Kelmscott, Morris set up Morris & Co., where he expanded the stylistic repertoire of floral wallpaper and fabric designs to an unprecedented degree. He later threw himself into the theory and practicalities of the design process. Morris spent many hours learning to master the print of woodblocks and the weave of tapestries. He also spent hours learning the medieval technique of dyeing and printing. All the while, he co-founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. His increased social consciousness and his opposition to modern industrial methods had already shaped progressive causes in his life. However, he started witnessing class inequalities across Europe, and becoming more well-versed in contemporary

politics, Morris became a radical socialist. He wrote several books related to his cause. His political views were inseparable from his aesthetics. He believed art should be produced and enjoyed by all and that the products of artistic labor should be offered back to the working classes. Morris spent his final years in West London, and in 1891, launched his last creative venture, the Kelmscott Press. This is where he would bring to life his lifelong vision to produce beautiful, illustrated books inspired by medieval ecclesiastical manuscripts. His biggest dream was to complete the works of Chaucer, which he and Burne-Jones had admired since their early years at Oxford. The text was complete on May 8, 1896, with a publication date of June 26, 1896 (Chaucer xi). *The Kelmscott Chaucer* was completed and would come to be Morris's final collaborative text. He died on October 3, 1896, less than four months after the publication (Chaucer xi).

Edward Burne-Jones was a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood with William Morris. Influenced by Pre-Raphaelite paintings and by the medieval art and architecture seen in Northern France, his painting and design established him as one of the outstanding British artists of the later 19th century. Burne-Jones, alongside Morris, studied with Dante Gabriel Rossetti. His career as an artist-craftsman who produced designs for stained glass, tapestry, tiles, book illustrations, and the decoration of furniture and musical instruments embodied the ideal of the arts and crafts movement. One of his most notable achievements was book illustration, included the collaboration for *The Kelmscott Chaucer* (Luthcmansingh 105). Burne-Jones was the creative hand in the images. He brought Morris's vision to life. Ultimately, Burne-Jones completed 87 illustrations for *The Kelmscott*. Their work together produced one of the most beautiful Chaucer editions extant today.

As with Chaucer, the relevancy of Morris's edition ties into his historical context. Tracing Morris's life, the struggles with education and his interest, and his persistence to maintain a certain political and social position that informed his decisions shows his investment to this ultimate project. He and Burne-Jones's life-long relationship also shows the dedication and determinism to making this nothing less than ideal to fit into his life-long journey. Understanding the depth of commitment Morris had to *The Kelmscott Chaucer* allows the reader to see how it fit into Morris's world and how his journey was not independent of the world around him but rather a response directly to the world and mankind.

> "One gifte [Chaucer] hath aboue other Authours, and that is, by the excellencie of his descriptions to possesse his Readers with a stronger imagination of seeing that done before their eyes, which they read, than [sic] any other that euer writ in any tongue."
> Francis Beaumont, quoted by Catherine Spurgeon,
> *Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Allusion*, vol 1

LIMINALITY AND LITERARY SPECTACLE

The Kelmscott Chaucer connects the medieval to the modern, creating a present-day entry point for any audience. The borders between the illustrations in the text, and the written on the pages blur, creating a liminal space for a deeper and intersecting understanding between the two, expanding how the text informs the modern reader. To add, Edward Burne-Jones draws Chaucer into the illustrations as if to progress the reader through the visual edition. Adding Chaucer in the image from his words makes him, and therefore his text, inseparable from the images and adds life to the text. In some instances, Chaucer-the-Illustrated is not in the original text but crosses over and has become part of the story in Morris's edition. Chaucer moves from the written to the visual belonging then to both spaces simultaneously. Making Chaucer part of the illustration opens the text, making the expanded borders more accessible and inviting the reader into the image as well. Liminality forces the audience to rethink these passages and

amplifies, both literally and figuratively, the ins and outs of meaning by removing the boundaries, also both literally and figuratively, and allowing a new 'seeing' to happen in a space easily overlooked thus creating depth to the understanding opportunities offered by both texts.

In framing my use of liminality in this thesis, I will use Arnold van Gennep's "rites de passage" liminal theory as a lens to read the text as this passage parallels many of the themes seen in Chaucer's work, such as the dreamer on the quest for the perfect lover, finding it, then not being able to have her in *The Romaunt of the Rose*. Van Gennep uses three parts to explain the passage: rites of separation (preliminal), transitional rites (liminal), and rites of incorporation (postliminal) (van Gennep 11). In specific instances, these three stages in the "rites de passage" are not always equally important or equally elaborated. Although van Gennep's theory does not completely explain the function of liminality I focus on in this text, it is important to understand the stages of entering, becoming, and being because the basis of this text is stages of progression for authors, artists, and societies. Van Gennep's theory explains Chaucer-the-Illustrated's progress through the book which is relative to Chaucer-the-Author's life. In the first image of

Chaucer in *The Kelmscott*, he stands alone in the garden, a small book in one hand, a quill in the other, and his writer's pouch on his side (figure 1.1). Chaucer's solitude in the garden, surrounded by other liminal spaces, presents one separation stage of Van Gennep's theory, but there are many entry points that could be read

Figure 1.1. First portraiture of Chaucer in The Kelmscott Chaucer.

here. His small book offers an authorial separation from the written world, and more specifically, Chaucer's continued thirst to grow and establish himself as an *auctorite*, or an authority in his writing craft. Moving through Morris's text, Chaucer-the-Illustrated's book gets larger showing a

transition on his journey relative to Chaucer-the-Author's life. As his book grows, so does a symbolized understanding of authorial presence by expanding his experience(s). By the end of the book, Chaucer-the-Illustrated stands with a vastly larger, closed book, no quill, and a retired writer's pouch (figure 1.2). These progressive images parallel Chaucer's life and suggest a beginning and end, or at least a growing of his experience. Besides the book, however, his appearance ages pushing him into another "rites de passage" creating another space where the illustrated mimics the natural progression of the life cycle. This progression reminds the reader

Figure 1.2. Last portraiture of Chaucer in The Kelmscott Chaucer.

of the continuation of time and despite the mechanics that come in and out of the world, it does not slow down the human element of life—it continues. Seeing the progression on the pages offers an explanation of also how knowledge and experience ages one, mentally, expanding the opportunities around them via deeper understanding.

Van Gennep also outlines the relationship between actual spatial passages and how a change in social position can open doors into such liminal spaces, which proves important when discussing texts 500 years apart. Chaucer's reader enters the medieval where Morris's reader enters into the late 19th century, all while belonging to their current social space. For instance, knowing the middle class rose up through the Peasant's Revolt in response to the hardships faced during the 14th century and how Chaucer reflects this in *The Tales*, brings understanding to the issues being faced in the 19th century, such as the Arts and Crafts Movement in response to the machine, and how Morris's text is also reflective, while both create a meeting space for the current reader to enter the conversation. Liminality here works to negotiate between text and

image that reflect a negotiation between past and present. The visual elements of the text open up new possibilities for thinking about how literary meaning is constructed (and disrupted) across time and space. Another place where van Gennep's theory proves helpful is being able to step back and see the text collectively as a liminal space. Chaucer and Morris both use their texts to inform the reader to common threads between the human and its world, whether it be the middle-class group wanting to be heard, or humanity situated between nature and machine. This edition binds beyond those page boundaries, fundamentally connecting people with people. *The Kelmscott Chaucer* extends access to this space. Using liminality, more specifically van Gennep's theory, shows how Chaucer's original work in Morris's illustrated edition connects the old with the new.

A liminality lens inherently envelops by nature. To offer a metaphoric example of how this layering functions is to consider Chaucer's original work as a house, Morris's work as the windows and the doors offering new entrances into the house. A door or window offers an entrance into both spaces and with these entrances also come exits. So, while standing inside Chaucer's house, the door or window offers views to the outside while people outside can also see in. Looking at the images with the text then allows the reader to move from Chaucer's world to Morris's world, to then, their own, thus making the entire book an entrance to the space between 1386, 1896, and today. This time-travel, of sorts, then becomes a meeting space for the reader to enter with their experiences to better inform their current perspective allowing for different assumptions to be made or denied based on a more widely, earthly projection. Illustrated pages inside this collective text then become an entry point and, on many occasions, these openings occur layered on the page to the image.

Although there are several examples of "rites de passage" extended in Chaucer's and Morris's texts, other transitional spaces beckon a slightly different explanation requiring a more focused liminal lens. Extending beyond van Gennep's conversation, Victor Turner's theory concentrates on the initiation or becomingness of the liminal space. Liminality as a becoming suggests an action must happen to move into a space, and the action, for this analysis, happens between the reader and the text. More so, Morris's construction of liminal spaces is an act of eternally (re)constructing Chaucer for new and evolving contexts and readers. And since all examples do not simply move from point A to become point B, using Turner's framework as a lens to Morris's text, I direct my reader from one point to the next. Turner's theory also helps as we cross visual borders on the actual page, and as we navigate back and forth between the written and the visual. Using Chaucer-the-Illustrated as the example again, his *becoming* part of the story, by way of the image, allows the reader to move past merely reading and *become* part of the story too—*becoming* one with Chaucer as the reader is also moved into the image. The significance to this *becoming* then is one check of Morris's end goal of reasoning—to return the human element back into the craft of art. His ability to connect the modern reader with the medieval text through his edition suggests more of a fundamental *need* of *becoming* rather than an easily dismissed secondary *want*. This need then validates his push for the power of true aesthetics in art and further, in life.

Figure 1.3. Illustrated verso page from The Romaunt of the Rose. Edward Burne-Jones, The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

The *need* of becoming then ties well with the *need* for touch or a sense of reality. In *The Romaunt of the Rose*, for example, Chaucer walks past the *tableaux* of courtly vices, touching the wall (figure 1.3). His drawn hand creates

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a textured 'feeling' as it casts a shadow onto the wall. He becomes real in the image. The reader progresses with him, looking at the vices, one by one. Edward Burne-Jones inserting Chaucer where he is not in the text creates an intrusion or a disruption of how the reader engages with this text. Inserting Chaucer-the-Illustrated opens the door for the reader to gain entrance as well. The text becomes malleable, as does the meaning. Meaning emerging from alternative perspectives works well with Victor Turner's idea of liminality, as he notes, "liminality is the realm of primitive hypothesis, where there is a certain freedom to juggle with the factors of existence" (Turner 106). Liminality can then help explain the audience's manipulation, which occurs "betwixt and between" their experience and the actual text, helping each to navigate meaning, per image, per page, or as a collective text (Turner 97).

Once beyond the borders, the image guides the reader through the text using cues to set up the reader for suggestions of what to do next. Sometimes the image includes cues to direct the reader across the page, across the image, or beyond the image and page completely. Looking back to the previous example of Chaucer moving across the walled *tableaux* (see figure 1.3), he literally steps over to the next page (figure 1.4). Chaucer-the-Illustrated walks the reader through these uncourtly vices, and his progression across the image, pulls the reader through
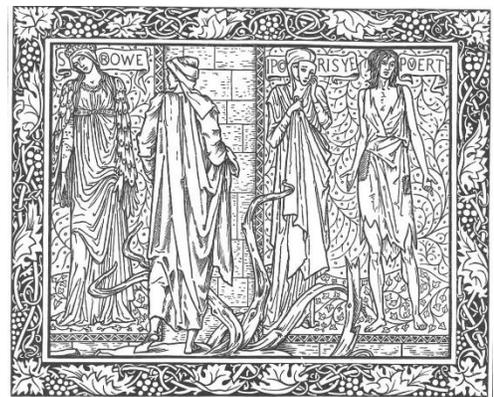
Figure 1.4. Illustrated recto page from The Romaunt of the Rose. Edward Burne-Jones, The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

the text. In the second image of this scene, Chaucer's left foot is slightly raised, casting a shadow like his hand. Again, this small detail reminds the reader progress exists in the image. Chaucer is moving through the text. Spectacle theory teaches us to recognize how hints in the image lead readers to a translation of meaning. I see this image of Chaucer as a prime example of such an

invitation, as the details provide readers with key signals that allow them to see his movement. 'Guided seeing' on the page works in tandem with the reader's ability to recognize the signals and then translate according to some type of signification depending on their experience. Previous experience within and beyond the text brings a renewed look at the original, written and visual, back onto the page in current time and space, working well with liminality and spectacle as they intersect on the current experience of the page. Most of the illustrations offer natural or created platforms, creating an actual stage for the spectacle within the spectacle. This layering of spectatorship shifts perspectives of the image, allowing different, non-linear translations for the reader, thus putting Chaucer's original work on the stage but in a different, more modern venue, allowing his work to come to life beyond its original context through Morris's edition. This (re)seeing allows broader reflection of society and opens opportunities of response, both individually and collectively.

In this project, I negotiate different ways of seeing, being seen, and seeing others see, as each mode of spectating produces new interpretations of Morris's text. In these determinations of seeing or being seen, there is always the matter of private and public spaces to be examined for additional context. These spaces change the way the audience translates the act of looking because of the learned expectations of doing so. Guy Debord's spectacle theory creates a broad baseline for this discussion. Debord suggests, in simple terms, that spectacle is more than an image or sight, but rather how image or sight collectively mediates social relations. When considering how this might work in a non-capitalist, non-modern society, we could think about Chaucer's pilgrims in *The Tales*. The pilgrims are ranked by socio-economic states. As they tell their story, each pilgrim becomes a spectacle—the focus is on them while they are speaking. The audience is the other pilgrims, some lower status, some higher, but the focus here is not directly

on the story, as Debord would point out, but how the story and its teller are perceived and why these perceptions are happening (what they are calling attention to) during this time. These observations are especially fascinating as we move within a written medieval text and to a visual modern one. In turn then, the reader can make connections across social issues and critique and situate both as a response to current issues. Chaucer's ability to spotlight the pilgrims through detailed description, without spotlighting the pilgrims based on their tales, allows the reader to grasp the power of one's voice and the power of rhetoric available to all despite their perspective. Chaucer demonstrates how voices can be heard and critique is valid despite socially constructed ideals of class and position.

   To expand on how spectacle functions in reflecting social views and voices, one must also consider the positions and techniques of those observing and being observed. Morris's text brings focus to the act of seeing, but it is irrelevant without the understanding of how this seeing explicitly evokes a response. In considering the broad topic of spectacle, I also lean on Jonathan Crary's work on attention, observing, and perception to connect this seeing and its historical construction that informs some of the ambiguity between the observer and the representation (the translation of the 'what and how' which is seen). Crary's methodologies take notice of how the act of seeing also creates tensions, making individuals "isolated, separated, and … disempowered" (Crary 3 1992). In Morris's text, some of the images present a more complex looking such as the opening illustration of *The Parlement of Foules* (figure 1.5). Chaucer-the-Illustrated looks over the tree with the four eagles: three of the males, staring down at their desired mate.

Figure 1.5. Illustrated page from The Parlement of Foules. Edward Burne-Jones, The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

The male eagles are unbothered by the spectator, and they continue to prey on the female eagle below them; however, the female eagle looks back at them, perhaps empowered by the same spectator or also unbothered. Each translation allows for alternative meanings across all vantage points into and from the current. This triad of looking, made up of Chaucer-the-Illustrated, eagles, and the reader, then becomes more than an observation, but more complexities are added to the narratives, text and visual, along with their historical settings based on Crary's methodologies. Crary's works will be beneficial in navigating tensions between multiple spectacles in an image and in drawing meaning out of each perspective individually. His work will also provide techniques for the one seeing, to include the reader, and highlight how personal perspective (and experience) plays into how one looks upon another.

Although Crary's work is beneficial in tying observation to historical significance, Michel Foucault's theoretical work on spectacle is particularly interesting for specific conversations, such as pain or public humiliation and the power it holds over the spectator. Foucault's theory expands to include moments of surveillance and private space seeing which adds to the understanding of seeing in Morris's text (Foucault 14). This model elicits a different meaning in *The Romaunt of the Rose* where the lover laments the beauty of the rose and accepts his destiny without his perfect love (figure 1.6). Even though this scene takes place in a garden, a public space, it becomes private as the lover laments the rose. Space becomes intimate between the lover and the rose, leaving the reader, as spectator, also a part of this intimacy through watching the lover and the rose at this moment.

Figure 1.6. Lover laments his love. Illustrated page from The Romaunt of the Rose. Edward Burne-Jones, The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

This relay of lament from the watched to the watcher in this space conveys the emotion then into a public sphere, making this intimacy between two, become a broader question of where the lines of public and private are drawn in a society, even greater, humanity, and should they be crossed. These questions lead to an even bigger question of personal responsibility and social duty. Chaucer and Morris both pose these questions on their pages.

In this final garden scene, the dreamer laments the perfect lover, depicted as a rose rather than a female (see figure 1.6). The authors made a symbolic choice, as did Burne-Jones when he brought the words to life; therefore, this representation, and others alike through the text, then become the focal point as the reader must make some type of connection between the symbol and its semblance. The idea of the rose, which represents perfect love, relates well to Stuart Hall's theory of representation as a guide through a text, written or visual, exploring, not only the possibilities of language, signs, and images standing in for others but also the process of this exchange and how it reads culturally and creates meaning in a specific moment. Going back to the previous rose example, Hall's theory of representation teaches us to notice these hints in the image that lead to a certain translation of meaning. In this image, the hints suggest the need to dissect the image of the perfect lover being represented as a rose, and how the cultural perspective of the looker derives meaning from this stand-in. Semiotics, collectively, will prove useful in capturing the importance of interpretation to signification in expanding the conversation about representation specific to the reader's eye.

Building off the act of seeing, the details then of the looker and the looked-at must be considered. It is in this examination where the path of the gaze becomes inseparable from spectacle theory. Whether we are referring to the reader's gaze or gaze(s) on the image, the looked-at is a construct of the artist, and being aware of this construct and how it can function,

allows more interpretation of the text. Gaze and spectacle start working as soon as the pages open, guiding direction across the pages and through the book. Following the gaze(s) across the image sometimes offers insights into the meaning in intent of the author or illustrator. Gaze theory helps to interpret social behavior by constructing and maintaining ways of thinking about visual images and, I would argue, even the written gaze. Gaze theory also works in conjunction with the other theories, as well as on its own, disrupting translation of the written. Both liminality and spectacle work well with words and images. But, seeing a gaze, or the lack of a gaze, in a visual creates a different tension in the text. Un-seeing a gaze proves difficult after a literal seeing has occurred. The seeing brings the gaze to life. When read, gaze remains ambiguous, allowing flexibility in the details surrounding the gaze: the depth, the direction, the time, etc. Therefore, when a text is illustrated, the gaze works in a specific way, forcing the reader to take notice of what the author wants the gaze to be directed at, the construct. At that point, the reader can then make assumptions surrounding the gaze, but the gaze itself is a choice made by the author or illustrator.

Once aware of the line of vision, the reader becomes part of the gaze, not so much as being looked-at, although it does happen in some scenes in *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, but more so, the details *of* the gaze: to whom, by whom, how, and why. These specific aspects of gaze theory can be expanded by Laura Mulvey's work on the male gaze, where conversations about gender, queer, post-colonial, and other identities have responded and refined her argument so non-normative categories of spectator and spectacle Otherness are considered, such as dominant gaze (Mulvey "Visual Pleasure"). Although gaze has its roots in Lacanian psychoanalysis, Mulvey's work deploys the gaze and its function outside of the psycho realm allowing ways of seeing from the cultural perspective. Mulvey's male gaze concept, for instance, can be used when referring

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back to the lover lamenting his rose. The woman, signified as the rose, is the object of the image who is protected behind the gate, gazed upon by the lover who wants her. The protected woman trope then, explained by Mulvey, is socially constructed implying the need for the woman to be protected also implying the weaker gender—the one needing to be protected. If she is the desired, he must be the one that desires correlating with a certain passive/aggressive cultural association between genders. He desires her, but his desire is never met. He becomes the chaser, and she is the chased implying love then is unequivocal and that one tends to want more than the other. The signified rose projects a very particular, yet ambiguous meaning onto the woman creating layers of translation for the reader. A rose is delicate yet adorned with thorns and can symbolize sexuality and love adding complexity to its significance. One important aspect when considering images where gender is othered, is the perspective of both genders. Does the woman see herself as a rose? Does she become a rose only because the man sees her this way? The reader does not know the artist's intent here; however, the reader's meaning pulled from the work is valuable when navigating translations of meaning between the text and the image. One must also consider de Meun's added ending *not* being illustrated where the lover plucks the rose, forcibly, implying a rape, but rather an illustration of de Lorris's lamenting lover. The artist's choice then also becomes an object of translation, and when using Mulvey's work and the idea that the image is a cultural portrayal and expectation, this image then either speaks to, or in response of, Morris's 19th century.

To expand on the cultural aspect of seeing and being seen, it is important to note the similarity of the images through Morris's edition. Although the images in *The Kelmscott Chaucer* seemingly portray white men and women, Chaucer's text includes a more geographically diverse group of peoples. Geographical borders or difference informed medieval

race. "The Knight's Tale" recalls ancient Thebes and Athens while "The Squire's Tale" takes place in the Mongol Empire. One of the main subjects in "The Squire's Tale" is king Genghis Khan's daughter, Canacee. Both tales are illustrated in Morris's edition, but the variations in the images of the people are negligible from all the other characters. Looking at only the illustrations, the idea of different people would not manifest; however, when the reader is aware of instances where other groups are identified in Chaucer's work, and the visual translation does not line up, it creates an almost uncanny moment in the reading. bell hooks's theoretical framework on the Oppositional gaze then brings up a similarly interesting conversation in response to cultural competence and the implied reader, particularly in certain scenes where people of color are described in Chaucer's work yet not represented in the image (hooks). The artist's choice to *not* distinguish between the people in the illustrations reflects not only a response to society's eye, but also the eye of the artist, and even the eye of the reader all of which informs the meaning. The reader not recognizing these subtleties suggests a certain privileged perspective in itself as a sameness in the illustrations to the reader with certain assumptions about class and social status denying the obvious differences pointed out by Chaucer. These differences then become the same in the image and this same-ing of the characters negates any type of diversity offered through the texts. The image then offers only the artist's translation to the reader. The responsibility of seeing, or defining, the other is placed back to the reader where they must be informed by the original text before reading Morris's visual text to see past the shown creating a "moment of rupture" for the reader (hooks "Oppositional" 309). This "rupture" is an acknowledgement of the missing and simultaneously creates a look-back by the reader to question the missing, a rebellion in sorts to the resistance. hooks suggests power in looking. The power in Morris's edition, however, is then displaced because the subjects are

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being samed, thus stripping any textual agency Chaucer added of diverse peoples he added to his works. The question of power then is also useful with scenes of earthly characters next to mythical gods such as Venus, Mars, or Diane the Chaste where race extends beyond the earthly but also to the godly and how these too are depicted as same to the other characters and how the artist's perspectives inform meaning. The Oppositional gaze offers a way of understanding how an Other is looked at, even more so, how an Other is made Other through the act of looking, and its power over another. Even though hooks's focus is on Black/White looking, it informs any group being looked at from a White perspective, to include the secular and the mythical. hooks offers a critical lens to the reader to decipher relationships of power between the looker, the looked-at, and in reference to this text, the watcher who is by default the reader.

> "Yes, surely! And if others can see it as I have seen it,
> then it may be called a vision rather than a dream."
> William Morris, *News from Nowhere*

READING AS SEEING

Geoffrey Chaucer's works are celebrated in part because of the way he uses vivid visual rhetoric. Although my analysis focuses on Morris's edition and how it works with Chaucer's texts, it is important to note the conversations surrounding Chaucer and how others have visualized his text. In *Chaucer: Visual Approaches*, Susanna Fein and David Raybin have compiled a collection of essays celebrating the richness of Chaucer's visual poetics. The essays are based on contemporary interplays between text and image, uncovering interdisciplinary potential that deepens and informs our understanding of Chaucer and how his work functions in and with modern capabilities. *Chaucer: Visual Approaches* examines re-imaginings of Chaucer's work, attention to imagescapes, and focus on text symbols and image translations.

Chaucer: Contemporary Approaches brings together how Chaucer's work functions in contemporary society. Chaucer posed questions and created conversations extending from the medieval period to today, helping scholars to understand the contextual framework lending itself culturally to the understanding of literature, art, and beyond. In my argument, I walk the reader across the pages of the 19th-century edition of Chaucer and how it intersects with Chaucer's original work. Susanna Fein and David Raybin have collected works of 21st-century theoretical approaches that add contemporary relevance to reading Chaucer through his rhetorical lens. This collection focuses on Chaucer's places, audiences, and language. Although *Contemporary Approaches* specifically looks at Chaucer's work, I will use this text to rethink how the intertextuality of Chaucer's work functions as well – more specifically, how Morris uses Chaucer's work to function in his society, and also in the modern-day, and how this intertextuality creates a triad connection of meaning.

V.A. Kolve's text, *Chaucer and the Imagery of Narrative* delves into Chaucer's imagery on a different scale. Going beyond the construct of the visual in his work, Kolve uses historical theory to suggest Chaucer creates imagery around the narrative itself, inviting the reader to (re)construct the story and how its meaning functions in the modern day (Kolve 2). Kolve maintains, "Chaucer engages the literary and visual culture of its time both at the moment of its making … and in its public life thereafter, as it is experienced by an audience and thought about when it is over" (Kolve 2). Kolve sees his work as Chaucerian-esque, creating something new from the medieval culture, with a focus "near its imaginative and ethical center," thus bringing the journey into the modern-day (Kolve 7). Kolve's idea of how the text functions broadly extends my conversation back to Morris through a 'new' Chaucerian lens. I walk the reader across the page, beyond the image, considering how the larger picture functions with Chaucer's

words and how re-seeing Chaucer's text in Morris's illustrated edition deflects, denies, or creates new meaning from a current perspective informing current critiques.

Chaucer translated *Boethius de Consolatione Philosophie*, which provided an authoritative answer on how the imaginative works *with* the mind. Boethius lays out distinct ways of knowing to include the use of *wits* and how it functions with *ymaginacioun* and *resoun*. Chaucer demonstrates his knowledge of the value of the combined senses through his work and how the "three-cell doctrine" of the brain works: *ymaginativa*, *logica*, *memorative* (Kolve 23). In *The Riverside Chaucer*, "The Second Nun's Tale" offers an example of his understanding:

> *Right as a man hath sapiences three –*
>
> *Memorie, engyn, and intellect also –*
>
> *So in o beynge of divinitee,*
>
> *Three persones may ther right wel bee.* (Chaucer, lines 338-41)

Chaucer thought of himself as a *makere*, not just a storyteller with a great imagination (Benson 328). Chaucer goes to great lengths to make his audience visualize his words, to use memory in the interaction of those images, and to make implications across their world. His works represent a complete, integral, self-reflexive, metafictional way of thinking, and are my first area of textual study.

While there are broader conversations sparked by Chaucer's vivid words, there are also conversations around William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones and their work. These conversations are important as they have shaped literary conversations moving forward. To understand *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, one must understand the conversations around both Morris and Burne-Jones as their social, political, and even religious ideals shaped the forming of the Kelmscott Press, through which the illustrated Chaucer was born. Morris and Burne-Jones were

products of their society, both having rebellious attitudes against it. In a mechanized world different than Chaucer's, their critiques, conversations, and pushbacks looked different. The beauty and societal function of *The Kelmscott Chaucer* can only be fully envisioned by seeing the personal connection Morris had to create this text. By bringing in the conversations surrounding Morris and Burne-Jones, the reader then can look at this edition of Chaucer's work and see how, much like Kolve's vision, Morris extends the meaning into today.

Moving forward to the 19th century, Morris was mastering his last craft by founding the Kelmscott Press in 1891 where he would illuminate many medieval texts (Richmond 2). *The Kelmscott Chaucer* would be the final venture he and Edward Burne-Jones would complete together. Using medieval text and art as inspiration, Morris claimed illustration was needed for the combination of beauty and meaning in books:

> All organic art … has two qualities in common, the epical and the ornamental; its two functions are the telling of a story and the adornment of a space or tangible object … Not only is all its special art obviously and simply beautiful as ornament, but its ornament also is vivified with forcible meaning, so that neither in one nor the other does the life ever flag, or the sensuous pleasure of the eye ever lack. You have not got to say, Now you have your story, how are you going to embellish it? Nor, Now you have your beauty, what are you going to do with it? For here the two are together, inseparably a part of each other. (Morris, "Woodcuts" 26)

In *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, Morris's role was both editor and illustrator and worked in partnership (and friendship) with Edward Burne-Jones as an illustrator. In speaking of their combined purpose for the text, Burne-Jones said, "I want particularly to draw your attention to the fact that there is no preface to Chaucer, and no introduction, and no essay on his position as a

poet, and not notes, and no glossary; so that all is prepared for you to enjoy him thoroughly"

(qtd. in Robinson 35). This implies a shared belief among both Burne-Jones and Morris that the

illuminated edition offers a truer representation of the original works and thus offers a truer

translation for the author. Conceivably, Chaucer would agree, judging by his own words in *The*

Legend of Goode Wimmen: *For myn entent is, or I fron youw fare,* / *The naked text in English to*

declare suggests a vulnerable offering of truth and thought from the page to the reader (Chaucer

417).

William Morris's conversations allow his vision of the Kelmscott Press, and ultimately

the printing of *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, to be seen. In his "Note on Founding the Kelmscott," he

lays the framework of his hopes of printing books "which would have a definite claim to beauty"

(Morris, "Note" 2). He admired the beauty seen in the mere typography of 15th-century

manuscripts, even though most also were adorned with ornament. Morris lays out the

bibliographic codes he has mastered to aesthetically recreate a mindful visual translation of the

beautiful texts he has admired for years. Chief considerations were "paper, the form of the type,

the relative spacing of the letters, the words, and the lines; and lastly the position of the printed

matter on the page," most of which I will detail in Chapter 2 (Morris, "Note" 2).

Since his goal was aesthetics, it is important to understand his goals of art. In "Of the

Origins of Ornamental Art," Morris writes a manifesto of sorts defining ornamental art to guide

its purpose, and by doing so he hopes to expand the audience perspective on the idea of art and

its function, in and outside of other art forms (Morris, "Of the Origins"). He furthers the

conversation in "The Ideal Book." In this essay, Morris claims a book can be a work of beautiful

architecture without extra ornament but must be soundly built. To fit into the construct of a

sound book, the following boxes must be checked: pages must be clear and easy to read, the type

must be well designed, and the margins must be proportional (Morris, "Ideal" 2). Morris goes into detail about how to achieve these requirements, but his main point is the text is the art itself and should be constructed as such. One of Morris's fears that in an industrial society, the "determination to put our eyes in our pockets wherever we can" will become the default (Morris, "Ideal" 2). Morris also believes a book originally constructed by a true artist naturally lends itself to the art of ornamentation. The beauty produced from the original, awakens the beauty in others, leading to adding ornamental art to a text. He writes:

> The ornament must form as much a part of the book as the type itself, or it will miss its mark, and to succeed, and to be ornate, it must submit to certain limitations, and become architectural; a mere black and white picture, however interesting it may be as a picture, may be far from an ornament in a book; while on the other hand a book ornamented with pictures that are suitable for that, and that alone, may become a work of art second to none, save a fine building duly decorated, or a fine piece of literature. (Morris, "Ideal" 8)

Although Morris acknowledges picture books limit content, the books do, however, produce pleasure, artistic, beautiful pleasure, and it is this production of pleasure that he means to strive to reproduce. In "An Essay on Printing," Morris sums up his thoughts on the ornamentation of printed books, "the essential point to be remembered is that the ornament, whatever it is, whether picture or pattern-work, should form part of the page, should be a part of the whole scheme of the book" (Morris, "Printing" 19). Furthermore, he states the need to clarify the "modern practice is to disregard the relation between the printing and the ornament altogether, so that if the two are helpful to one another is a mere matter of accident" (Morris, "Printing" 19). Morris denies accident with true craftsmen.

William Morris spent years studying medieval manuscripts to replicate the true art processes before mechanical thoughts and capitalized productions blurred the line between art and economy. He highly respected Chaucer's writing, his gift of art, and spent much of his life focused on bringing Chaucer's words to life past the page. His hope was that "printed books might once again illustrate to the full the position of our Society that a work of utility might be also a work of art, if we cared to make it so" (Morris, "Printing" 19). Even though he does not duplicate the entire medieval aesthetics, his techniques and values grew from the core of the author's artistic seeds planted 500 years prior.

Although Morris and Burne-Jones had a unique collaborative relationship and were on the same page with illustration design, Burne-Jones struggled occasionally with content. Burne-Jones was not a *fabliau* fan; Chaucer was a fan and used this genre in his works accordingly. In a conversation with his assistant, Thomas Rooke, Burne-Jones says, "I'd like to pretend Chaucer didn't do them" (Lago 68). Burne-Jones's sketchpad contains a marginal note verifying his discontent with certain content: "no picture to Miller / no picture to Reeve / no picture to Cook's Tale" (Robinson 27). All of the tales Burne-Jones marginalized, both literally and figuratively, are known *fabliaux*. Others influenced by Burne-Jones, the Pre-Raphaelites, and the Arts and Crafts Movement, noted the style choices of the illustrated content: "You won't find a single picture of Burne-Jones that could not be displayed in Sunday Schools" (qtd. in Wilton 32). Nonetheless, Burne-Jones did draw more sexualized details in previous work such as Malory and the Merlin paintings.

There is also conversation surrounding Burne-Jones's longstanding battle with lethargic moods and nightmares after an affair which may have complicated his artwork and influenced his choices in his later years, which include *The Kelmscott Chaucer* (Fitzgerald 112-16). The

style and tone showed through his illustrations differ from his earlier works which offered a

more amusing and even sometimes comical side of the artist. Examples of this more disturbing

or gothic feel are in *The House of Fame*.

Chaucer-the-Illustrated is confronted by this

larger-than-man eagle. Then the next

encounter with the eagle, same text, shows the

eagle dwarfing the terrified Chaucer-the-

Illustrated and is too big to fit completely in

the frame (figure 1.7) (Richmond 28). The

eagle has the terrified Chaucer gripped by his

Figure 1.7. Illustrated page from House of Fame. Edward Burne-Jones, The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

long talons and is in control. These are two of the few images in the edition where Burne-Jones

presents the "tensions of late Victorian England" and of the "artist's fearful uncertainty"

(Richmond 28).

Considerations should be made for the editor and the illustrator's background, when

examining the visual in *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, since it is inevitable in any text, written or

visual, that an artist's slant manipulates the subject. Burne-Jones overlooked themes he found

distasteful and less than honorable, by his standards and experiences, thus inviting an instant

critique of trueness to Chaucer's text. Because of these choices, Burne-Jones did not produce

illustrations for some of the more common and expected Chaucerian scenes, with modern critics

faulting his "monolithic choice of chivalric subjects for the illustrations" in *The Kelmscott*

Chaucer (Archibald 172-77). However, my analysis offers a wider examination of Burnes-

Jones's subjects and themes encompassed by his choices. For his part, Morris shines the light on

texts which have not been highly associated with the visual, such as *Boethues de Consolatione*

Philosophie or *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, bringing life to the shadowed depth of Chaucer's imagined. With Morris, even though he did not create the word, the *act* of image creation pushes the audience to interact, not only with Chaucer's sighted words but also with the illustrations and the ornate borders used to complete the aesthetic package. Both men weave image and text, creating an experience for the reader, an experience uniting not only image and text but the reader with "a harmonious whole, something which will give a person with a sense of beauty real pleasure whenever and wherever the book is opened" (Morris, "Woodcuts" 7). These men worked together every week for almost twenty-five years, two and a half years on the Chaucer itself (Burne-Jones, *Memorials* 259). Burne-Jones, a Christian, religiously devoted his Sundays to this project, suggesting a connection with Chaucer somewhat analogous to other artists (Ford 421). Even though Burne-Jones was for his part dedicated and deferential, he also recognized his tensions and struggle for self-effacement in this project:

> I wonder, if Chaucer were alive now, or is aware of what is going on, whether he'd be satisfied with my pictures to this book or whether he'd prefer impressionist ones … And if he and Morris were to meet in heaven, I wonder if they'd quarrel … for the book I am putting myself wholly aside, and trying to see things as he [Chaucer] saw them; not once have I invaded his kingdom with one hostile thought. (Burne-Jones, *Memorials* 260)

Burne-Jones was mindful in his creations. Even though Morris remained confident with Burne-Jones's work dedication and decisions, it is necessary to note Morris's allowances for Burne-Jones's exceptions were not complete. Morris did give him authoritative freedom with illustrative choices; however, even with this freedom, Burne-Jones's choices did not take away from Morris's vision, and in turn, both remained faithful to their planned 'true' version of Chaucer.

In "A Book Arts Pilgrimage: Arts and Crafts Socialism and the *Kelmscott Chaucer*,"
Jessica DeSpain acknowledges Morris's aim of overhauling book production in an attempt to
reinsert the role of the craftsman inside the covers, typography, and printing of the book
(DeSpain 74). In doing so, she claims there is "no escaping from William Morris, the artisan,
while examining a Kelmscott Chaucer; the book forces the reader to visit its pages in a social and
political connect that critically challenges the capitalist culture surrounding it" (DeSpain 75). In
her essay "Beauty, Unity, and the Ideal: Wholeness and Heterogeneity in the *Kelmscott
Chaucer*," Diane Archibald argues the symmetrical placement of illustrations and borders
imposes unity on the text of Morris's *Canterbury Tales* not seen in Chaucer's tales; however, she
does insist Morris's emphasis on union among the elements of the book – typeface, margins, and
spacing – forces harmony and intrudes upon the heteroglot voices of the pilgrims (Archibald
178). Archibald examines *The Kelmscott Chaucer* as a reframing of Chaucer's work as a treatise
and embodiment of arts and crafts socialism for the 20th century (Archibald 169-180). DeSpain
adds, "Morris's view of Chaucer's *Tales* as a site for social and political commentary in which
the pilgrims and the reader could participate, *The Kelmscott Chaucer* contained a reframing that
Chaucer would have welcomed" (DeSpain 77).

Much of my analysis addresses how Chaucer is inserted into the text as Burne-Jones
draws him into 31 images in Morris's edition. In her article titled, "Edward Burne-Jones's
Portraits in the Kelmscott 'Chaucer,'" Velma Bourgeois Richmond focuses on these portraits and
their significance to this edition. She notes, "his easily recognizable Chaucer combines visionary
ethereal slenderness with a deliberate reflection of 'realism,' substituting instead details that
merely evoke the Middle Ages," thus contrasting with Victorian ideals (Richmond 5). Chaucer
references his physical appearance by noting his "plumpness" in the *House of Fame*; however,

Richmond notes Burne-Jones drawings were faulted for going against the realistic expectations during his time. Burne-Jones's Chaucer is more "elvyssh," expressing not so much physical feature as an elusive quality remarked by Harry Bailey in *The Tales* (Richmond 5). Elvyssh, as Richmond notes, meaning mysterious, not of this world, expresses Chaucer's experience rather than his physical looks, a notion which did encompass both Morris and Burne-Jones's concepts of what art *should* do, not just what art was now *expected* to do (Richmond 5). Chaucer's portraits expanded the (then) current conversation surrounding Burne-Jones's chivalric painting themes and present a vision much more personal of both the artist's experience which is both medieval and deeply modern that embody the literary texts differently than before (Richmond 31).

Since Chapter 2 of this thesis lays out the structure of Morris's editorial choices and how they relate to the readings of Chaucer's work and the illustrated edition, it is important to note Charles LaPorte's essay, "Morris's Compromises on Victorian Editorial Theory and the Kelmscott *Chaucer*." LaPorte addresses the Victorian editorial theory in general and how the Victorians "treated Chaucer with the same attention and scholarly exactitude with which they approached biblical literature" (LaPorte 216). LaPorte notes William Morris's editorial accidentals and criticizes him for not staying true to Skeat's erudite Oxford edition. Skeat's title printed on every volume reads, *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, edited, from numerous manuscripts*, contrasting with Morris's title which reads, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer now newly imprinted*. LaPorte mentions Morris did not reproduce Skeat's textual variants, and in doing so, retained the cultural cachet of the best and most reliable text, while he concedes nothing of the elusiveness of Chaucer's historical transmission (LaPorte 216). LaPorte examines the problems inherent with a 'cathedral'-like, aesthetically based edition of the

complete works of a medieval poet, and what an attempt like Skeat's or Morris's to craft one

authoritative text from Chaucer's multiple texts does to the (re)imagining of Chaucer's work

today (LaPorte 218). LaPorte does not denounce Morris's and Burne-Jones's aesthetically

pleasing Chaucer edition; however, he does note that because of its magnificence, it has altered

the surviving image of the poet. His work focuses on to what extent, for what reasons, and upon

what bibliographical premises this shaping influence occurred and how it changes how we read

Chaucer as an authority today (LaPorte 218).

CONCLUSION

I have set up Geoffrey Chaucer and how his works are easily adapted into William

Morris's visual culture of the 19th century. Through liminality and literary spectacle, I offer ways

of seeing past the malleable boundaries on the page and how the act of seeing in these spaces can

function to inform meaning for the reader. I then walk the reader through some of the

conversation surrounding Morris and Burne-Jones's specific work and how their reading and

seeing become inseparable and also intentional. I now expand my discussion and analysis of the

interpretive nature of *The Kelmscott Chaucer* begins with the larger framework of the text. In

Chapter 2, I provide a framework for navigating Morris's editorial choices: type, frames, images,

margins, ornament, and placement. These editorial choices function aesthetically on the page and

work *with* meaning between the image and the words. Building on the editorial framework, I lay

out two representative texts in Chapter 3: *A Treatise on the Astrolabe* and *The Parlement of

Foules*. Liminal theory will inform the analysis and bring the reader across the borders on the

page. Using a lens focused by spectacle and gaze theory in relation to liminality, the reader can

then unpack the image translation and how it functions with the words to offer a more current

socio-historical approach of seeing and reading.

Chapter II

You may say that you don't care for this result, that you wish to read literature and to look at pictures; and that so long as the modern book gives you these pleasures you ask no more of it; well, I can understand that, but you must pardon me if I say that your interest in books in that case is literary only, and not artistic, and that implies, I think, a partial crippling of the faculties; a misfortune which no one should be proud of.
William Morris, from "The Woodcuts of Gothic Books"

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will lay out the fundamentals of the text in two parts: the bibliographic and the linguistic. Jerome McGann's text, *The Textual Condition*, defines linguistic code as the aggregate meaning of the text on the page and bibliographic codes are then the non-linguistic signifiers (McGann 70). Although McGann starts with the linguistic code, for my argument, the collective text umbrellas both linguistic and bibliographic blurring the starting line. To successfully move through the pages of the text, the bibliographic codes need to be recognized and positioned as *part of* the linguistic, rather than separate. Rather than focusing solely on the textual, the whole page is then processed, both being dependent on the other which is why it is important to outline these areas, for this text and my argument, methodically as such. Therefore, recognizing each aspect individually, a collective picture of the larger text presents clearly. Starting with the non-textual as being the outer page, with textual being the written and the visual being the inner page, allows for a natural flow of interpretation as one moves across the page. To clarify, Chapter 2 will define the bibliographic codes to include the type, frames, images in the general sense, and margins. When mentioning images relating to the bibliographic

codes, I want to separate the image from the image's meaning, the image consists of borders separating the image itself from the page and from the meaning within the image. In this section, I will reference the image as merely a bordered area on the page and how its position on the page fits into Morris's aesthetics alongside the other details outside of the illustration. Chapter 3 will include the linguistic codes which will focus on the space *in* the illustration. I will cross the bibliographic threshold to dive into the analysis of the image itself using liminality, spectacle, and gaze theories. Specific images in specific texts were chosen to represent the text as a whole. Even though Chaucer's works are represented differently in *The Kelmscott*, the theoretical pattern is the same when discussing the illustrations.

    The Kelmscott Chaucer was designed to epitomize William Morris's 'ideal book.' Morris formulated three basic requirements for the 'ideal book' through his extensive study of 15th-century manuscripts: "*First*, the pages must be clear and easy to read; which they can hardly be unless, *Secondly*, the type is well-designed; and *Thirdly*, whether the margins be small or big, they must be in due proportion to the page of letters" (Morris, "Ideal Book" 68). Morris's emphasis "upon the book as an organic assembly of paper, type, and binding" continues through every part of the book, working seamlessly to create his ideal book (Jackson 176):

> The question, in fact, which I want to put to you is this, Whether we are to have books which are beautiful as books; books in which type, paper, woodcuts, and the due arrangement of all these are to be considered, and which are so treated as to produce a harmonious whole, something which will give a person with a sense of beauty real pleasure whenever and wherever the book is opened, even before he begins to look closely into the illustrations; or whether the beautiful and inventive illustrations are to be looked on as separate pictures embedded into a piece of utilitarianism, which they cannot

decorate because it cannot help them to do so. (Morris, "The Woodcuts of Gothic

Books")

TYPE

As William Peterson notes, despite the limitations and contemporary critiques of Morris's

typefaces, the 12-point Gothic Chaucer type's success stems from the organic flow with *The*

Kelmscott Chaucer decorations and margin sizes without compromising the size, legibility, and

usability of the completed volume (Peterson 90). The Troy was the original typeface to be used

in this edition. Morris designed the type and had it cut. The type was delivered January 1, 1892,

and he quickly realized its size created an issue for text accessibility (Morris, "The Art of Craft

of Printing" 30). In keeping with Morris's preference for

Gothic typefaces for this edition, he had initially planned

to use his Troy type, but "Morris had reached the

conclusion, early in 1892, that the Troy type was too large

for the projected" volume (Peterson 240). Morris had the

Troy type re-cut in the size of a pica (Morris, "The Art

and Craft of Printing" 30). Success surrounded the new

font; however, Morris was not satisfied with the reduced

Figure 2.1. Golden Type / Troy Type / Chaucer Type: Specimens of Fonts Developed for the Kelmscott Press by William Morris. February 1897.
www.morrissociety.org/morris/artbookdesign.html#

size of the 12-point Chaucer type as it reduced the text's

legibility (Peterson 240). An 18-point typeface would have

resulted in a completed volume so physically large as to make it too difficult to handle, therefore,

minimizing usability, which was a fundamental concern for his definition of a successful book

(Morris, "The Ideal Book"). The larger Troy typeface, however, is still used in the text as

headings for the longer works. Morris used black and limited red ink for highlighted or

marginalia text.

Beyond the font and its size, the white space between the letters, words, and lines factors into legibility. Morris's utmost concern when developing fonts was that his books be clear and legible, and to address these concerns, fonts should be:

> pure in form; severe, without needless excrescences; solid, without the thickening and thinning of the line, which is the essential fault of the ordinary modern type, and which makes it difficult to read; and not compressed laterally, as all later type has grown to be owing to commercial exigencies. (Morris, *A Note* 2-3)

Figure 2.2. Example of non-illustrated page from "The General Prologue." Chaucer, Geoffrey. William Morris, editor. The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

Omitting unnecessary white space between words and between lines enhanced the beauty of the book according to Morris. The play with the white space on the page, even on pages with no image, is distinct and consistent through the pages of *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, also creating an image to be seen (figure 2.2).

Ornate letter boxes are seen on nearly every page of Morris's *Chaucer* in varying sizes. The boxes are carefully integrated onto the page allowing an organic flow of the page while also
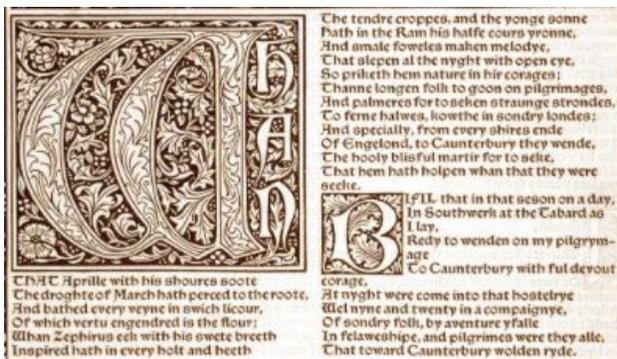
Figure 2.3. Example of ornate boxes from "The General Prologue." Chaucer, Geoffrey. William Morris, editor. The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896. C.43.h.19., bl.uk/collection-items/the-kelmscott-chaucer.

signaling what Morris deems an important moment in the text. The larger lettered boxes are square, measuring at 1 5/16 of an inch with the only differencing of two "Ws" measuring at 1 1/2 inches (figure 2.3). Morris was very specific with his measurements as "early page proofs reveal how he screened all production to

assure complete harmony of adornment and text, sometimes rejecting a design for misalignments as little as a fraction of an inch" (Archibald 172). The letters appear with designs varying from leaves to vines, to berries, and any other combination of the forementioned. Usually, the larger boxes signal the beginning *of* text, or a new beginning *in* the text. The smaller boxes measure 3/4 of an inch. The design filling each box is like the larger but a more concise design. Again, the "W" box is slightly larger. The smaller letters all measure around 1/2 inch square. The visual difference between these ornate letter styles is that the square and design are more in the background now with the letter primarily filling the space (figure 2.4). Rather than rigid box frames around the letters, the letters look to sit upon a simple unframed design.

Figure 2.4. Example of smaller unboxed letter from The Kelmscott Chaucer proofs. Designed by William Morris.

FRAMES AND BORDERS

Frames and borders in *The Kelmscott* are consistent and function in a few different ways. Figure 2.5 demonstrates a typical page with frames and borders. Around the illustrated pages is a

Figure 2.5. Illustrated page from The Kelmscott Chaucer. Chaucer, Geoffrey. William Morris, editor. The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

larger ornate border framing the page. Then, a smaller ornate border frames the image while a thin solid black border frames the image, all framed by some level of white space. Below the image, the page border encompasses the text, creating a one-ness on the page. The larger decorative page borders "bind the illustrations and the text, guiding the eye naturally from image to word" (Archibald 173). Each piece of the page is separated by frames and borders assigned to specific locations by Morris. However, even with this obvious separation, the frames and borders also create an overlooked connection.

Morris's precision with separations helps to achieve this unified ideal book. Without the frames on the page, the cohesiveness would not be there. The text is situated *with* the images as both are enclosed in the larger decorative page border (see figure 2.5). If only the image was bordered, it would create distance from the text. The reader's eye might navigate to the image and *then* to the text. With the larger border around the entire page, the attention is drawn to what is inside, collectively. A distinguishable separation is almost impossible to find on the page, enforcing a harmony Morris deems necessary for illustrations in a book (Morris, "The Ideal Book"). Since the text below the image has minimal and proportioned white space, a continuation from the image to the text exists. Figure 2.6 below demonstrates how Morris's two-page unit works with these frames and borders. The individual page borders continue across the other page, connecting the separate pages. The measurement precision smoothly lines up the illustrations from one page to the other. The white space between the text columns, although differing, is consistent and unifying across the two pages. The borders being the same across both pages in this example connect the pages, the images, and Chaucer's text. Although there are instances where the larger decorative page borders do differ across the pages, the changes signal a new text or a major theme or tone switch in the same text. Either way, the functions of the frames and borders both separate and unite image and text, creating a unique experience between the reader and the page.

IMAGES

Although there are only 87 pages adorned with illustrations in *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, each page is aesthetically reminiscent of a medieval manuscript. Discussion in Chapter 3 surrounds the intersections of meaning found in the illustrations; however, it is necessary to address the image in a broader sense as well. Morris positions each image box at the top of the

page with only borders and an occasional text title above it. All the images are approximately the same length and width and are relative to other pages with images creating another consistency through the text. Each illustration completed by Burne-Jones has a thin black frame with a wider white space frame between it and the smaller floral border creating. When looking at the page, (see figure 2.6), the illustration and words share the page almost equally balancing the page space beyond the borders. Even though the reader 'sees' the image before reading the words, the balance suggests oneness, or transparency, between both—one leads to the other.

MARGINS

The white space on the page was important to Morris. Much like his attention to the spaces between words and lines, the marginal white space was also carefully controlled. Morris believed the basic visual unit of a book consists of "two pages making an opening" (Morris, "Ideal Book" 70). Looking at the pages with illustrations on both sides of the book, *verso* left-side page, and *recto* right-side page, demonstrates best. This two-paged "opening" resisted the page-by-page progression of other 19th-century books. In Chapter 3's "Art Historical" sections, the precision Morris went to in exacting measurements across the two pages to unite them as one is detailed. Rather than the *verso* and *recto* pages being mirrored, the binding connects the two pages so when the book lays open, the reader sees the connection. The margins following the outside of the pages are equal. However, the margins on both inner pages measure only about half of the outer edge, creating a disturbance to the eye as it moves left to right. It is in this disturbance that the reader finds a continuance or "opening" across the page. Morris's two-page design connects page to page more completely than binding alone can do, thus creating a more unified work and solidifying the text's effect on the reader (Archibald 172). Figure 2.6

demonstrates how the margins create a one-page experience rather than two individual pages.

This scene illustrates the lover walking through the garden where he encounters Beauty and Love. Then on the next page, he encounters Jealousy and Idleness. The pages "open" for the reader allowing access from the page and into the garden. The images walk the reader through the garden and across the page, demonstrating Morris's created opening by having a two-paged unit rather than the typical left to right, top to bottom feel.
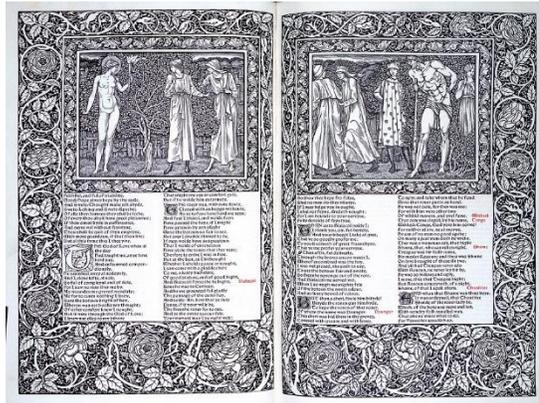
Figure 2.6. Illustrated pages from "The Romaunt of the Rose" in The Kelmscott Chaucer. Chaucer, Geoffrey. William Morris, editor. The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896. C.43.h.19., bl.uk/collection-items/the-kelmscott-chaucer.

Morris's proportional layouts and distinctive margins guide the reader through the text. His editorial choice to not "design an italic alphabet or certain other characters … that other printers would find indispensable (e.g., brackets, dashes, small capitals, bold face) … [produces] a grand simplicity and uniformity of texture in the Kelmscott Press pages" (Peterson 90). Morris inserts floral paragraph markers into the text serving as a structure aid (figure 2.7). Inserts of leaves and flowers flow with the page design and are extensions of the ornament on the page that

Figure 2.7. Examples of Ornament used in The Kelmscott Chaucer. Designed by William Morris.

allow the reader to quickly note the beginnings and endings of stanzas and texts. These paginal features break up the text naturally without abrupt shifts more modern editorial design create. The only marginal comments on the non-imaged pages in *The Kelmscott Chaucer* are the names of the text on the outer top corner of the page, allowing for easier navigation through the texts, reminiscent of ecclesiastical text. The uniformity of the titles creates an 'expected' on the page and allows the reader to find the text, or section of text, easily. In some of the texts, there is

marginal writing in the column of the text, but never disrupting the outer margins (see figure 2.2). In the white space between columns and stanzas, occasionally, subtext will appear to note specific texts as seen in *Boethius de Consolatione Philosophie* moving between *Book*, *Prose*, and *Metre*. This text is usually on a line by itself to easily identify the specific sections.

ORNAMENT

William Morris emphasizes the use of ornament in books and its use not being necessary for a book to be ideal. However, he does caution "that if we think the ornament is ornamentally a part of the book merely because it is printed with it, and bound up with it, we shall be much mistaken" (Morris, "The Ideal Book" 4). William Morris pushed against the modern book practice "to disregard the relation to the printing and the ornament altogether" and believed illustrations should be made *for* the book and when removed from the book, do not stand alone (Morris, "The Art and Craft of Printing" 19). The illustration comes to life *with* the text, not out of it. He also notes that the true beauty of a book arises naturally from true craftmanship of the artist, and definite ornament will also arise naturally. Morris's thoughts about the manuscript as image interact with and inherit a long medieval tradition progressing to his illustrated edition.

Figure 2.8. Illustrated page from the Ellesmere Manuscript, The Canterbury Tales. Geoffrey Chaucer, est. 1400, The Huntington Library: MS EL 26 C 9, www.bl.uk/collection-items/ellesmere-manuscript.

ILLUSTRATED AND ILLUMINATED CHAUCER

The *Ellesmere Manuscript* is one of the most famous manuscripts of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. The *Ellesmere* is one of the earliest manuscripts known of Chaucer's works, dating around 1400 -1410. The richly illustrated version brings life to Chaucer's pilgrimage in *The Canterbury Tales*. The *Ellesmere* contains 22 detail-colored

images of the pilgrims, often at the opening of their tales. This text is also notable as it contains a portrait of Chaucer, which is rare for medieval authors, even though it dates after his lifetime (see figure 2.8). The manuscript offers a distinct hand and consistent text copied by one scribe. However, the illustrations are thought to be collective, with as many as three different illustrators based on the details across the pilgrims. Like Morris's edition, there is beautiful ornamentation on some of the pages, along with ornate lettered boxes. The *Ellesmere* is named after Sir Thomas Egerton (1540 – 1617), who was born Baron Ellesmere and Viscount Brackley.

The *Hengwrt Chaucer* is another of the most famous illuminated manuscripts of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (figure 2.9). The *Hengwrt* is believed to be one of the earliest manuscripts extant copy of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* dating back to the early 15th century. Although the *Hengwrt* is not illustrated like the *Ellesmere*, both are considered superior manuscripts by Chaucerian scholars. Research has led academics to conclude that both the *Hengwrt* and the *Ellesmere* were copied by the same scribe, and this scribe tentatively has been identified in 2004 as Adam Pinkhurst. Even though images are not present in the *Hengwrt*, the pages demonstrate medieval illumination influencing editorial choices made by William Morris. His rich page ornamentation does not mimic medieval practices, but the ornament does certainly resonate with the style. The *Hengwrt* is

Figure 2.9. Page from the Hengwrt Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales. Geoffrey Chaucer, est. 1400, The National Library of Wales: MS 392D, www.library.wales/discover/digital-gallery/manuscripts/the-middle-ages/the-hengwrt-chaucer/.

named after Colonel Robert Baughan who lived in Hengwrt in Wales.

William Caxton's edition is also popular as it was the first published version of Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (see figure 2.10). Caxton was the first to print a book in English, and also

the first English printer. He printed two editions of Chaucer's work, the first published in 1476
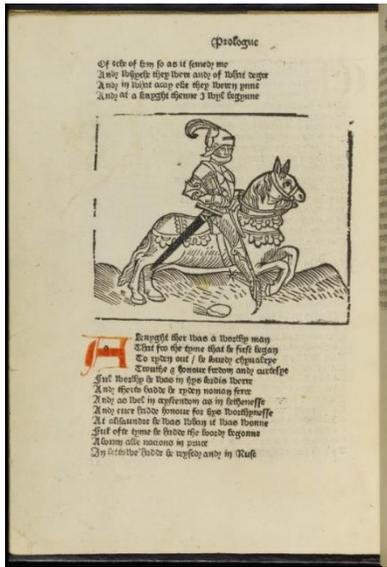
Figure 2.10. Page from The Canterbury Tales. William Caxton and Geoffrey Chaucer, 1483, British Library, www.bl.uk/collection-items/william-caxton-and-canterbury-tales.

and the second, which was illustrated with 26 woodblock prints, in 1483. Like the *Ellesmere*, Caxton's edition brings life to the pilgrims at the start of their tales. One main difference is the lack of color seen in the *Ellesmere*. However, traces of red lettering can be seen throughout the text.

Many others followed, but *The Kelmscott Chaucer* set a new benchmark for both illustrated versions of Chaucer and for book design at the end of the 19th century. Morris's edition brought together two of his passions. The first is his love of medieval literature and his socialist philosophy, pre-machine, and what it had taken from true craftsmanship. Morris's design approach was fundamentalist in all aspects of his work. He looked back to early 15th-century printing and took inspiration from type and margins. He printed on handmade paper, leading him to a paper-mill in Kent. The ink came from Germany after he abandoned the idea of making his own to be confident in the quality. Thirteen copies of Chaucer were printed on vellum and forty-eight were bound in white pig's skin with silver clasps. Like Caxton, Morris's edition is also black and white with traces of red ink for highlights (figure 2.11). One difference between this edition and other illustrated editions is Morris used Chaucer's works collectively, not just the often-celebrated *Tales*. The Kelmscott edition also offers images extending
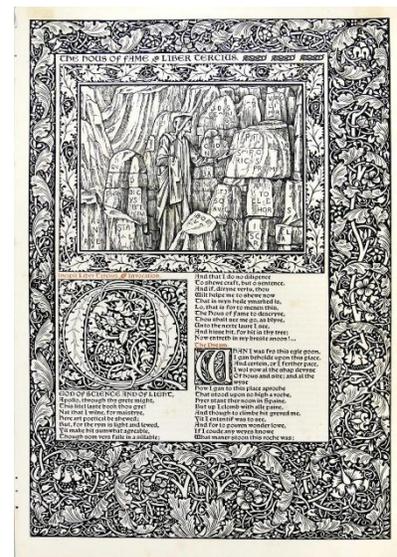
Figure 2.11. Illustrated page from The House of Fame in The Kelmscott Chaucer. Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, 1896, British Library, www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-kelmscott-chaucer.

beyond introducing the pilgrims. Edward Burne-Jones selects works to illustrate. He also expands the *Ellesmere* Chaucer portrait by inserting Chaucer-the-Illustrated into more than 20 images (see figure 2.11). There are 87 woodcut illustrations, 23 ornate borders, and scattered ornamental elements throughout the pages. William Morris died the same year his masterpiece was printed.

ANALYSIS

As Jerome McGann suggests in "'A Thing to Mind': The Materialist Aesthetic of William Morris," Chaucer's framed events, dream-visions, and descriptive scenes extend an entrance to Morris's visuals where he adds-to rather than creates anew (McGann 56). As Morris's eye focuses on beauty in his work, Chaucer's hand focuses the eye of the imagination through his work's imagery rather than a literal image. The images created for *The Kelmscott Chaucer* create liminal borders allowing meaning to move back and forth between the inside of the image to the words outside on the page in mutual conversation. One for example is the timeline when the pilgrims start their journey in *The Canterbury Tales*: *Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote / The droghte of march hath perced to the roote* (Chaucer 23). The visual imagery paints a picture in the reader's mind, and that picture looks different depending on the reader's position, in both time and place; however, a picture is painted, nonetheless. April resonates with the start of spring and new beginnings. Starting the pilgrimage here, from Chaucer's vantage point, as well as inserting the first illustrated portrait of Chaucer, from Morris's, signifies a newness, or a starting point, not just of Morris's text, but for the pilgrims, the audience, Chaucer-the-Illustrated, and even Chaucer-the-Author. All of these options intersect with the original work and create, through liminality, openings meaning to be navigated to be interpreted *to* the reader. Even though the progression of Chaucer's work is unclear, *The Canterbury Tales* are

what first comes to mind, allowing an obvious (liminal) entry point into Morris's text. The reader then enters Chaucer's original work and Morris's added visuals simultaneously.

Like Morris, Chaucer had a way of making the text come to life, moving his audience past the page, thus eliciting audience participation. The participation both Chaucer and Morris provide(d) is the whole experience of connecting the word to image. The illustrations in Morris's text encompass more than the expected scenes, also adding life to his edition. In Morris's text, the expected Wife of Bath or the pilgrim group depiction, for example, is not seen though both have been presented in various ways over the years. However, what is worth mentioning here are the scenes Burne-Jones did create in *The Kelmscott Chaucer* and how these scenes amplify the depth of images created by Chaucer's rhetoric. Burne-Jones brings attention to those scenes often overlooked. Beyond his mere eye for the arts, Morris mastered techniques and collected artists alike to create (and share) his vision as an example of aesthetic freedom, not only his Chaucer edition, but any text created by the Kelmscott Press.

From the beginning of the text, Morris makes clear that Chaucer is the primary theme uniting the illustrations. Directly before the title page, Morris has a page labeled "The Contents of this Book," and he lists all of Chaucer's work. He does not, however, list the illustrations. From the beginning of the book, his value is placed on the original works. The content page shows how Morris centers Chaucer's text and how he physically shows what came first and acknowledges Morris's intended unity of his text. *The Kelmscott Chaucer's* contents grew from Morris's appreciation of the medieval text and the artistic craftmanship surrounding it. With Morris's vision, he maintained certain themes that unified the texts. Floral-vined borders and distinctive typefaces are repeating motifs through *The Kelmscott Chaucer*. In figure 2.12, Morris's first attempt of unifying his art into the words of Chaucer is evident as the Troy typed

'G' and 'C' of Chaucer's first and last name are intertwined with the image, and his motifs, bringing the words to life. The title page is oddly *verso* (on the left and on the back of the contents page) contrasting with traditional 19th-century editorial techniques where the title pages appear on the right. The first page of text mirrors *recto*, to include the larger border on the right, thus putting the two smaller borders 'against' one another to form a large border together. The significance in the presentation here is that it

Figure 2.12. Title page and the first page of text that follow, The Kelmscott Chaucer, Geoffrey Chaucer. Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, 1896, British Library, www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-kelmscott-chaucer.

highlights Morris's page layout, more specifically, the negative space and its function as a frame. The white space is minimal on these two pages, bringing the reader's attention into the focus of the text. With the first two pages open, the first two book pages look like a framed continuum: not two pages but one full page (figure 2.12). This intentional page placement pulls the reader into the leaves of the book (quite literally) forcing an experience, of some sort, on to the reader. There is no way around the feeling of grandeur as the eyes take in the text and the image, unable to separate the two. The only option is to turn the page. Whether it be curiosity framed by the bounded beauty or the overwhelming awe of the boundless sublime, Morris creates a desire to want to see more, and that desire will be chased till the last page is closed. To assess this notion in Lacanian terms, perhaps reader desire is fueled by the intrigue from the reader experience Morris instigates with his work, thus creating a desire for the reader to recognize his (Morris's) intention while also fulfilling the experience he (Morris) and his text are offering (Lacan, *Écrits* 343). Either way, desire is created and always unobtainable, yet the search remains.

A moment of complexity where Morris's text begs thought can be seen in "The Clerk's

Figure 2.13. Walter, Griselda's husband in "The Clerk's

Tale." Morris's choice and placement of illustrations add to Walter and Griselda's 'relationship.' Two of the illustrations in Morris's text portrays the baby being taken from Griselda by a sergeant sent by her husband, Walter, as Chaucer tells. The sergeant sent to take the baby bears a striking resemblance to her husband as he is portrayed in two other illustrations in the tale

Figure 2.14. The sergeant in "The Clerk's Tale."

(figures 2.13 and 2.14). Burne-Jones's similar portraiture of Walter and the sergeant creates a oneness across gender rather than the individual thus extending a conversation beyond marital relationships and into patriarchal power in society and beyond. Burne-Jones's act of drawing Walter not only as the villain in his home but also as the doer of the deed, the man who takes his own child away to be murdered, blurs the line beyond relationships and power. Then, another question is how a woman functions, or is expected to function, when the eyes of tyrannical control are always on her.

Even though analysis in the image begs to be read, for this example Morris's placement of the image is the focus. The first image shows Griselda holding her child before the man who

Figure 2.15. Illustrated page from "The Clerk's Tale" in The Kelmscott Chaucer. Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, 1896, Vallejo John F. Kennedy Library, McCune Rare Books & Art Collection, www.mccunecollection.org/kelmscott_chaucer?mobile=1.

comes to take it away (figure 2.15). Both are standing upstairs, and both are looking down. This image is on the left side of the text with a page of text to the right. The next image is on the next left side of the text, also with a page of text to the right (see figure 2.16). These pages being in succession and on the left disrupts the tale from the other right page illustrations. This pivotal moment in the tale extends to the images Morris chooses to insert portraying a translation of Chaucer's words.

The two images suggest a movement, much like we have seen in other illustrations, that crosses the pages. This movement created by Burne-Jones in the images becomes amplified by Morris's placement more so in the second image. Unlike the other illustrated pages, the expected balance is thrown off on this page. There is text 1 1/2 inches above the image which creates a dipping of the image much like that of Griselda when she bows down on her knee. The three characters remain in the scene, but the background and the body positions have changed. Rather than baby being held by its mother, the man holds the baby with its arms extended out to its mother along with its gaze. The man is still looking down at Griselda, but Griselda's gaze has moved from down at the baby to up and it remains unclear if she looks at or past the baby.

Figure 2.16. Illustrated page from "The Clerk's Tale" in The Kelmscott Chaucer. Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, 1896, Vallejo John F. Kennedy Library, McCune Rare Books & Art Collection, www.mccunecollection.org/kelmscott_chaucer?mobile=1.

To add to the movement, once the page to the right of the first image is read, the reader automatically looks back to the left in anticipation for the next page. This look back allows the image on the left to be re-seen and then the next image appears as the page is turned, creating almost a flip book action. One hardly notices the background changing as the main movement is the baby switching arms and Griselda's kneeling. Both man and woman remain near the original image but have moved to the right toward the exit on the right in the second image.

The borders on the page have also changed. The larger border on the page with the first image has smaller, closely laced flowers and more drawn in leaves. The smaller border around the image is drawn compact with little empty space between the berries, leaves, and vines. The second image's borders have more black space than in the previous image creating a change in

feel from one page to the other. This change of the artwork mimics Griselda's emotional change from lament to vulnerability. Also in the second smaller border, acorns and oak leaves have replaced the previous leaves and berries. Although these changes are subtle to a reader looking through the book, when considered with the text, the acorns in this scene offer levels of meaning to the reader. Although this is a tragic moment for Griselda, she remains dutiful and consents to her husband as he desires. The first image correlates to the text of Griselda getting up from resting with the child as she asks to kiss her child goodbye one more time. He permits her to take the child. As she kisses the child, she marks it with a cross and bids it farewells:

> *And thus she seyde in hire benigne voys*,
>
> *Fare weel, my child*; *I shal thee nevere see*
>
> *But*, *sith I thee have marked with the croys*,
>
> *That for us deyde upon a croys of tree*.
>
> *Thy soule, litel child*, *I hym bitake*,
>
> *for this nyght shaltow dyen for my sake*. (Chaucer 133)

In the second image, however, rather than begging for her child back as the picture might suggest on its own, she is rather begging the man to conceal her daughter's body in burial:

> *Gooth now*, *quod she*, *& dooth my lords heeste*;
>
> *But o thing wol I prey yow of your grace*,
>
> *That*, *but my lord forbad yow*, *atte leeste*
>
> *Burieth this litel body in som place*
>
> *That beestes ne no brides it torace*.
>
> *But he no word wol to that purpos seye*,
>
> *But took the child and wente upon his weye*. (Chaucer 133)

The mention of Christ dying upon a tree in the text, and then having the image of her child taken away surrounding by oak leaves and acorns, suggests a Christ-like renewing or resurrection happening. Neither acorns nor oak trees are mentioned in Chaucer's tale; however, acorns represented penitence and mortification during his time. Morris using acorns in his design for this illustration plays into the meaning of Chaucer's words. The oak tree has long been recognized as a symbol of strength and

Figure 2.17. Illustration of Abraham's Oak. from *Dictionary of the Holy Bible, William Wilberforce, editor, 1886, p. 398.*

endurance (Rand 398). Griselda does mention the tree when referencing the cross Christ was crucified on, tying in her sacrifice to her own child which then ties into Morris's oak leaves.

Even though the choices by Morris in these examples (could) add to the meaning of Chaucer's work, his choices also allow the images and ornate to just belong on the page. Even though my analysis offers meaning through close reading of both texts, it is merely my translation. It is not exhaustive nor is it meant to focus in on specific areas. Contrary, my analysis is to open doors to conversation stemming from my perspective. Looking through Morris's edition of Chaucer does not have to be a quest for something else. The perspective of the audience's gaze and the experiences encompassed by the reader determines the meaning beyond the words or the image. Morris's edition, above all, is a beautiful book constructed to reflect a true medieval craftsmanship both Morris and Burne-Jones admired and respected. Morris's edition adds to Chaucer's imagery which inspired Morris's dreams for the Kelmscott Press. The quest for more beyond the page is personal. Meaning is not forced; meaning is born from the reader and the text. Likewise, *The Kelmscott Chaucer* was born from Morris's experiences with Chaucer's text.

Chaucer's gift represents the craftmanship Morris sought to create with the Kelmscott

Press. Morris wanted not only to reproduce a text, but he also wanted to reproduce a relationship

from the medieval time period stemming from the artist to the text, then to the reader which he

deemed broken by industrialization. As editor, Morris created a text that encompassed this

relationship from inside the industrial realm he pushed so hard against. His resentment stemmed

from the intimate side of art being edited out, not so much the industry itself, but rather the

mechanics of the industry and what it had done to people and their relationship to art. Art was

reproduced more quickly and cheaply. Although accessibility was broadening, Morris saw the

wedge the machine drove between the artist and their work and their audience. Even though the

books he created were physically born of the machine he resented, his editorial choices and

process lined up with his vision connecting his art back to the craft which flowed naturally onto

the pages.

CONCLUSION

Close reading and analysis appear in Chapter 3 where much of Morris's conversation can

be seen both literally and figuratively. However, the construct of his work through McGann's

defined bibliographic code frames the conversation: the type, the frame(s), the image, the

margins, the placement (McGann *The Textual Condition*). All these areas construct the text

collectively forming a conversation between the written and the visual; therefore, acknowledging

these areas and their function allows the whole picture to come together, on the page, in the text,

and as *The Kelmscott Chaucer*. Seeing how the images and words work together in these spaces

will be the subject of Chapter 3, which now follows.

Chapter III

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 is set up to walk through my close reading analysis of two texts which are representative of *The Kelmscott Chaucer* text, collectively. I do, however, pull in other texts for comparison and reference from Morris's text. My framework can be used to walk through any text in *The Kelmscott Chaucer.* My analysis by no means is exhaustive and is only my translation based on my experiences as a reader thus far. My research has been extensive with these two texts, allowing me to pull in not only other works of Chaucer but also his influences and texts to exhibit how deep social and historical influences are on one's perspectives despite the time-period which speaks to Morris's edition in its entirety.

This chapter is subdivided based on my approach to these two works. I first provide a summary of each text and then offer context to situate the text historically. I then move to a detailed image description including an art historical description allowing the reader to make connections from the editorial choices of Morris and his integration of the text and the visual. I conclude with an analysis section.

My hopes are that in presenting the material in this way, I give the reader a starting point to offer a translation based upon their own experiences. I come into this research with a background of Chaucerian works, a passion for his visually charged rhetoric, and a love for his snarky comments and hidden-humor critiques. Although I have always been especially interested in the visual, I admit to only an initial interest in Morris's visual translation. I began my research

last year on William Morris and his journey and how *The Kelmscott Chaucer* has come to be. The beauty of *The Kelmscott Chaucer* is undeniable, yet I questioned the interruption of the visuals into Chaucer's work. My interest was heightened, however, upon reading *The Kelmscott Chaucer* and finding points of discrepancies between the two works and then how the two work or do not work together. I was interested how the visuals both created and denied meaning and how these two texts enter a current socio-historical conversation. Like Morris, I too am intrigued by the aesthetics of literature and the beauty it affords and find value in keeping Geoffrey Chaucer's text alive in current conversation for years to come.

> *But natheles, suffyse to thee thise trewn conclusiouns in English,*
> *as wel as suffyseth to thise noble clerkes Grekes thise same conclusions in Greek,*
> *and to Arabiens in Arabi, and to Iewes in Ebrew, and to the Latin folk in Latin;*
> *whiche Latin folk han hem forst out of othre diverse languages,*
> *and writen in hir owne tonge, that is to sein, in Latin.*
> Geoffrey Chaucer, from the "Introduction" of *The Treatise on the Astrolabe*

The Treatise on the Astrolabe

An important, yet under-recognized work by Chaucer is *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*. This text is a medieval instruction manual written by Chaucer and attributed as the first of its kind written in English rather than Latin. This technical guide is not the first text of Chaucer usually to come to mind when thinking about visual rhetoric. The choice of using this text in Morris's edition, however, is no surprise considering the second wind of the Industrial Revolution was rising. William Morris's aesthetics theory was a rebuttal to the period, so to see he and Burne-Jones collaborate so brilliantly with this text is not surprising. *Treatise* does more than provide details and descriptions, which Edward Burne-Jones takes advantage of with different uses of platform and gaze throughout *The Kelmscott Chaucer*.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

A Treatise on the Astrolabe is a medieval instruction manual written in prose form by Chaucer around the year 1391. This treatise was written for the accessibility of the curious. Chaucer starts with an introduction to the *Treatise* stating his purposes of composing the treatise and to make clear he is not responsible for the information as it has been borrowed from the greats who have already done the work in astronomy (as a part of science). The prose is separated into five books. The first book describes all the parts and the functions of the astrolabe. The second book instructs the subject on how to use the astrolabe. Books three, four, and five contain tables, charts, calendars, and diagrams to assist with using the astrolabe.

IMAGE AND ART HISTORICAL DESCRIPTIONS

Image 3.1 is on the right side of the text and stands 3 1/2 inches tall and 4 9/16 inches wide. The page is framed with a border of small flowers, flower buds, vines, and large scrolling leaves. The border measures 2 1/8 inches on the bottom, 1 3/16 inches to the right, 3/4 of an inch on the top, and 1/2 inch on the left. The image is framed with a smaller border with vines and scrolling leaves different from the page border. The smaller border measures 5/16 of an inch on all four sides. A white border of 1/8 inch separates the two ornate borders on three sides. Then, a white frame of 1/16 inch surrounds a black frame of 1/32 which borders the image. Unlike other texts, the title of the text is

Figure 3.1. Illustrated page from The Treatise on the Astrolabe, Edward Burne-Jones, The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

written in capital letters with flower ornamentation sits above the image. An ornate text box stands 2 5/16 inches tall and 2 5/8 inches wide. The word "Little" is inside the text box with small flowers, berries, vines, and leaves. The first line of text in the left column is all capital and then the regular font ensues. The text is divided into two equal columns of 2 5/8 inches with 1/4 inch of white space between the columns, 1/8 of an inch of white space on the outside of the columns. There are no separated stanzas on this page.

Chaucer and his son, Lewis, gaze out into the heavens. Lewis's left hand holds Chaucer's gown, while his right hand holds his gown up mirroring Chaucer's grasp on his layered garment. Lewis's left foot is lifted slightly up off the stone platform floor. Chaucer's cap drapes down on his shoulders. Chaucer holds his book underneath under his right arm. His left thumb holds an astrolabe detailed with two arms and twenty-six sections and his finger points out and up. The two stand on a stone-wall platform rising above the ground in the background of the scene but in the foreground of the image. Stairs exit the platform to the right in the image leading to a doorway. The ground in front of the structure is made up of bare hills with sparsely scattered bushes. A winding path leads up the hill to the left of Chaucer seemingly to nowhere. A desolate building stands tucked in the hills at a distance to the right of the image. Framing the top of the image is a dark but clear, starry sky. The dry earth stands between Chaucer and little Lewis and the heavens present, almost metaphorically to the travels one must make to reach the reward. The reward here is the understanding that bridges the two worlds together: astrolabic sciences and human intelligence. In bridging these two ways of thinking together, Chaucer and Morris offer a more worldly view of belonging to their societies. With the authorship of this piece, Chaucer steps across typical literary subjects drawing across several different disciplines yet pulling them

all together to force the question of what it means to instrumentalize. Chaucer stands with his eye on the prize, quite literally.

ANALYSIS

There is only one illustration among the 19 pages of text for *A Treatise of an Astrolabe*, an image of Chaucer and *little Lowis*, presumably his 10-year-old son (see figure 3.1). This text's "Introduction" is important as Chaucer clarifies his work is merely a compilation of the *labour of olde Astrologiens*, stripped down to rudimentary form for tender minds, discounting any personal *envye* for his process (Morris 398). People's lives had become mechanically regulated by the late 19th century. Advances in science and technology sped up the world, leaving little time for leisure and nature. While Chaucer does not describe the scene Edward Burne-Jones chooses to illustrate, the depiction of the image parallels the text. The reader can make plausible connections in this gray space to how the prologue *might* have been told if *told* at all. The choice to breathe life into such a technical text through this illustration elevates the overall story Morris is attempting through using his press.

Chaucer-the-Illustrated is standing with his son gazing into the sky behind a wall and the dry world which creates distance between them and the heavens. Unlike the use of the platform in *The Romaunt of the Rose* as discussed in Chapter 2, the reader is now *behind* the scenes rather than watching. Unlike Jonathan Crary's description of the Romantic resistance to *externality* demonstrated in the *The Romaunt of the Rose* with the intimate, in the garden alone with the dreamer, yet public *tableaux* and courtly vices, the images standing behind the wall now look beyond the interior and past the present world against the ideas of modern-day immediacy (Crary 83). So, then the *internality* situates the images and the observers to subjective interiority with the objectivity of the exterior world at the same time (83). The reader is part of both. Rather than

participating in the scene with Chaucer-the-Illustrated, the reader is now watching from over his shoulder, forcing a literal third-person point of view of the image. This point of view is important in this instance because seeing the scientific topic of *The Treatise* breached by the human aspect speaks to the importance of both science and man, and how for either to advance, both must remain accessible. Moreover, this outer perspective allows for a more thorough and objective conversation as the text directs a focus to the technical aspect while the image suggests a non-technical caveat *to* the technical. Burne-Jones visualizes a disruption that Chaucer ambiguously recognizes in his introduction. Also, with this perspective, Burne-Jones gives the reader full access to the text through the visual and broadening the scope of the text without changing any of Chaucer's purposes.

The drop-down stage-like balcony the two stand on does have stairs to the right, suggesting a space where comings and goings are or can be frequent possibly as a nod to freewill. It is also relevant to note the 'stage' drops down rather than elevates Chaucer and his son and how this shifts the focus to the looked at rather than the lookers. The stairs also construct an element of time as space where Chaucer and Lewis stand and is not a living space nor a public space but rather a spatiotemporal moment with the stars, on the balcony, at a particular time. The wall also provides security from the outside, and if not security, then at least a hard divide between the inside and the outside, both physically and symbolically. As with the previous platforms used in *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, the divide is evident. Rather than a divide of the living from the unliving, the divide is between the heavens and the earth, more so nature versus nurture. Chaucer's finger directs the gazes up to the stars. The reader looks down at the participants and then up to the sky. Following Chaucer's line of vision makes the image performative, thus tying together how the logistics of this piece insert the reader into the framework of the narrative.

Tucked safely under Chaucer's arm is his large book correlating with his *lerned* knowledge, as the book 'grows' through illustrations in *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, and the astrolabe in his other hand directing their eyes to the sky. In this scene, Chaucer is the teacher to his son, thus also correlating to the size of his (now) full book of knowledge. A line of the prologue comes to life read alongside the visual:

> *And Lowis, yif so be that I shewe thee in my lighte English as trewe conclusiouns touching this matere, and naught only as trewe but as many and as subtil conclusiouns as ben shewed in Latin in any commune tretis of the Astrolabie, con me the more thank: and pray God save the king, that is lord of his langage, and alle that him feyth bereth and obeyeth, everech in his degree, the more & the lesse.* (Morris 398)

Lewis *touching* his father's robe is a very subtle yet powerful focal point in the illustration, much like Chaucer touching the wall in *The Romaunt of the Rose*. Like the unseen acts, as discussed in Chapter 2, this act, though not unseen, is a gesture easily overlooked. Chaucer-the-Author has undertaken instruction, making it accessible to others through translation. Juxtaposing Chaucer-the-Illustrated and his son with advancing times of the 19th century, there is a clear parallel of the old and the new in the 19th-century image, thus presenting a larger lesson to be learned. Chaucer's ability to teach his son comes from life experience. Chaucer-the-Author and Chaucer-the-Illustrated create liminal spaces of knowing of the before *and* the after, which in this example is the technicalities of an astrolabe, or on a bigger scale, knowledge collectively. One of these spaces is with the reader of his manual who seeks the knowledge offered and walks away with a clearer understanding. The connection between the young and the old, represented by Chaucer and his son, becomes liminal as the years transform a person in age and wisdom as it passes. Lastly, the collective liminal space of society underlies this image, as it is a social learning that

shifts culture's expectations and normative behaviors beyond the immediate to encompass a more worldly lens. This liminality allows Chaucer to teach *of* the world while retaining grounding *in* the world. Lewis's hand on Chaucer's robe and Chaucer's hand on the astrolabe form a connection between the world before and the world beyond presenting an image of how the machine (technical) can work *with* the human rather than against it. For years, people were using tools to look into other worlds that without, they were unable to navigate. This line created by Lewis to Chaucer to the astrolabe connects the worldly with the heavens - secular and non. This connection is not what is important, but rather *the implication of* the connection that leads thought beyond the immediate space surrounding them.

Additional symbolism created in the image is of the young with the old representing wisdom. The touching of the robe by Lewis grounds Chaucer to the innocence of the world (*unlerned*) while the extension of the astrolabe projects him forward (*lerned*) to the heavens. Society surrounding *The Kelmscott Chaucer* was rapidly moving forward by way of information production decreasing the *need to know* while the *means to know* was on the rise suggesting a more superficial way to learn. Learning was more accessible, yet people were losing what Morris considered the art of craft with this accessibility. Morris believed a true craft was a process the artist developed over time through skill and patience. By creating a visual threshold, Morris and Burne-Jones can critique 19th-century humanity and its need to move forward while not critiquing at all. He has absolved himself and Morris from any finger-pointing by making no obvious claims, much like Chaucer does with his retraction.

The astrolabe becomes the focal point in the middle of the image and in between Chaucer and his son creating an obvious divide between the stages of learning: unlearned, learning, and learned. Much like Van Gennep's *rites de passage* description suggests, a person who seeks to

learn is pushed in the liminal cycle of learning thus becoming aware of their passage to move from one stage to the next. Entering this cycle is a choice, however. There is a difference between being aware of not knowing something and being clueless about the opportunity. Chaucer-the Author presumably wrote this treatise in response to his son's quest to know. His son learned because he was curious and willing to be taught. Chaucer-the-Author knocked down boundaries for his son by writing an appropriate level manual he could understand. The astrolabe works only if the operator understands how to use it properly and the same with the manual. Chaucer seems to be aware of this divide and how important knowledge was as his writing suggests, but just as important was how to use the knowledge one gained. To be educated does not make one knowledgeable, and to be knowledgeable does not make one educated. Being able to see the difference is the othering Chaucer-the-Author suggests through his *subtil conclusiouns*, the true power, and understanding, of knowing. Initially, the reader looks to see what the two are looking at on the page, but, like a house of mirrors, sight quickly gets distorted and complicated the further one progresses forcing the reader to refocus and find other ways in. The gaze through the astrolabe metaphorically opens windows of the world otherwise unseen as Chaucer and his son look on. Through Jacques Lacan's lens, Chaucer-the-Illustrated's eye on the astrolabe can be distinct from a mere vision, point-to-point seeing, to a gaze inseparable upon the desired world beyond (Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis* 67-122). It is on this platform that the greatest show of perspective extends to the unknown limits of being, as knowing one's relationship to the greater world sits in the palm of one's hand. *A Treatise* is not allegorically labeled, but a close reading paired with a visual analysis broadens the interpretations of the text to navigate beyond identification and instructions much like the astrolabe is more complex than the mater, plate, and rete.

In both examples of Chaucer's text, *The Romaunt of the Rose* and *A Treatise of the Astrolabe*, the visual experiences are similar. Edward Burne-Jones's platform guides the seeing in the illustrations and William Morris's placement and ornate borders and typography parallel Chaucer's original work by extending the scenes from the page to the eye. In *A Treatise of the Astrolabe*, Edward Burne-Jones creates a probable scene beyond Chaucer's words. Although the reader does not know Chaucer-the-Author's experience with his son and the astrolabe, the illustration offers the reader an alternate experience, a (re)telling of the telling as a life lesson, deeper than the technical he has translated. This image suggestion intersects Chaucer's original work without removing meaning. Morris's placement of the illustration separates the illustration from the rest of the text as if creating a two-part in the one manual. As Gerard Genette claims, not only does the illustration present the text, but it also "*make*[*s*] *it present*, to assure its presence in the world, its 'reception' and its consumption, in the form … of a book" (Genette 262). This placement play forces the reader to pause and consider the meaning between the author, publisher, and 'current' society. A modern reader then has a tri-threshold to cross from the medieval to the 19th century and back to the present. Entering the text in this way allows a critique of not only the publisher's society but also their own. The interesting factor with this text is it is less known than say *The Canterbury Tales*, making it less likely to have been read. Morris's choice to insert an illustration ignites a new reading for this text, one that moves it from the technical to the human. As Genette claims, "he [does] not say that one must know it; [He] only say[s] that those who know it do not read it in the same way as those who do not" (Genette 266). So, not knowing this text, and being introduced to it through this illustration on the first page, allows the reader an entrance *into* the technical where an area of understanding has breached the jargon. Otherwise, Chaucer's scientific explanation associated with the use of the

astrolabe alone could isolate the reader rather than welcome them in. Furthermore, since the astrolabe is a medium that allows the user to make observations unseen to the eye alone, the illustration here is organic and functions like the astrolabe as it opens the text up for the reader to observe beyond the words. Gilbert Simondon claims that the modern culture has accepted and expects the segregation of aesthetic and technical objects; Morris saw this separation happening and pushed back by joining the two forcing the reader to question their responsibility in their worlds (Simondon 225). Chaucer lays out his three purposes for writing the *Treatise* to include simplicity for those who seek knowledge; however, the *Treatise* expands beyond these purposes. The astrolabe provides navigation for those looking to explore the world beyond; similarly, the text and the illustration do the same.

> *The lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne, / Th'assay so hard,*
> *so sharp the conquering, / The dredful joye alwey that slit so yerne, /*
> *Al this mene I by love, that my felynge / Astonyeth with his*
> *wonderful werkynge / So sore ywis, that whan I on him thinke, /*
> *Nat woot I wel where that I flete or sinke.*
> Geoffrey Chaucer, from *The Parlement of Foules*

The Parlement of Foules

     The Parlement of Foules describes a conference of birds meeting to choose their mates on St. Valentine's Day. The narrator, unexperienced in love, is reading hoping to find a certain secret about love and states he will continue reading until he finds it. He is currently reading the *Dream of Scipio* by Cicero, and he proceeds telling the reader about the tale until he falls asleep and joins Scipio in his own dream. Scipio then urges him to go through the Gates of Paradise. He enters reluctantly and walks through the temple of Venus finding a beautiful garden. Here Lady Nature presides over a debate between three tercel eagles, vying for the attention of the formel eagle. The categorized species of birds represent the voices of English society assigned to hear the tercel arguments before offering a verdict on which mate will be chosen for the formel. Each

bird is allowed a chance to express their opinions; however, Lady Nature makes the final call. The dreamer wakes up with his questions unanswered, vowing pursuit of the secret.

The enveloped narrative then is a dream vision inside a dream vision inside another dream vision: the narrator tells of Scipio falling asleep and seeing of his ancestor then the narrator falls asleep and meets Scipio who can now guide him through his – Scipio's – dream while he – narrator – is dreaming. The intricate dream patterns Chaucer weaves magnify his skill as a writer differently than his other works. Chaucer uses satire gently to curtail the tradition of courtly love while using humor to philosophically arouse major points of discussion surrounding it. This use of form ties into William Morris's edition and its form because, much like Chaucer's form, Morris also envelops a narrative through imagery. Chaucer's dream inside a dream compares to Morris's image inside the image which also sits inside the text. One advantage to this technique is it situates the audience depending on how they are coming into the text. It creates layers of separation between the author and the reader, and it also separates the narrator from the author by becoming in a space that is uncontrollable and not manipulated. A dream space is a literary free for all for the author. So, looking at Morris's edition, with him allowing Edward Burne-Jones authorial freedom to create his images accordingly, despite the two sharing the same vision, separates Morris from possible implications not being the artist, yet also marries him to it as publisher. The multi-layered borders and layout even suggest a dream like state on the page perhaps not mimicking the use of a double dream vision in Chaucer's text, but as a means of separation all the same.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Parlement of Foules is an allegorical dream vision and a poem written in rhyme royale by Geoffrey Chaucer around 1380-82. Chaucer composed this piece in loose tradition of

French romances while also pushing the boundaries of the genre by way of style and theme. *Parlement* was thought to commemorate the marriage of Richard II to Anne of Bohemia in 1382. This poem is one of the first references linking St. Valentine's Day to being a day for lovers.

IMAGE AND ART HISTORICAL DESCRIPTIONS

The opening page (see figure 3.2) of the text is on the right, or *recto*, side of the page with an image of Chaucer holding a large book on the right of the image. Chaucer's right-hand rests softly on his book while his left hand supports the book's weight and also the hem of his garment. His cap drapes down over his shoulders. His gaze is directed over his right shoulder, as if looking across the page. A large tree with four eagles perched on the branches takes up most of the image's space opposite of Chaucer. The three eagles positioned higher in the tree all gaze down on the fourth eagle perched below looking back. The three eagles above look ruffled where the gazed upon eagle appears settled. Chaucer stands level with the treetop suggesting he is elevated. Jagged rocks form the backdrop behind Chaucer. Under the tree, the space is black to further suggest the distance below.

Figure 3.2. Illustrated page from The Parlement of Foules, right side. The illustration on the left is mirrored in the text and is the last illustration in The Romaunt of the Rose and is included for reference. Edward Burne-Jones, The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

Figure 3.2 is on the right side of the text and stands 3 1/2 inches tall and 4 9/16 inches wide. The page is framed with a border of large flowers, flower buds, vines, thorns, and leaves. The border

measures 2 inches on the bottom, 1 3/16 inches to the right, 3/4 of an inch on the top, and 1/2 inch on the left. The image is framed with a smaller border with flowers, vines, and leaves all different from the page border. The smaller border measures 3/8 of an inch on all four sides. A white border of 1/32 inch separates the two ornate borders on three sides. Then, a white frame of 1/16 inch surrounds a black frame of 1/32 which borders the image. Below the framed image, the title of the text is written in capital letters with flower ornamentation. An ornate text box stands 2 7/32 inches tall and 2 5/8 inches wide. The word "The" is inside the text box with small flowers, vines, and leaves. The first line of text in the left column is all capital and then the regular font ensues. The text is divided into two columns measuring 2 9/16 inches with 3/32 of an inch of white space between the two columns, ¼ of white space to the right of the second column, and 3/16 of an inch in white space between the stanzas.

In the second image (figure 3.3), Chaucer is coming into the image on the left side. Only part of his body is visible suggesting reluctance to move forward. His right arm is up in a resisted stance while Scipio, center left of the image, has hold of Chaucer's hand as if to pull him along. Scipio is suited in armor from head to toe and holding a shield with his left hand. A black halo surrounds Scipio's head and his eyes are covered. He and Chaucer are looking toward one another. The right side of the frame shows a large stone building with two iron doors with handles. The left door is
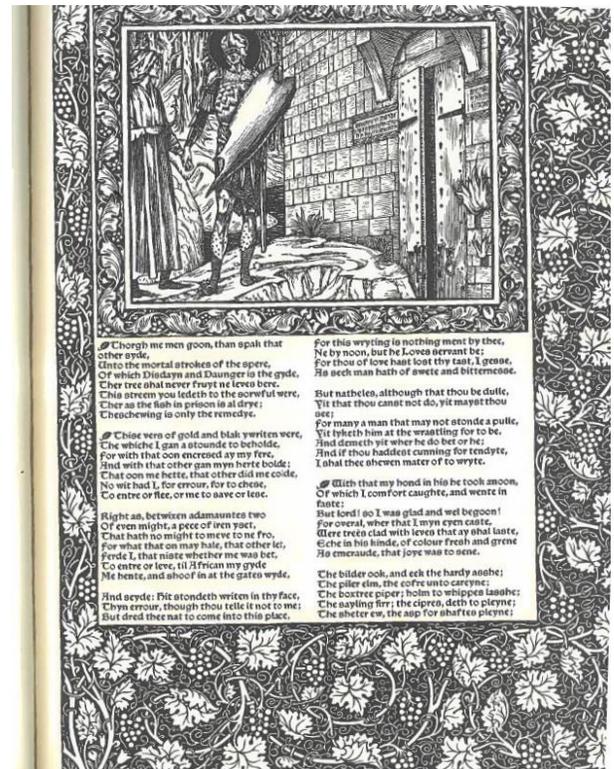

Figure 3.3. Illustrated page from The Parlement of Foules, Edward Burne-Jones, The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

propped open. To the sides of each door, a plaque looks to be part of the building on each side. A bridged canopy covering the door is partially in view but goes off the page top right. The two men are standing on a rocky cliff higher than the doors suggesting a descent to get into the door. The doors look to be blocked by the cliff requiring work to go through. In the background between the two men, there are rocks with water behind them. Tree trunks fill up the left quadrant of the image.

Figure 3.3 stands at 3 1/2 inches tall and 4 9/16 inches wide. The page is framed with a border of berries, vines, and leaves. The border measures 2 inches on the bottom, 13/16 inches to the right, 11/16 of an inch on the top, and 5/14 of an inch on the left. The image is framed with a smaller border with small flowers, vines, and leaves all different from the page border. The smaller border measures 3/8 of an inch on all four sides. A white border of 1/16 inch separates the two ornate borders on three sides and continues around the text under the image. Then, a white frame of 1/16 inch surrounds a black frame of 1/32 which borders the image. Below the framed image, the text is divided into two equal columns of 2 1/2 inches with 1/4 inch of white space between the columns, 3/16 of an inch of white space to the right of the second column, and 3/16 of an inch of white space between the stanzas. Ornament is added at the start of three stanzas.
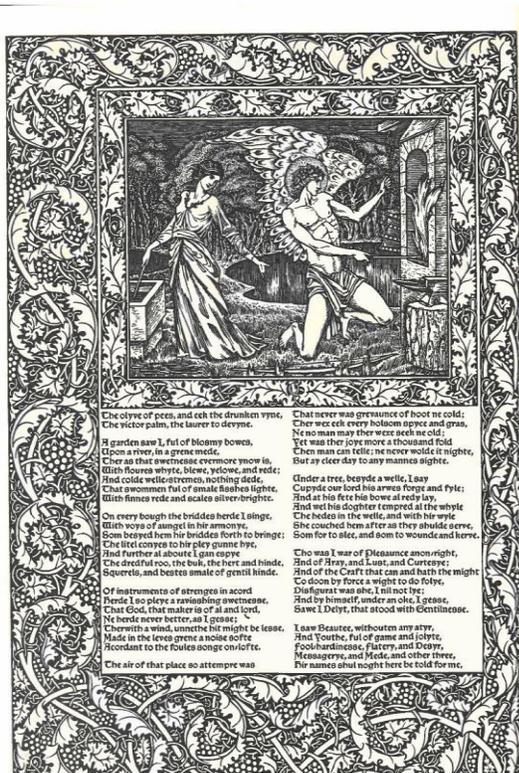
Figure 3.4. Illustrated page from The Parlement of Foules, Edward Burne-Jones, 1896.

Will, Cupid's daughter, is on the left-hand side of the image tempering the arrows which Cupid is forging and filing to her right. Her garment flows

behind her. Her hair is down. She has a leaf necklace around her neck. Her right arm cools an arrow in the well. Her left arm is extending behind her, as she looks over her shoulder toward Cupid who squats down as he forges the arrows and fuels the fire in the oven. He has on only a loin cloth. His wings extend up and above him. He has a leafed halo on his head and a halo surrounds him. In the foreground lies a bow in front of Cupid and seven arrows in front of Will. Behind Will, there is a small lake; behind Cupid, the lake is larger. The background of the image is dense trees and sky frames the top of the image (figure 3.4).

Dame Patience sits on a pile of sand on the left half of the page on the grass covering the bottom of the image. Her gown is flowing around her and onto the sand and grass beneath her. She has a halo of flowers around her head. Her hands both rest in her lap peacefully while her gaze is submissively looking down and to the left of the image. Dame Peace sits to her right on a throne projecting out from the temple behind her directly centered between the two oval entrances. Her arms are open holding and extending a branch in her right hand while holding the curtain open on the right. Her gaze counters Dame Patience's gaze as her head tilts to the right of the image. Her gown is layered and flowing onto the ground around her. She sits upon a pillow in her throne which is sitting on a cloth which covers the sides and seat. She also has a flower halo. Behind them is a brass temple with great columns throughout. The left side of the temple looks to be raised up on columns. Both entrances and the columns are ornate (see figure 3.5).

Figure 2. Figure 3.5. Illustrated page from The Parlement of Foules, Edward Burne-Jones, 1896.

The two pages are mirrored images (see figures 3.4 and 3.5) in the text. Both images stand 3 1/2 inches

tall and 4 9/16 inches wide. Each page is framed with the same border of berries, vines, and leaves. The border measures on the left page are 2 inches on the bottom, 13/16 inches to the left, 11/16 of an inch on the top, and 5/14 of an inch on the right. The right page mirrors the measurements. Both images are framed with a smaller border with vines, and leaves. The smaller border measures 3/8 of an inch on all four sides. A white border of 1/32 inch on the left and 1/16 inch on the right separates the two ornate borders on three sides and continues around the text under the image. Then, a white frame of 1/16 inch surrounds a black frame of 1/32 which borders the image. Below both framed images, the text is divided into two equal columns of 2 11/16 inches with 1/4 inch of white space between the columns, 1/32 of an inch of white space to the right of the second column, and 3/16 of an inch of white space between the stanzas.
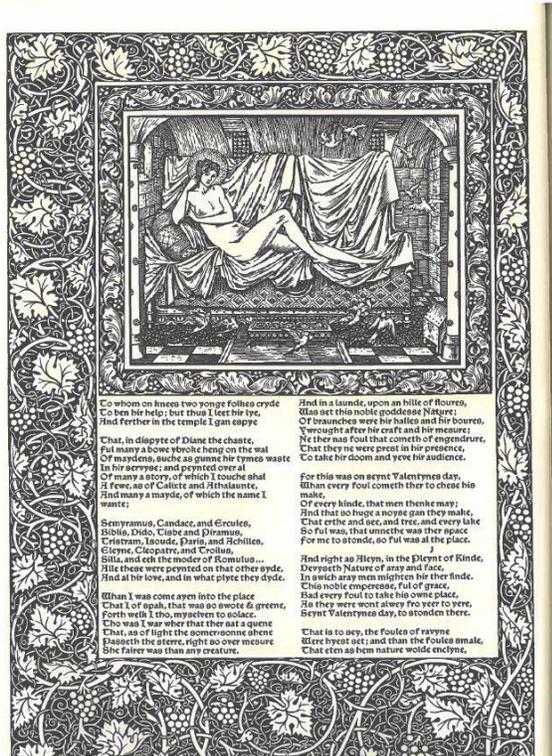
Figure 3.6. Illustrated page from *The Parlement of Foules*, Edward Burne-Jones, 1896.

Lady Venus lays posed naked on her bed (see figure 3.6). Her legs and arms are posed. Her bed is ornate and covered with a flowing cloth with a pillow behind her back to prop her up. She gazes straight ahead. She has a halo around her head. Her bed is not centered in the page, but rather to the left. It sits against the wall on the left side of the image. The bed sits on a bed of leaves. There is a walkway to her bed with an ornate pedestal. Twelve birds circle her in the room. The ceiling is arched in this room and the windows look to be stained glass. Two columns decorated with flowerheads frame the

image on each side. The floor is checked in pattern. To the left of the right column sits a locked box. The door leads off the right of the image.

Figure 3.6 is on the left side of the text and stands 3 1/2 inches tall and 4 9/16 inches wide. The page is framed with a large border of berries, vines, and leaves. The border measures on the left page are 2 inches on the bottom, 13/16 inches to the left, 11/16 of an inch on the top, and 5/14 of an inch on the right. The image is framed with a smaller border with small flowers, vines, and leaves. The smaller border measures 3/8 of an inch on all four sides. A white border of 1/16 inch on the right separates the two ornate borders on three sides and continues around the text under the image. Then, a white frame of 3/32 of an inch surrounds a black frame of 1/32 which borders the image. Below the framed image, the text is divided into two equal columns of 2 1/2 inches with ¼ inch of white space between the columns, 1/8 of an inch of white space to the right of the second column, and 3/16 of an inch of white space between the stanzas.

Chaucer stands upon a rocky patch barely in the image on the left side (see figure 3.7). His hands are hidden by his garment. His cap flows down his shoulders, and his gown is ankle length. His hand is raised to his mouth in awe. He gazes to the right at Lady Nature who sits upon a grassy hill, which serves as her throne, with her arms extended out invitingly. She looks toward Chaucer. Her gown is flowing down and lays on the ground in front of her. Her gown is adorned with leaves. A flower halo sits upon her head
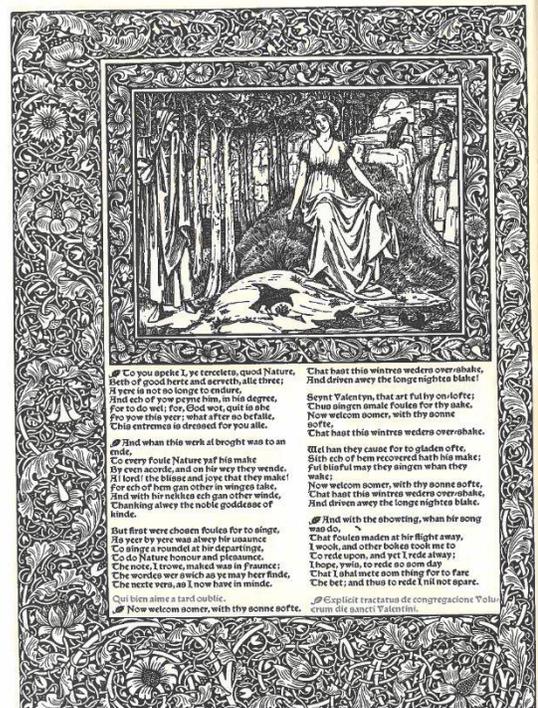

Figure 3.7. Illustrated page from The Parlement of Foules, Edward Burne-Jones, 1896.

surrounded by a white halo. Her hair is flowing. Behind Lady Nature sit two birds of prey on rocks which are stacked up in the background with a waterfall flowing down them along the grassy hill on which she sits. There are two ducks in the water, a smaller bird in flight, and a larger bird sitting on the rocky ground between her and Chaucer. Behind Chaucer, trees extend to the hill and up to the rock wall in the background. Sixteen turtle doves are in flight atop Chaucer's and Lady Nature's heads.

The final image (figure 3.7) closes the text on the left side and stands 3 1/2 inches tall and 4 9/16 inches wide. The page is framed with a large border of small flowers, vines, and leaves. The border measures on the left page are 2 inches on the bottom, 13/16 inches to the left, 11/16 of an inch on the top, and 5/14 of an inch on the right. The image is framed with a smaller border with small flowers, vines, and leaves. The smaller border measures 3/8 of an inch on all four sides. A white border of 1/16 inch on the right separates the two ornate borders on three sides and continues around the text under the image. Then, a white frame of 1/16 of an inch surrounds a black frame of 1/32 which borders the image. Below the framed image, the text is divided into two equal columns of 2 11/16 inches with ¼ inch of white space between the columns, 1/32 of an inch of white space to the right of the second column, and 3/16 of an inch of white space between the stanzas. Ornament is added at the start of five stanzas.

ANALYSIS

The opening illustrated page of *The Parlement of Foules* mirrors the last image of *The Romaunt of the Rose* (see figure 3.2). Chaucer-the-Illustrated holds his book open with a gaze extending beyond the tree with the three tercels and the formel to his right side. Both larger and smaller borders match across the two pages creating a continued space where Chaucer is in both, yet he has moved from bowing at the rosebud to standing next to the mates in waiting. Chaucer-

the-Illustrated frames these two images, both physically and with his gaze. He encloses a space where women are the hunted and sought after. He encloses a space across the page, as the space on the page encloses him. The birds represent subjects of the hearing. The opening image juxtaposes a crowded Chaucer, level with the tree-top slightly above the perched eagles.

The male eagles in the tree gaze down on the female like prey, just as Chaucer, although lamenting, eyed the rosebud in the same way. Both female gazes are looking up, the eagle with her gaze on the male eagles as if to keep watch and to confront her hunters head-on, while the rosebud's face is looking towards the heavens as if looking for refuge. The position of Chaucer with the female has changed in the image, both literally and figuratively. Chaucer-the-Illustrated has been moved across the pages. From a kneeling stance with eyes upon his desired in *The Romaunt of the Rose*, to an upright stance, as he looks past the birds who also have eyes on their desired in *The Parlement of Foules*. Chaucer has changed positions paralleling an (in)balance of the act and the actor despite its purpose, which offers a critique of those in power in current society in areas of class and by default, gender. This critique unveils the balance of power often denied in the face of controversy and on a public stage. In the original ending, de Lorris's lover experiences a deep and personal love for a love he can never obtain that he laments for the rest of his life where de Meun's addition to the text describes love who is more self-centered. His choice to take his love object forcibly, contrasts with the perspective not only of the rose, but of love, agency, and social situation. The eagles in the tree looking down on their beloved suggests more of a balance between the two extremes. The male eagles look down upon their possible love-mate, as she looks back. Even though they want to be her mate, despite their desire, patience holds them steady unlike with de Meun's lover. Chaucer being moved across the images in this way, along with these different thoughts toward love, the lover, and the loved, creates a

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visible connection, not only to the two texts, but to the thought processes themselves. Taking Chaucer out of the scene in *The Parlement of Foules*, from being the watched to the watcher, also adds another layer between the reader and the text thus forcing the perspective of the reader to also move from *part of* society to *looking at* society. Even though the focus naturally falls to the male with Chaucer-the-Illustrated being a focus, the represented female and specifically the female's gaze also suggests critique.

In *The Romaunt of the Rose*, the rose looks towards the sky, away from her spectator while the female eagle matches the males' gazes at her in *The Parlement of Foules*. The act of rebellion in looking back by the female eagle where she is significantly outnumbered and in a more vulnerable position, opens the possibility of agency for her, as suggested by bell hooks and contrasts with the rose's more submissive gaze (hooks 116). Rather than facing her opponent head on like the female eagle, the rose looking up is ambiguous. If her eyes are closed, this might suggest her being asleep or unaware of her lover watching her. However, she could also be closing her eyes to not see him. Her not looking then brings into question the act of seeing and being seen in a private space rather than being in the public eye, as the rose remains guarded in her garden suggesting a subtlety of rest and comfort. The reader then might consider how being protected and guarded inside compared to the vulnerability of outside and to whom this responsibility shifts to - woman, man, or society.

One other option might be she is praying with her head facing toward the heavens. If she is praying, this might suggest she is aware of her fate and asking for some type of intervention or she accepts her fate and asks for peace. Either alternative puts the represented female in a vulnerable and submissive state which automatically transposes the male in a position of power and control, over her and the situation. Even her praying to the heavens suggests a power being

sought from Father God (male) suggesting if she seeks something from Him, then she is lacking or has insufficient power in the situation and needs help. The implication then, to whomever she may be praying to, is beyond worldly; therefore, non-secularity informs the matter of power. Man remains atop of the gendered hierarchy. This seat of power, however, only happens because of the female's lesser position, begging the question of who the power holder truly is, better yet what exactly is power. This dichotomy of the gaze parallels conversations of the (then) modern society. Women's agency, both intrinsic and instrumental, being externally questioned or removed by men, or even society collectively, reflects similarly in both images *and* Chaucer's text, therefore making the "Woman" question the same, yet the way and why it is asked is different all while the men's agency reigns superior. The submission and the resistance displayed in these images suggest that Edward Burne-Jones had something to say. Like the rose and eagle, his artwork offers representation or personal translation, but in the pure socialist style he and Morris both rallied for allowing the reader to form their own arguments, agreements, and associations.

The recurring theme of nature versus nurture is also woven through each image. While both images suggest a natural occurrence: a man desiring his perfect love, a bird looking to mate, there is still a tension between what should happen and what does (or does not) happen when nurture, or nature, is manipulated. With de Lorris's ending in *Parlement*, the plucking of the rose demands a need to control, to have mutual consent removed and a total disregard for the other. This same struggle exists between the four eagles in the hearing until the end where Lady Nature steps in forcing her judgment on what the female should be allowed to do and disrupting the instinctual. This disruption of nature was created by Lady Nature, thus offering a reflective look back to the idea of power and manipulation and who exactly holds those cards.

Another layer in these images revolves around female sexuality that unites agency to nature versus nurture where sexuality has always been easily manipulated by society. The rose sits beautifully behind her gate, guarded with her thorns, yet still is taken sexually. Sex through society's lens was made for the man. The idea of her being protected perhaps added to the man's desire to take her then moves to how the woman is then seen as part of a conquest rather than an equal. Her protection translates to denial of the man, increasing the stakes for him because she holds the prize that he wants which, in his socially fed mind, puts him in the weaker position. The only way to correct this in his mind, is to ultimately win by whatever means necessary. The eagle aware of her vulnerable position yet refusing to merely submit or deny herself the choice to submit or otherwise, gives her power. If she becomes overpowered, at least she held her ground, and in turn, her resistance internally translates to her power. Both females are aware of their agency even in the face of a society that knows but does not accept it equally.

Perhaps Chaucer-the-Illustrated represents society in these images as the see-er, the one in the background, the one capable of making a change yet remains on the side, in the picture but out of the scene, perhaps. He is pulled out of society and identified as the male in both images as well. In *The Romaunt of the Rose*, Chaucer is substituted as the lover by Burne-Jones as he becomes the one on a quest to find the perfect love but with *The Parlement of Foules*, it is a bit different. He stands next to the tree with the male and female eagles in the image, but not in Chaucer's original works. He has been inserted in just as he was inserted in as the lover in *Romaunt*. Rhetorically, this scene encompasses animals in the garden with a disagreement. Adding the human element into this text, creates a picture of meaning that was already in the text. Burne-Jones pulls meaning from between the lines on the page allowing instant visual access to Chaucer's text through his pictures. Again nature vs. nurture intersect, and the

responsibility each one may (or may not) have on the other is created in the image. Burne-Jones's choice to insert Chaucer in this scene begs the question of accountability, for whom and by whom, and then by adding the original text to the image, takes the question even further of what accountability even means and by whose standards is it measured. Seeing these representations of women from both of these images across the page from one another juxtaposes the idea of women in society, superficially, as meek and mild rose to the opposing and bitch eagle with no in-between.

Chaucer looks back as if (re)experiencing *The Rose*, as his book is opened to understanding new things. As he stands to the right of the female eagle, he looks to stand with her, or at least by her side. While looking past the page, his gaze extends past the male eagles in a way to signify his learning ascends over the males perched staring at their prey. Referring back to bell hooks with an idea of oppositional gaze, this act of looking past could be read as a submissive act suggesting how people tend to look the other way when they witness acts of wrong or injustice. This instance of the image, with this text, informs how ideas have evolved over the years, yet the act of change is passive and is acceptable. Chaucer does not confront or interrupt the eagles, nor are they phased by his presence. His passive existence amplifies how women can become the unseen in society. This passivity is uncanny in both images. The omnipresent audience is forced to see the page and divides the readers by who sees the problem and who does not, the relative solutions, and how this is quite possibly an ever-existing point of contention between these texts. The placement of these two images side-by-side makes it more prevalently seen.

Chaucer's focus is diverted, unlike the male eagles. His look back also reflects a possible new way of thinking about the idea of women, not only in the mating sense but in a broader

earthlier view. In the image, he and the eagles are equal in height and footing, but his opposite look speaks to a different view of the perched hunters. Chaucer's book opened suggests new ideas emerging or a need to know more. His gaze back to the previous page offers a moment of personal reflection on his experience possibly illustrated by Morris and Burne-Jones to reflect Chaucer's time gap between the two texts, about 10 years or so, and how Chaucer's worldly learning also encompassed Italian writing and thinking styles, informed by writers such as Boccaccio and Petrarch. Looking at these two pages as one, it encircles the woman and how she is viewed by the male juxtaposing the sacred, protected woman, and the woman "out on a branch" and unprotected and how these differences suggest a different view of the ones that look upon them. These views also correlate with woman questions dating back to before Chaucer's time to Morris's and beyond.

One other thing to note here is the size of the tree in this image. The tree takes up 3/4 of the area, yet Chaucer and his book stand as equal. Also, the tree holding the eagles comes up from the valley suggesting years of living and survival, while Chaucer-the-illustrated matches the tree in stature by standing on a rocky cliff. The fact he is standing on this cliff implies he too had to prove himself to get this point, physically and mentally, to survive balancing out the distance between them. The deeply rooted tree holding the eagles has survived the test of time, but so have the rocky weathered cliffs where Chaucer stands. The persistence of the tree and the cliff connects to ways of thinking which society, to include Chaucer stands. The difference is the tree continues to grow steadily at one pace, changing with the seasons while the other remains longer in the past, meaning visually staying the same, because of the slow change due to weather and natural forces. The resistance of both the tree and the cliffs is undeniable and could represent the collective ideas and expectations passed down through time as both influence and exist

despite how time changes. This resistance allows both the nature and thinking to be grounded in

a time before, or in a way of what always has been which is represented at the time even through

social critiques of authority Chaucer offers through his other works (Alisoun, The Wife of Bath).

Chaucer wants to move forward. His book open suggests he is looking for more. Also, his right

foot is not flat but looks to be preparing to take a step forward. Burne-Jones produces a

movement by Chaucer suggesting he is in a temporary space and time only to move ahead. The

shadow created by his feet adds visual depth making him present in that moment and therefore,

adds to his awareness of being to where he has been (looking back), where he is (his shadow),

and where he is going (his body's direction). By placing Chaucer standing on the cliff, Edward

Burne-Jones suggests an acceptance of what was and an understanding that change, if not

necessary to survive, is necessary to grow. Edward Burne-Jones shows the balance by showing

this imbalance much like Chaucer's hidden play of form and structure of his words.

     The need or suggestion to grow is often met with resistance or hesitation leading perfectly

to the next image created by Burne-Jones. Scipio is urging a hesitant Chaucer through the gates

of paradise (see figure 3.3). Scipio is originally referenced by Cicero as the sleeping knight who

had to choose between Virtue and Pleasure, and in the end, there was no separate choice to make

as the two ideally are inseparable. The choice was rather a need for balance. Chaucer-the-

Author's choice to have the narrator reading Cicero's text with Scipio's dilemma and references

all while he is trying in search for the answer to what love is, emphasizes a natural unity of

Nature and Venus rather than forcing a choice between the two.

     A black halo surrounds Scipio's head suggesting a more stern or authoritative agency. It

could also represent the dream state or the 'sleeping' state of the lover to the subject matter of

love in which he searches. In Cicero's work, Scipio the Elder attempts to mentor his grandson on

the vastness of the universe extending beyond earthly ideals. Through the dream Scipio the Elder takes young Scipio to the outer rim of the heavens to look back down to the world below in perspective bringing him closer to the gods. He also advises young Scipio to exercise his role of reason and free will over mind and body in comparison to God's rule of himself over the physical universe lining up the idea of earthly with body and mind and heavenly with reason and free will. The lesson's purpose given by Scipio the Elder is not to emphasize choice, but rather to exercise control and to be mindful in the use of either in the extreme; to find harmony. Scipio's grandfather is awakened to the experience of life and the world around him and trying to save his grandson from making some mistakes he now knows can be avoided. Scipio's eyes covered by the rim of his helmet suggests an unawareness that the younger Scipio has even after his grandfather's advice of ration and reason. Scipio *could* see, yet he chooses not to see. He is present yet unaware. Scipio trying to guide others in this unawareness is cyclic and detrimental as those he leads then are going in blindly. Scipio does reassure Chaucer-the-Illustrated, that as long as he has no stakes in the game, nothing will happen. However, this does not account for those not looking for love, either by accident or becoming smitten. He continues to be bound by the opposition in choices rather than finding a middle ground. He urges Chaucer through the gate, dismissing Chaucer's resistance and ignoring his grandfather's authoritative advice:

> *And seyde: Hit stondeth written in thy face,*
>
> *Thyn errour, though thou telle it not to me;*
>
> *But dredthee nat to come into this place,*
>
> *for this writing is nothing ment by thee,*
>
> *Ne by noon, but he Loves servant be;*
>
> *for thou of love hast lost thy tast, I gesse,*

As Seek man hath of swete and bitternesse. (315)

Chaucer reads Cicero's text in hopes of finding the answer to the love question. Once Chaucer moves into the dream space and becomes part of the text with Scipio, he then becomes mentored by the same blind-eye Scipio is criticized for turning. The black halo around his helmet signifies the darkness he stands in either from experience or age resisting the words of his elder. In the text, Chaucer notes two choices of travel once inside the gates: one of healing or one of dread. He also mentions that going inside the garden is also another free choice and another option. The opposition for Chaucer to move forward contrasts with Scipio the Elder's advice, thus emphasizing Scipio's acceptance and then 'mentoring' Chaucer by the same earthly viewpoint. Scipio's dismissal about Chaucer not being affected by either side because he is not love's servant only discounts his breadth of knowledge beyond the gray space between the worldy and the non-worldy woven with the harmonious thread of nature.

Chaucer's book is put away, and he seems hesitant to move forward not just in the dreamed image, but also in the text as he only halfway emerges from the right of the image. This same hesitation is seen by Chaucer-the-Narrator in *The House of Fame* when the giant eagle offers to guide him, also in a dream. Although Scipio's eyes are covered, Chaucer-the-Illustrated eyes are open creating more resistance between the two. In *The House of Fame*, however, Chaucer-the-Narrator's eyes were closed, not his guide's, but were opened literally and figuratively once into the journey. Burne-Jones bringing life to this scene, pulls out other moments of hesitation woven through Chaucer's original works, which paint a picture of Chaucer's general critiques, both social and personal. Examples that demonstrate this hesitation include when Alisoun, the Wife of Bath, brings questions to the voice of authority in relation to life-experience or when Chaucer-the-Author's prologue to *The Treatise on the Astrolabe*

suggests knowledge is more than knowing. Although these possibilities are subtle in the image, Morris and Burne-Jones were studiers of Chaucer, and like him, understood the value of hesitation in the craft of art and study.

Ultimately, Chaucer-the Illustrated remains next to Scipio. They stand on a rocky clearing as trees frame their background. Both stand taller than the doors inviting them in. The gate's doors seem unreachable as they are drawn behind and lower than the rocks upon which they stand. Each door has a sign, each to symbolize the two sides of love: the healing and the dread, which also demonstrates Chaucer's understanding of the two-sided love debate emerging in literature. Petrarch's view of love was more fearful where Boccaccio's view, contrastingly was more game-like and jolly. Ultimately, Chaucer merges the two ideals through his work and then Morris follows. The doors illustrated by Burne-Jones continue the pattern of textual and visual dichotomy seen throughout *The Kelmscott Chaucer* by offering a choice or even more so, forcing a choice of some sort to be made. The gates to the "Paradise of Lovers" are open and as the image presents, one must work to even get to the doors because of their location. The door on the left being open suggests the gates to paradise begin with walking through the door of heart's health. The opening also creates a curiosity which mimics how a love quest may begin. Juxtaposing the entrance to the "Paradise of Lovers" with dread and health sets up the idea of bad love and good love but again does not account for the ups and downs natural in the love process, romantic or not. This contrast of degrees of love, good or bad, parallels this question of romantic love contrasted with dread and further pushes the question of love in society. For each creator's time – Chaucer, Morris, and Burne-Jones, the union, not the separation, necessitates the understanding to ultimately push through the good and the bad while recognizing either on its own is detrimental. To look at the bigger picture, just as Chaucer eventually decides, willingly or

not, to go through the door, one *should* be hesitant before entering the garden, or the love quest the garden represents.

Scipio stands in his full battle regalia with a shield in hand; however, Chaucer enters the battleground in plain clothes, armed only with uncertainty like his audience. His oneness with the reader is highlighted by this lack of armor. Chaucer's dress is expected; however, seeing Scipio outfitted in armor poses the question of why. The image emphasizes difference by juxtaposing the warrior and non-warrior. In turn, the texts, both written and visual, allow an accessible entrance to not only a private dream space but also an inviting entrance into the enclosed space in this personal dream. *Then,* an entrance into the narrative opens up beyond social class connecting with the human element where the reader becomes one with the other. Scipio stands guard outside the garden gates, gatekeeping, like *Ydelnesse* in *The Romaunt of the Rose,* where she allows admittance into the Garden of Mirth. As in *The Rose*, Chaucer-the-Illustrated moves over the threshold into liminal space, and the reader goes along with the turn the page. This liminality is significant as it brings the reader to an intermediate space which allows growth between the what-is and the what-might-be. The multi-layered liminal spaces opened by creating a dream space inside of a dream space being inside a dream space allows for transformation on different levels; personal (private), social (immediate public), cultural (collectively public). The degree of separation between the author, the text, and thus from the reader, must also be considered and can be viewed as either a more dramatic space, where deeper consideration needs to be, or a freer space, where more choices and different perspectives are elicited.   Reading the text, Scipio acts like a guide in the 19th century, remaining true to Chaucer's time, but the image juxtaposing the dress of both men creates a space of protection not only for Chaucer as his guide but also the park protected behind the gates where Scipio stands. The repetition of enclosed

spaces and the tension between public and private forces boundaries to become blurred allowing room for more interpretation and translation between the lines of the text and in the image. Nonetheless, Chaucer is thrust through the gate like a prisoner to learn of love so that he may continue to write as seeking before his dream.

  With Chaucer, we are connected to both the dream space and reality through the (re)telling of his dream. This balance of dream and reality is interestingly represented by Burne-Jones given how ironically the prison-like vibe upon entering the "Paradise of Lovers" is shown. The audience is *in situ* with Chaucer forced to enter a seemingly pleasurable experience guarded and with his captor/guide unnaturally dismissing any *natural* chance of enjoyment one might have upon arriving. A modern read parallels the balance of work (prison) and leisure (pleasure).

  Morris forces the reader, much like Scipio did with Chaucer, into the garden as the page turns. The reader has mirrored images walking us through the sites Chaucer-the-Illustrated sees while in the garden (see figures 3.4 and 3.5). The repeated motif in both the small and large borders across the pages joins the two and continues from one page to the next. The same trees seen outside the gates sit in the background of the image with Lord Love and his daughter inside the gates.

> *Under a tree, beside a welle, I say*
>
> *Cupyde our lord his arwes forge and fyle;*
>
> *And at his fete his bowe at redy lay,*
>
> *And wel his doghter tempred all the whyle*
>
> *The hedes in the welle, and with her wyle*
>
> *She couched hem after as they shoulde serve,*
>
> *Som for to slee, and som to wounde and kerve.* (316)

The narrator must again be considered as it is he who walks through the dreamed garden and tells the story on his quest to discover love. In this section, he refers to *Cupyde* as "*our lord*" implying the authoritative way he sees love and the way one receives it—by the power of Cupid's hands which ties back to Chaucer's *The House of Fame* and the narrator's quest to understand fame and fortune as both seemingly tied to destiny or fate. In "The Knight's Tale," Chaucer ties both the knightly love quest and fate together as Emelye becomes the desire of two men, neither of whom she is interested in. The love battle winner, Arcite, is killed, mainly because of a bet between Venus and Mars, leaving Emelye with the loser, Palamon, who becomes the winner by manipulated fate. The connection to *The Parlement of Foules*, repeated in several of Chaucer's tales with the same theme, is the quest to question authority and its role in relation to experience and knowledge. The narrator claims to know nothing of love, but *desires* to find out, yet by naming Cupid lord, he acknowledges an extent of knowing, even if limited, and that love is not something merely to understand, but rather a quest that is out of the lover's and beloved's hands. If Cupid is lord, he holds the cards, and since the narrator-dreamer knows this, then the assumed motivation to continue his journey to seek out love is fed by a possibility Cupid is not in control or if he is, perhaps he can learn to manipulate the fate that is being manipulated in the first place.

Another suggestion here is that Chaucer-the-Author's focus is on the *desire* rather than the love and how this desire leads to the more irrational imbalance of emotion as Boethius and Philosophy grapple with in *Boethues de Consolatione Philosophie*. Desire is the drive that *leads* the lover, or the learner, to *search for* the lover and knowledge, not particularly *to* the loved or known and it is in this liminal space produced by the act of desire that offers multiple choices where *then* the act of balance should be considered rather than later. Accepting Cupid as lord of

love, means the desire to love is already in place. Chaucer's choice to set up *Cupyde* with a focus on what he does (lord over love) rather than the outcome (if lucky, then love) pushes against more passive views of Cupid (Boccaccio's Cupido) and enters the conversation of morality, suggesting readers not make decisions in haste in the name of love and not be distracted by the attractions of the services of love.

In "The Knight's Tale," however, Chaucer refers to Cupid as *Cupido*, like Boccaccio's, rather than *Cupyde*. This variation of spelling suggests a difference in how Chaucer wanted to portray Cupid perhaps to match the different guises assigned to Venus through the years: procreator (Venus *Genetrix*), prostitute (Venus *Meretrix*), Heavenly Love (Venus *Caelestis*) (Boccaccio *Genealogie deorum libri*). Although these guises are not exhaustive, they do encompass the broad range in which Venus is historically referenced. Chaucer-the-Author does not seem to pick or choose preferences to Venus or Cupid, or even love, but he does acknowledge the human element and how knowledge, the rational, should also be used in matters of emotion. Again, balance is necessary to be successful (subjectively), but more so, the awareness to choose, rather than going into situations blindly must come first. Chaucer's varied references do not create a new Venus or Cupid, but rather unite the ideals to again show the complexities and power (if given) of both allowing for a more complete awareness thus allowing one to become *lerned* in love. This difference is also illustrated by Burne-Jones in both texts. In figure 3.8, *Cupido* is blindfolded and stands without his weapon, despite Chaucer's text referencing Cupid

Figure 3.8. Cupido in "The Knight's Tale."

Figure 3.9. Cupyde in The Parlement of Foules.

with his bow. He is also naked, which is depicted by Chaucer, and both leave him unarmed; vulnerable. Despite Chaucer-the-Author's armed *Cupido*, the imaged context surrounding Cupid suggests he is a more naïve and under Venus's control, unlike in *The Parlement of Foules* where he is depicted in both text and image as standing separate from Mother Venus. In *The Parlement of Foules*, *Cupyde* is creating his weapon, absent from his mother, no blindfold, and clothed, all suggesting a more seasoned and separate entity of love (see figure 3.9). The same thing is done with the depiction of Venus by both Chaucer and Burne-Jones. Venus is a statue in "The

Figure 3.10. Venus in "The Knight's Tale." Edward Burne-Jones, The Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896.

Knight's Tale" yet is drawn human-like allowing her to be seen by the reader in a certain way (figure 3.10). Connection is hard to make with a statue, devoid of emotion, yet Chaucer describes her in a statuesque way that does offer a look into Venus. Burne-Jones dismisses the third layer of representation and inserts Venus and represents her instead as a woman in figure 3.6, and whether it was historically accurate or not, her naked body, with long flowing hair, up on her pedestal as a spectacle, does offer a way to 'see' Venus, again connecting what Chaucer suggests between the lines of his work to the image (and thus, to the reader). Therefore, the images here do intersect the text, but in a way that allows one to see the meaning pulled *from* the text, not just a physical description *of* the text.

The image of Cupid and Will coming to life out of Chaucer's era encompasses an alternative meaning coming from perspectives of a reader in the 19th century (see figure 3.4). Vast ideas of man versus machine were circulating, along with ideas about the situation of women in Victorian society. Here we see Cupid, representative of males in society, and his daughter to represent females. Both sit under a tree (masculine) and by a well (feminine)

connecting both to nature. The man is at work with the metal and the machines, while the dutiful woman is beside him doing a job deemed suitable for her. Cupid is constructing and sharpening his battle weapon – the arrow. The female, away from the machinery, takes the arrows and places them into the well. Several social issues intersect here. The question of women in the workplace is relevant in the 19th century, along with the question of women in the workplace performing 'appropriate' jobs. This image also speaks to the domestic angel role, where the woman's job is not only to temper the arrows but to temper her mate, sexually and non-sexually. Chaucer-the-Author uses *doghter* to translate to Cupid's daughter but can also reference a generic term for female or maiden not of the familial sense. The roles of women and men expand beyond the mere domesticated needs of a man needing to be 'tempered' by his mate. One is almost dependent upon the other not only for tempering arrows, sexually, but tempering the man in general. In *A Concise Dictionary of Middle English*, *tempre* means to temper, moderate, restrain (672). When looking at the image, Burne-Jones illustrated the male and female circle-ish in pattern suggesting how cyclic the idea of love is, and how both are equally important – in life and nature. The *doghter* reaches out to *Cupyde* her lord, waiting to complete her duty, but this is more than Burne-Jones suggesting women should have a role, and if anything, this image suggests the opposite. Without her performing her job(s), lord Cupid's weapon would not be complete, therefore, making his labor of love unsuccessful. To add, the imagery is overtly Freudian and sexual , with Cupid (the man) handing Will (the woman) a weapon, who inserts his weapon into her well to 'cool' and then 'finish' it. The tempering stage completes the arrow by sealing the mold which confines the edges making them less rigid, more refined. The symbolism here is vast but depends on the conversation brought to or extracted from the texts as one. This process symbolizes the necessity for women and men to be seen individually while also

recognizing the role of each in the sexual and/or love union of two and these differences in roles should be celebrated and understood rather than pitted against the other.

Moving on through the garden, Chaucer comes to the front of Venus's brass temple (see figure 3.5). Venus's temple is mentioned different times in Chaucer's text. One mention is In *The House of Fame*, where Chaucer awakens from a dream, also in a dream, inside Venus's Temple made of glass. There is, however, a reference to brass in *The House of Fame*. When Chaucer-the-narrator awakens inside Venus's glass temple, he finds a brass tablet and written on this tablet was the account of the epic of *Aeneid* which tells of the tragic love affair between Aeneas and Dido. And, in "The Knight's Tale," Venus's temple sits within a theatre of stone with white marble gate, with only a physical description of the inside. This temple parallels Boccaccio's copper temple in *Book of Theseus* in reference to the location where the two knights fight for their love, but the physical details inside and out differ. These description differences account for the complexities surrounding Venus. In referencing to Chaucer-the-Author's specific contrast of glass to brass, the most obvious difference is durability. Glass is more vulnerable and the people inside the house become more vulnerable. Glass might also suggest a temporary or reconstruction state. Brass on the other hand is strong yet still formable. Brass is resistant to other elements and can withstand elements better than other metals. Chaucer's use of brass as Venus's temple and for the *Aeneid* tablet, connect the texts with author's ideas, with (only) assumed implications intertextually. Boccaccio's temple is made of copper, more malleable than brass. Copper is also a pure metal with a refined appearance, fitting for his aesthetic vision of love in the *Decameron*. fitting for her temple according to Boccaccio. The lack of outside description in "The Knight's Tale" is also telling. By removing the housing around Venus, the focus is on her rather than what she encompasses. He has taken down her home and describes her

by what is around her just like in the garden paradise in *The Parlement of Foules*, which takes notes of her actions and their repercussion, good and bad, rather than what one sees on the outside. Nevertheless, Burne-Jones's illustration of Venus's temple, much like other illustrations, is ambiguous and void of color, leaving meaning in Chaucer's text the same. Despite the ambiguity, Dame Patience and Dame Peace sit outside as if waiting for the next visitor.

One thing to note as a connection to "The Knight's Tale" and *The Parlement of Foules* is Chaucer's use of cataloging. One specific instance is when he lists the descriptions of broken lovers in both texts, but he also uses this form in *The Parlement of Foules* to catalogue the tress and the animals thus offering a connection to love, to include its disparities, to nature. This catalogue then, in this context, moves Venus into Nature. Nature, by way of Chaucer's text, connects the human with the other world and this connection is powerful. Chaucer-the-Author acknowledges Cupid's power by his title, Lord Cupid, and he does the same with Venus's title of Mother. But Chaucer and Burne-Jones situate Lord and his Mother *into* Nature along with Dame Patience and Dame Peace, ultimately personifying Nature as Goddess. Situating fated beings, Venus and her son, into Nature, puts them at *her* (Nature's) mercy rather than nature being encompassed with the destined. Love (Venus and Cupid) may be powerful, but Nature limits their power, thus also allowing others in Nature an element of power against the destined. This aligns humanism and the natural with morality, as evident in *Decameron*, but Chaucer's triadic positioning of humans, nature, and fate also suggests the question of morality and *who* or *what* defines or controls it.

In figure 3.5, Dame Patience is seated upon a pile of sand while Dame Peace sits upon a permanent throne on an embroidered pillow. The contrast of these two seats creates a tension of time and a contrast of being. Patience on her sand shows she, or the virtue she represents, is

fleeting and temperamental. Peace, however, is more stable. These two virtues seated next to one another suggest a need for a balance of both to have either. The idea of Peace having a more permanent seat suggests, that to experience Patience, one must first have Peace, and without Peace, Patience is unpredictable at best. The sand seat looks out of place and off to the side as if an afterthought. In contrast, the throne is centered between the openings of the temple. The throne looks like a permanent part of the temple, an extension of, rather than added on. The juxtaposition of Patience and Peace creates tension or the need to question the significance of each virtue independently. Neither looks up at the visitor to the temple as if visitors were commonplace, but their presence is guard-like, much like Scipio at the garden's entrance. Patience's hands rest in her lap while Peace's hands are both holding items, busy: the right, extending an olive branch; and the left, holding the curtain open, inviting visitors in. Chaucer-the-Illustrated overlooks Patience.

   Pacience is considered a lost or fleeing virtue after the age of the machine. *Pees* represents inner and outer well-being. She welcomes and bids farewell, which is represented by her placement between the two doors to the temple. Either way, their presence creates another disruption for the reader and the garden traveler. Looking at them is natural; however, it is uncanny they do not look back. Even though both fit at the temple, their stances suggest invitation and hesitation at the same time. Both women are set up as gatekeepers, yet also as statues. Much like with Chaucer's statue of Venus in "The Knight's Tale," Edward Burne-Jones represents both Patience and Peace ambiguously and in this liminal space, the Dames become *either* statues *or* women. This space allows the reader to make assumptions - either they are statues with human-like features, or they are human with statue-esque features which inform how they see Venus as the page is turned, and ultimately, in relation to Nature. The

absence of looking by the virtues suggests a passive welcoming to all, thus complicating the gatekeeper element. The idea of looks for the sake of looking is a vein that runs through societal thinking during the time. Perhaps one common thread is how society toys with the idea of allowing and disallowing, and if expectations and rules are followed, then one can come and go, in a loose sense, as one pleases. Gatekeepers are only necessary when someone is to be kept out or in - controlled.

In figure 3.6, Venus is depicted upon her golden bed, but the textual description is on the previous page with Dames Patience and Peace image (see figure 3.5). This placement of text to image builds up the anticipation of the visitor to see the attraction, Venus, *naked fro the breste unto the hede*, but being forced to be patient and read before turning the page and experiencing the image (317). Seeing the women on the outside while reading about Venus on the outside allows the reader to reflect these virtues *into* Venus on the next page as one must look *through* them to see her. This constructed hesitation in both the text and image reminds the reader that to 'see' Venus, one must be balanced before blindly looking at her, with the assumption that looking at her begins the act(s) of love. The text on the page with naked Venus mentions *Diane the chaste*, and the introduction of the *noble goddesse Nature* juxtaposing naked with the (un)naked or the chaste then with the (un)chaste (318). Venus historically has been the embodiment of love with implications of lust or sexuality where Nature historically is referred to as Mother Nature which strips away any outward sexual connotations from her beauty. This contrast complicates matters as Venus is also a mother, to love (in some sense) and to Cupid, which feeds the need for guises to be constructed so lovers and non-lovers can both navigate the idea of love and sex and where and how it fits in socially. Also, linking the term 'mother' in a familial sense to Nature allows associations to be drawn to the idea of a mother being a

caretaker. If she is Mother Nature, then those who inhabit her are her children situating a position of accountability and responsibility from both the mother and the child. In a world without children, there would be no mother. By juxtaposing Nature and Venus, rather than transposing the two, society creates a contrast between the two. This contrast suggests a need for a balance of the extremes (between signified Nature's love and Venus's sex) and that a middle ground is comfortable, less questioned, and therefore more acceptable. Love without sex would be considered abnormal or even cruel, while sex outside of love might be considered selfish and reckless all of which are constructed socially. Therefore, a mediocratic class is the mere biproduct of a capitalist society needing to justify and measure up against another and is more representative of the whole. For instance, since there are beautiful sexual beings in the world, then there must also be unbeautiful nonsexual beings to create balance, not necessarily subjectively but rather because this is, then this must be also. In the capitalist society, the blame for the *lack of* then falls back to nature rather than the individual self. The placement of these women aligns with social assumptions through the times with immodest women being unfavored while offering Venus in contrast with Diane or Nature, both represented, historically, in a different way than she.

> *And in a privee corner, in disporte,*
>
> *Fond I Venus and hir porter Richesse,*
>
> *That was ful noble and hauteyn of hir porte;*
>
> *Derk was that place, but afterward lightnesse*
>
> *I saw a lyte, unnethe hit might be lesse,*
>
> *And on a bed of golde she lay to reste,*
>
> *Til that the hote soone gan to weste.*

Hir gilte heres with a golden threde

Ybounden were, untressed as she lay,

And nake fro the breste unto the hede

Men might hir see; and, sothly for to say,

The remenant wel kevered to my pay

Right with a subtil kerchef of Valence,

Ther was no thikker cloth of no defence. (Chaucer 318)

Chaucer is not in this image, and this absence situates the reader's vantage point *with* Chaucer rather than a mere spectator of Chaucer-the-Illustrated, where before the reader sees him watching *then* looks on (see figure 3.6). This focus creates a disconnection from the text for a moment as Chaucer steps out in these few images. Walking with him through the text has become expected. Yet, his absence here disrupts the perspective and creates an uncanny intimacy of the image as she is left alone on her bed, in her room, to be gazed upon. Chaucer-the-Illustrated does not mediate this private space and no longer guides how the reader looks at the image. If our author has left the pages, then how does one navigate the text? Chaucer-the-Illustrated is expected, and his abrupt absence is disruptive. Chaucer-the-Illustrated on the page connects the reader to the image as he is also a reader of sorts, and his presence allows the reader's presence on the page, but when he leaves the page, he becomes one with the reader, and the reader becoming one with him, thus allowing his authoritative assumptions to be shared. The reader no longer is *just watching* but has now become performative with the text. Venus's gaze forces a decision from the reader, which now includes Chaucer-the-Illustrated, who has been taken off the page. The decision is to either look at her or turn the page. Venus wants or expects to be looked at as she sits staged upon her bed. Her beauty is uncontainable. Her perfectly laid-

out cover on her bed creates a soft cradle for the reader's eyes, allowing the gaze to go past her body to take in the whole image rather than just her. Venus baring herself in this private space on her bed speaks to the naturalness of her essence, but at the same time, it creates an uncomfortable moment where the reader is not sure whether to look or look away. This entire image encompasses what Venus is. Much like Morris's placement of image and text on the page, Burne-Jones's symbolic elements in the image accessorize the idea of Venus and how she is seen. Nature's branches support her foundation. The element of Venus and Nature, even though commonly opposed, are seen as one repeatedly through the visual, working together, inseparable. The intertwined elements present, at minimum, a cordial connection or bond between the two. However, recognizing a sameness between Nature and Venus, where rather than individual women, they are one woman holding two torches, what splits the two from one another is the purpose in the eye of the looker. Society's eye sees what it wants to see.

Doves are flying around Venus in a circular pattern forming a circle of life and love. The birds are natural, flapping and singing, uniting Nature with the walls of the inside. Chaucer's use of doves also brings in symbolism to that of Dame Peace from the outside. Peace surrounding Venus suggests a layering between harmony and passion, making it a choice and one of the voices of reason. Patience, then balances out the deep sighs of wounded lovers and the sorrows the dreamer experiences upon entering the temple. Not illustrating Chaucer's catalogue of devasted lovers, nor an image alluding to the sounds of those who have fallen victim to love mentioned by the dreamer in the text, Burne-Jones shows the other side of love to the reader only to be assumed through Chaucer's words, also as if to balance out the consequences of love.

The layered draping over the bed is strategically wrapped and tucked, and then she was set upon it, also strategically. Venus has a pedestal at the foot of her bed, placed as if only for the

reader to see. Her arm carefully cradles her breasts like a baby, naturally her other arm bent and her hand near her face. A pillow is placed behind her top half to keep her propped up and engaged as a spectacle. Her foot perfectly placed slightly behind her leg and her body twisted suggestively yet cautiously. Chaucer's text states she is covered from her waist down by cloth; however, Burne-Jones choice to remove the cloth and use her body as a cover, keeps her exposed in a natural state, which conflicts or intersects meaning suggested by Chaucer.

Venus represents not just one of her guises but encompasses all (or none) of them and either way she is viewed, despite the experience one brings as they to her, she is Natur-al, perhaps implying what is un-Natur-al are the gazes cast at her saying she is not. The birds carry the reader's gaze around the image guiding to her bright halo. Outside of the circle, Venus is framed by two pillars both adorned with flowers and white in contrast to the rest of the room causing them to stand out. On the ground to the right sits a locked box possibly where hearts are kept safe; however, the size of the box is startling. The size of the box could be symbolic of the time one spends or should spend at this moment in the 'love circle.'

This image unveils several 19th-century ideals surrounding love and women by contrasting the over-sexualized or the lustful aspect of love and women with the idea of how love *should* look and how women *should* be. This image encapsulates the natural essence interwoven into worldly love. Venus in this image suggests an appreciation of the natural woman's body. Venus is presented as a painting on the wall to be a spectacle. The suggestion here is for her to be admired and respected and to be seen as both beautiful and sexual, if so desired. This image offers a window into the artist's ideals of Pre-Raphaelites idealism of exemplifying the natural as accurately as possible.

The last page is an image translation of Chaucer's text describing Lady Nature but on the page of Venus's image, however (see figure 3.7).

> *And in a luande, upon an hille of floures,*
>
> *Was set this noble goddesse Nature:*
>
> *Of branches were hir halles and hir bourse,*
>
> *Ywrought after hir craft and hir measure;*
>
> *Ne ther was foul that cometh of engendrure,*
>
> *That they ne were prest in hir presence,*
>
> *To take hir doom and yeve hir audience.* (Chaucer 318)

Nature is the focal point in this image. Like Venus, her authority also demands an audience. The reader, like Chaucer, tries to find their spot. She welcomes all those around her to take a seat. Venus's golden bed represented the earthly aspect of love while nature's branches formed its foundation. Nature, however, sits on the land, humble. The hill forms Nature's throne. Chaucer writes, "*Nature, the vicaire of thalmyghty lorde*" which translates to "Nature, the *substitute* of the Almighty Lord" (Chaucer 319). This also informs the idea of nature encompassing all that is other. Nature encompasses fate factoring in choice and free will. Chaucer positions her as an equal to Christ informing the way he sees the natural world around him and the way he views Christ. Burne-Jones's image details and Morris's placement of the descriptions suggest their way of seeing as well.

Nature's clothing is modest in contrast to Venus's perfectly draped cloths underneath her. Like with Venus, birds create a circle around the goddess forcing the gaze to not only encompass Nature's physical beauty but the spirit of nature's beauty all around her. The doves to the left in the trees between Nature and Chaucer-the-Illustrated connect them yet the birds are easy to

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overlook suggesting perhaps a natural connection between man and nature. Even though Chaucer is not part of the scene in his text, his being there as a narrative voice is natural and represents man in general, a one of society. His being alone with Nature in her element speaks to the idea of reflection and what is required to have any type of thinking for oneself, to become one with Nature and remain two, respectively. For many years Morris was involved with his brotherhood to return this sort of reflective thinking back to society to revive appreciation for one another and the world around them, to translate into more beautiful things around everyone (the Aesthetics Movement). The elements in this image speak to a need for each other; without one, the others would not exist. The trees need water. The rocks capture the water and direct its flow. The land and water offer survival for living and both also welcome the non-living back. In the two-ness of the living, to include male represented by Chaucer, and female represented by Nature, suggests the human element into nature's cycle and the need for procreation for its survival thus recalling a need of love and nature for existence reminiscent of the text's beginning with the eagles in the tree and Chaucer's reflection back to the lover in *The Romaunt of the Rose*. Lady Venus is the collector of hearts, yet Goddess Nature creates the union.

Both women, Venus and Nature, are displayed in a way that counters the other. As previously mentioned, although they appear to represent two aspects of love, these two aspects could be represented by the same woman, and arguably are. Even the halos around each woman's head suggest a contrast of difference, or night and day, or private and public again offering two faces, which are both natural and (self) manipulated according to the situation (see figures 3.6 and 3.7). Not only is there a display of human nature in this image, but also a display of how society sees what they want while also dismissing what they choose. This choosing makes the act of seeing natural yet manipulated tying into the idea of nature versus nurture again.

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Chaucer recognized this manipulated seeing and how it has continued across centuries as evident in *The Canterbury Tales* with tales of horny churchmen and greedy prioresses. What is different with this repeating theme is, rather than the two being at odds with one another, competing in a socially constructed race, both texts (original and visual) suggest a state of oneness. The reader then returns to the beginning of Chaucer's text where they, like his dreamer, are pushed into a dream world where the idea of nature *and* nurture reflects the harmony suggested by Cicero in *Somnium Scipionis*.

Chap IV

The Maker of this Book here takes his Leave.
Now I beg all those that listen to this little treatise,
or read it if there be anything in it that pleases them,
they thank Our Lord Jesu Christ for it,
from whom proceeds all understanding and goodness.
And if there be anything that displeases them,
I beg them also to impute it to the fault of my want and ability,
and not to my will, who would very gladly have said better if I had had the power.
Geoffrey Chaucer, from *Chaucer's Retraction*,
The Canterbury Tales, translated by Nevill Coghill

CONCLUSION

Even though I consider my research just a starting point, as I look back, my enthusiasm

fuels me to delve more into the books to uncover more. Every time I open Chaucer's text, I see

something different as my experiences as his reader change as I grow academically. Over the

past two years, my mentors impacted the way I not only read but understand, extending the

lenses through which I see. Rereading Geoffrey Chaucer's works, liminality and spectacle

function as Chaucer presents his ideas so visually. Even before I contemplated Morris's images,

these images were created in my head and how I crossed from the text to these images relied on

both lenses. Morris's illustrated edition offers a translation different than mine, and it is in this

space I found my interest, not only in the differences but how there *were* differences. Morris and

Burne-Jones blended what Chaucer does with his words, with their art, with what they saw in

those "spaces between" - medievalized, crafted borders, margins, letters, frames, and then

images. I saw how those images intersect and interact across boundaries, invited or escaped, and

how these intersections and interactions played with Chaucer's words and the images created

from *between* the lines. I saw meanings offered, problematized, extended, in the spectacles created throughout the pages of the text. I carefully examined each element of that spectacle - historical and cultural threads centuries apart, visual and textual, spoken and symbolic - to try to tease out the meanings possible/inherent to those liminal spaces. Illuminated texts are like that - and maybe that was Morris and Burne-Jones's point, in the end. Every reading is a translation, and spectacular readings even more so.

I mentioned in Chapter 1 how, in the opening page of *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, Chaucer-the-Illustrated stands in the garden with his small book, quill in hand, while the reader watches him start his journey alongside the pilgrims introduced in "The Prologue" (see figure 1.1). I also referenced the last portraiture and how it closes the book on the final page of *The Kelmscott Chaucer* inside a walled garden (see figure 1.2). This progression of images parallels Chaucer's life and suggests a beginning and end, growth in Morris's edition. I want to expand on this example as this progression on the pages is where my research turns.

Since I spent most of my research based on liminality and how spectacle works in these spaces, I need to expand a bit on the spectacle of Chaucer-the-Illustrated that occurs betwixt and between in the liminal space of the collected text. Chaucer-the-Author's historical context is relevant to all his writing. Past scholarship connects his works and critiques. I work inside these connections, not to reprove anything, but rather add to the conversation of how one looks at these spaces. So, in between the two images (figures 1.1 and 1.2), other portraitures portray his "rites de passage" and speak more directly to an over-arching theme, one that Chaucer-the-Author weaves through all his texts, translated or otherwise: man's position in nature.

Chaucer, as a person living in the Middle Ages, was aware of the resources of nature as well as beauty. Chaucer's use of cataloging of the trees in nature in Chapter 3 mimics some of

Boccaccio's cataloging with one difference – use over beauty. The oak tree Chaucer-the-Author mentions, for instance, supplies acorns that feed the pigs, that feed the people. Life is cyclic and depends on nature for its nourishment. So, in looking at the images inserted into Chaucer's work, there is a progression of not just time and space or knowledge, all of which has been measured thus far to self, as I originally teased out, but also of how this progression inherently creates a relationship with the outside world and how this larger picture lines up with the dichotomies seen all through my analysis and the other texts as well. The relationship is inexorable. One is either *in* nature, *on* nature, or *with* nature, but it is not until the latter where (any) progress occurs.

To revisit figure 1.1, Chaucer-the-Illustrated stands *in* the growth behind the garden walls as if he is unaware of the growth happening around him. Figure 4.1 shows Chaucer-the-Illustrated in a more private garden, standing *on* the grass being talked to by Lady *Poesis*. His book remains relatively small while Lady *Poesis* points up to the heavens, with a burning, sacred heart in her hands, representative of the world beyond. This image informs many areas of conversation; however, concerning nature, Chaucer-
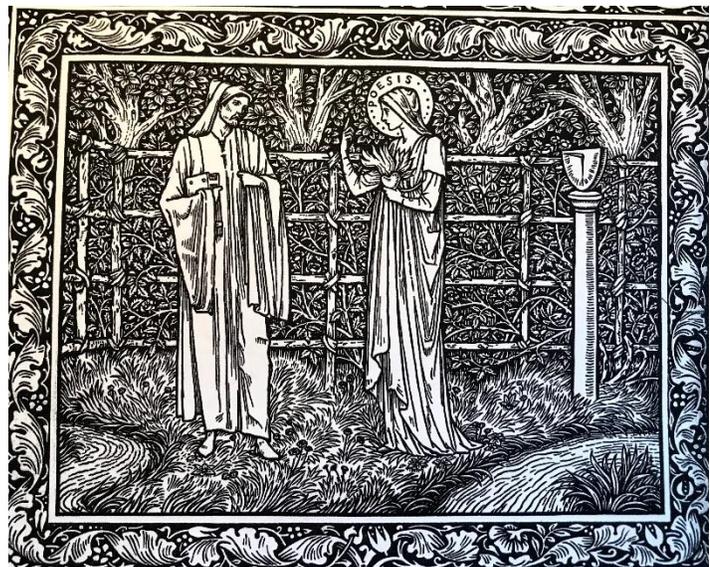
Figure 4.1. Chaucer with Lady Poesis, The Kelmscott Chaucer, Edward Burne-Jones, 1896.

the-Illustrated has now closed his book and seems to be listening to her. His awareness is different from the first image as he now looks beyond his book, beyond himself. This image is situated on the page with his retraction where he apologizes if he has done any wrongs through his writing, so Lady *Poesis* here mentoring him makes his retraction a bit more legitimate

through *The Kelmscott Chaucer* lens. He seeks guidance from the god of writing, which for an author, makes perfect sense, but she is directing him past her.

Figure 4.2 then shows Chaucer-the-Illustrated back with his small book and quill in his hand. His face has aged, and his writer's pouch is gone, showing still a progression in time (age) and experience, but not in his writing or perhaps his understanding of what it means to write as his book has gone back to the original size. The difference now is he is actively writing in his book rather than looking at it, which shows a transition from perhaps the craft itself, his ability to write, but still, a disconnect with the world around him as he is now back *in* the garden, head turned back down to his book, this time with Cupid. The contrast

Figure 4.2. Chaucer with Cupid, The Kelmscott Chaucer, Edward Burne-Jones, 1896.

of Lady *Poesis* with Cupid also represents a tension between reason and emotion directly relevant to the theme of nature and balance – if not the same. The garden space completely enclosed suggests another divide between the awareness of the world inside and the world outside. Chaucer-the-Illustrated seems to be taking notes as Cupid instructs him, but without the awareness around him, what good is the knowledge he receives which was also visualized in *The Treatise of the Astrolabe* through Burne-Jones's illustration.

Like the cycle of life and nature, we come back around to figure 1.2 where Chaucer-the-Illustrated stands with his large, closed book in hand, in an enclosed, stone garden, and where Cupid stands in contrast to him with his instrument in hand. What has changed is Chaucer-the-

Illustrated's relation and perspective to nature. He is aware of nature standing with him and Cupid's relation to nature has changed. Cupid has become nature, literally, and it is not so much about Cupid's relationship to nature, but how Chaucer-the-Illustrated sees Cupid's relationship to nature. It is there, in this liminal space, where he stands *with* nature, respectful and understanding, and his growing or becoming has come full circle.

Approaching spectacle in the liminal allows a different critical way of seeing the original work as the spectacle is created through the images inserted into the text. Spectacle here brings attention to Chaucer's book that could be read symbolically as society's understanding – or lack thereof, or an even larger (un)understanding of mankind. Chaucer-the-Illustrated becomes the reader, not the author from 500 years ago. He walks through the text with the reader, allowing the reader to learn inherently with him while walking, figuratively, in his shoes. What we learn is dependent on how we see what the text offers much like how Chaucer finally sees nature even though nature was present the entire time. Chaucer-the-Illustrated's perspective changed – the way he chooses to see changed, which is Morris's and Burne-Jones's perceptive reading of him and his maturity as a writer as he "progresses."

The liminal and spectacle approach to text I have used here asks a reader to focus on the differences, the changes between text and image, and how those work with creating or denying meaning in liminal spaces of change and/or passage, as well as how these meanings inform the world the reader is in. The advantage to this type of reading is it breaks habits of old, not to dismiss them necessarily, but to offer new ways of seeing beyond what has always been done. New ways of seeing do not equate to better, but they do offer more opportunities of perspectives encompassing even more people, therefore expanding thought, even if to do nothing more than offer confidence to one person who may not fit *with* the rest of the world's way of seeing. The

spectacle inside these liminal spaces offers access to endless possibilities of learning and thinking by adding value to these spaces, which might otherwise be considered as merely transitional. My research then does not dismiss the value of the transitional, quite the contrary. It is in this moment of transition that this or any reader can, like Chaucer-the-Illustrated, gain a more collective understanding of the relationship of the text *with* the rest of the world, *with* nature balancing reason with emotion. In the last image in *The Kelmscott Chaucer* (see figure 4.2), Chaucer's foot is again off the ground, a technique used frequently by Burne-Jones to create movement, showing the journey has not ended. He is moving on. The process is liminal, but the way I or any other reader sees has changed, and so like Chaucer, we continue.

William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones's love of Chaucer culminated in *The Kelmscott Edition*. The pride each artist took to carefully walk us through Chaucer's texts by revealing a translation not often seen on the pages was a service to his work. Mentally and perhaps emotionally, they sought Chaucer's approval working to produce something he would be proud of. Edward Burne-Jones sketched a drawing of him and Morris being blessed by Chaucer on the day their homage, *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, was complete. I saw this image when I first started my journey into Morris and Burne-Jones and assumed it was a nod to being equal to Chaucer. I know now I judged too quickly. These two men had a life-long passion for Chaucer and his work. They saw the beauty in Chaucer's words and only wanted to keep it alive and in a way that Chaucer would approve. I now understand the approval they sought, yet one they could never receive. They followed their passion, their interests, just as I have done. I found an outlet where I can merge two things that have inspired me thus far: Geoffrey Chaucer's work and the images his words have created for me. Chaucer's habitually decentered position as a writer naturally invites new ways of seeing his text. I accept Chaucer's invitation to approach his work with a

type of reading through which I incorporate the visual, and like Morris and Burne-Jones, I ask for his blessing. My goal for this work is to demonstrate how the lens of liminal and spectacle allows me to engage with Chaucer's words in a way relevant to the 19th century as well as today.

Although *The Kelmscott Chaucer* was the text I used for this project, the opportunities through using this type of a lens are endless as adaptations and translations are plentiful, and so are the ways we look at them. As I reference Chaucer's *Retraction* at the start of this conclusion, I reflect on his words and how they intersect with me at this point in my experience. With that, I offer a retraction - of sorts, an *apologia*, not for what I have written, but for what I have not, and to extend a promissory statement to continue with this journey. I hope to have started a conversation that leads to another way of seeing literature and image and the possibilities of meaning within and between the two.

Figure 4.3. Chaucer blessing Morris and Burne-Jones, ink sketch, Edward Burne-Jones, May 1896.

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