This redating, of course, significantly changes the outlines of 'the poetic career' and renders it a good deal more plausibly compact. In this account, Manning would have entered Sempringham sometime around 1315 (and was probably born in the 1280 s, not before or around 1270). But it leaves unaccounted for the poet's own dating of his work:

Þe ȝeres of grace fyl þan to be
A þousynd & þre hundred & þre.

Obviously enough, given the external historical evidence, this reading, too, must be another scribalism. Given that Glinton succeeded Hamilton around 1325, the author must have provided a date '1330' and to have written something along the lines of 'A þousynd + þre hundred & þr[itti]e'. His literary career thus was limited to a single decade.[8]

There is just one fly in the ointment: this emendation throws into rhyme close e and final -y (< earlier -ig)—a rhyme Manning does not appear to use. Normally in his practice, words in close e, while they certainly rhyme with words having -y in modern English, only do so when the underlying etymon has French -(e)é.[9] In these cases, as well as in the received text, the rhyme is unproblematic, close e with close e, while my suggestion is not. But of course, such an unusual usage may have influenced the scribes here as well, not to mention the fact that they may have assimilated the reading to the 'þre' that appears earlier in the line. One might obviate the difficulty about rhyme with a more extreme emendation that relies on that received repetitiveness; Manning perhaps wrote something like 'A þousynd & þr[itti]e [&] hundred þre'. However one chooses to present it, the *textus acceptus* errs, and any inferences drawn from the transmitted date are valueless. While small adjustments (and ones not concerning a widely read poet), this discussion might indicate how fragile some widely held 'truths' about medieval literary culture may be.

Ralph Hanna
Keble College, Oxford

doi:10.1093/notesj/gjy180

Advance Access publication 22 January, 2019

[8] Indeed, on Crosby's own showing (see 16, 22–24), Manning may have had no Sempringham attachment in 1303, since he seems to have been in Cambridge just after 1300.

[9] Cf. the following examples from the poem's first thousand lines (I simply give modern English forms): privity:thee 9–10, privity:be 139–140, pity:thee 163–164, be:authority 167–168, thee:pity 257–258, see:pity 329–330, vanity:be 381–382, privity:thee 397–398, privy:see 467–468, be:plenty 849–850, see:city 877–878; we:country 895–896; country:solemnity 915–916. Contrast examples like certainly:lechery 591–592 or specially:lady 853–854.

'KULTOUR' MEETS *CUL*: MORE WORDPLAY IN CHAUCER'S MILLER'S TALE

All readers of the Miller's Tale will recall the point at which Absolon borrows a 'hoote kultour' (3776) from his friend Gervays the smith.[1] Belatedly asking 'What wol ye do therwith?' (3782), Gervays is fobbed off in his attempt to discover what the reader may already be beginning to suspect. Absolon intends to use it against Alison, who has tricked him into kissing her naked arse. Indeed, being red-hot, the implement testifies to the displacement by anger of Absolon's formerly 'hoote' love (3754)—a passion that is now 'coold and al yqueynt' (3754). As explained in the *OED* (coulter, colter, *n.*), *culter* was Latin for 'knife'.[2] This is what it meant in Old English. In Middle English, too, the word could be used for a knife, but its chief reference was to the foremost (vertical) blade of a ploughshare.[3] It might be said that the word is leaned upon in the Miller's Tale because, while it does not appear elsewhere in Chaucer, it is used in the Tale a total of four

[1] All quotations from the *Canterbury Tales* are from *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson (3rd edn), Oxford, 1987.

[2] Cf. the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* ed. R. E. Latham, D. R. Howlett, and R. K. Ashdowne (Oxford, 1975–2013): 'culter … knife; b (used at table); c (used for sacrifice); d (used as weapon); e (fig.).', and '2 coulter of plough', and also '2 cultura [?<ME *culter cf. culter* 2 *coulter of plough*.' Citations under 'culter 2' are plentiful. There are just three citations—from 1302-1406—supporting '2 cultura'.

[3] See the *Middle English Dictionary*, ed. Hans Kurath, Sherman M. Kuhn, and Robert E. Lewis (Ann Arbor, MI, 1952): '*culter (n)* (a) the colter of a plow; also, a plowshare; (b) a knife; (c) a? a sharp stake or peg.' Accessed online at <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED9110>, last accessed 4 May 2018.The *MED* supplies thirteen citations (a1325–1500) under (a).

times within 150 lines (at ll. 3763, 3776, 3785, and 3812).[4] As I have argued elsewhere, the fact that the instrument of Absolon's revenge was such a blade is in comic harmony with his knife-based occupation as a barber-surgeon.[5] But Absolon's instrument (which distinguishes him from the equivalent character in the most relevant analogue) also involves a pun.[6] Rather surprisingly, given that, as observed in the most recent article on the subject by Jennifer Bryan, 'it is . . . generally accepted that puns are part of the [Miller's] tale's distinctive humor and rhetorical texture', this particular instance appears to have fallen beneath the radar to date.[7]

It depends upon the first syllable of Chaucer's 'koulter', a syllable which is the equivalent of (and was frequently spelled as) 'cul'. This coincides with the Middle English 'cule'—a long-obsolete word for, according to the *OED* definition (under 'cule, *n.*') 'the rump; a buttock'. It is defined as 'rump' in the *MED*—which supplies several citations via the unedifying formula 'thristen in [cule]', for 'to shove up one's anus'.[8] It derived, ultimately, from the Latin *cūlus*, meaning 'arse', or 'anus'.[9] It seems to have entered English from French in the thirteenth century. Indeed, it appears in the title of a thirteenth-century French fabliau generally cited as an analogue and even as a possible source of the Miller's Tale, *Bèrenger au lonc cul*.[10]

Interestingly, the *cul* is notable by its absence (or, to be precise, its occlusion) in this tale of a cowardly husband who cannot endure knightly encounters. In order to preserve his reputation with his wife, the husband goes into the forest, and beats dents into his armour before returning home as if from combat. Suspicious, his wife rides into the forest disguised as a knight. Coming upon 'him' as a stranger, the husband seeks to avoid conflict by promising to do whatever 'he' asks of him. The 'knight' agrees to let the husband go on condition that he kiss her (or, as the husband believes, his) arse. What the husband beholds when she (or, as the husband believes, he) disrobes is, however, a combination of *cul* and (to draw on a companion vocabulary item that features in the Miller's Tale) 'queynt', or cunt.[11] Failing to understand what he is looking at, the husband is astounded by the extent of what he still believes to be a male's *cul*—and which he goes on to kiss. His wife, identifying herself before her departure as the knight 'Bèrenger of the Long Arse', will later inform her husband that the same Bèrenger has passed on to her the story of his (the husband's) humiliation, a story that she threatens to tell if ever he were to chide her for her sexual promiscuity.

As intimated above, Absolon intends to use his terrible instrument upon Alison. If Nicholas had not inserted himself into her

[4] The introduction of the kultour in the context of Absalon's intended use of it resonates with the innuendo already implied by the ploughing imagery used by the Miller in his altercation with the Reeve in the Prologue at 3159, when the Miller swears by 'the oxen in [his] plogh' (?i.e. his testicles) to the effect that he is determined–by avoiding enquiry into the 'pryvetee' of his wife (3158–3166)—not to discover that he was (or is) a cuckold.

[5] Kathryn Walls, 'Absolon as Barber-Surgeon', *The Chaucer Review*, xxxv.4 (2001), 391–8.

[6] This, as argued by Peter G. Beidler, is the Middle Dutch *Heile van Beersele*, in which one 'Hughe' takes revenge upon a priest (whose fundament he has been tricked into kissing) by plunging a *[t]gheloyende yser* (red-hot iron) into his arse. See Beidler's chapter on the Miller's Tale in Robert M. Correale and Mary Hamel, *Sources and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales*, v.2 (Cambridge, 2005), 249–75. Beidler's facing-page translation of *Heile* appears on 266–75. The reference quoted above is at l. 147.

[7] For Bryan's remark, see '"A berd! A berd!": Chaucer's Miller and the Poetics of the Pun', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, xxxviii (2016), 1–37, at 3.

[8] The *MED* yields three citations of this formula a1300–a 1425. See 'cul (n. (1))', *MED*, accessed online at <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED9110>, last accessed 4 May 2018.

[9] Cf. 'culus' defined as 'fundament [,] arse' in *the DMLBS*. The entry contains just seven citations (1311-1402).

[10] For editions of the French text, see <https://www.arlima.net/ad/berengier_au_lonc_cul.html>. An English translation of *Bèrenger* is included in Larry D. Benson and Theodore M. Andersson, *The Literary Context of Chaucer's Fabliaux: Texts and Translations*, New York, 1971, 11–25. Benson and Andersson are neutral on the question of whether Chaucer would have known the work (11). Beidler denies its relevance. I cite it here for its focus on the anus as *cul*. While my point is not dependent upon the claim that *Bèrenger* influenced Chaucer, what I see as the pun buried in 'coulter' does qualify Beidler's assertion that 'the [*Berenger*] story has no similarity with *The Miller's Tale* except possibly in the fact that in it a woman also bares her bottom for the kiss of a man she despises' (253–4).

[11] Opinions are divided as to whether this word (as at 3276), equates to 'cunt' or whether it is rather a euphemism (meaning something quaint, or delicately formed) for the same. Bryan surveys contributions to the debate in her footnote 18 (7). Either way the word is played upon throughout the tale (as at 3605 and 3754, quoted above).

place at the window, Absalon might well have burned not her *cul* but her 'queynt'. Nicholas's literal presumption ensures (to the relief, I think, of most readers) that a 'queynt' ceases to exist as a possible target. What his presumption serves to ensure is that he receives his just deserts—in the form of the painful conjunction of Absolon's coulter with his (Nicholas's) *cul*. As I see it, then, the coulter, by virtue of its nominal designation, anticipates (as—and so much of the humour depends upon this—neither Absalon nor Nicholas manage to do) its destination. Without wanting to labour the point, it could be said that the word 'coulter' proves in the Miller's Tale to be (as Chaucer the narrator puts it in his defence of crude language in the General Prologue) 'cosyn to the dede' (742)—the deed, that is, that it is used to perform. Of course, since Nicholas's arse is never referred to as his *cul* or (English) 'cule' (although that is, in fact, what it is), the pun is less than obvious. In this respect, however, it is typical of Chaucer's word play—which, as Bryan has shrewdly observed, is often performed over the heads not only of his characters but even of his narrators.[12]

Kathryn Walls
Victoria University of Wellington

doi:10.1093/notesj/gjy187

Advance Access publication 15 January, 2019

[12] If I interpret her correctly, Bryan sees many Chaucerian puns as testimonies not only to the obliviousness of his characters and narrators, but also to the apparent obliviousness of himself as author. Abandoning (or, perhaps, seeming to abandon) control to the language as such, his works prompt the recipient 'to seize control of meaning' (5).

THOMAS HOCCLEVE, THE DREAM-VISION, AND SCOTLAND: NEW INSIGHTS

I

The works of Thomas Hoccleve (*c*.1367–1426), who was part of Chaucer's *milieu* and worked as a clerk of the Privy Seal, reached Scotland and circulated in multiple contexts through distinctive witnesses which are suggestive of a more extensive Scottish reception than it is currently possible to reconstruct.[1] Hoccleve is often deemed to avoid the dream-vision altogether. Yet a number of Scottish writers, beginning with James I,[2] responded to Hoccleve's creative subversion of the dream-frame in the *Regement of Princes* (*c*.1411). This makes it likely that there was in Scotland a copy of that work, although none survives. The narrative involves a narrator who laments the 'troubly world' (1.2)[3] and who, instead of dreaming, remains too anxious to sleep:[4] a scenario which resonates with the contemplation of James I at the beginning of Scotland's first fully extended engagement with the dream-vision, the *Kingis Quair*.[5] In this poem, too, the horizon of expectation of a dream is created but subverted through the insomniac-narrator. James, however, departs from this anxious Hocclevian sequence, instead applying it in a revisionary, optimistic fashion to a specifically Scottish political context. Hoccleve's sequence might also be an apposite source for the refracting of the nocturnal reader-dreamer in Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid* (*c*.1480–92), and the anonymous prose *Spectakle of Lufe* (*c*.1492). For the *Spectakle*, as in the other two works, includes a narrator who evokes a nocturnal dream setting, where 'þe restles besynes of [þis] translatory warld quhilkis thochtis and fantesyes trublit my

[1] I dedicate this article to the memory of Professor Eric Stanley, my much-missed mentor and friend, who encouraged and inspired me in all things from our first meeting fourteen years ago. Eric set a powerful example of integrity to all literary scholars, and shaped the field of Medieval literary studies for over half a century. It is, therefore, an honour to acknowledge here his legacy: an unmistakeable combination of generosity, guidance, and rigour, which empowered every scholar with whom he engaged.

[2] See J. Martin 'The Translations of Fortune: James I's *Kingis Quair* and the Rereading of Lancastrian Poetry', in N. Royan (ed.), *Langage Cleir Illumynate: Scottish Poetry from Barbour to Drummond, 1375–1650* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi 2007), 43–60.

[3] Quotation from F. J. Furnivall and I. Gollancz (eds), *Hoccleve's Works III. The Regement of Princes*. EETS ES 61 (London: Teubner, 1897), giving page and line number.

[4] See now H. Sugito, 'Reality as Dream: Hoccleve's Daydreaming Mind', *Chaucer Review*, xlix (2014), 244–63.

[5] See also J. Martin, 'Translations of Fortune: James I's *Kingis Quair* and the Rereading of Lancastrian Poetry', in N. Royan, (ed.), *Langage Cleir Illumynate: Scottish Poetry from Barbour to Drummond, 1375–1650* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi), 47–51.