INFORMATION TO USERS

This reproduction was made from a copy of a document sent to us for microfilming. While the most advanced technology has been used to photograph and reproduce this document, the quality of the reproduction is heavily dependent upon the quality of the material submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help clarify markings or notations which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or "target" for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is "Missing Page(s)". If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting through an image and duplicating adjacent pages to assure complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a round black mark, it is an indication of either blurred copy because of movement during exposure, duplicate copy, or copyrighted materials that should not have been filmed. For blurred pages, a good image of the page can be found in the adjacent frame. If copyrighted materials were deleted, a target note will appear listing the pages in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., is part of the material being photographed, a definite method of "sectioning" the material has been followed. It is customary to begin filming at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. If necessary, sectioning is continued again—beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. For illustrations that cannot be satisfactorily reproduced by xerographic means, photographic prints can be purchased at additional cost and inserted into your xerographic copy. These prints are available upon request from the Dissertations Customer Services Department.

5. Some pages in any document may have indistinct print. In all cases the best available copy has been filmed.

University Microfilms International
300 N. Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

Downloaded from SHAREOK. Persistent Handle URL: https://hdl.handle.net/11244/5280

8425533

Arbuckle, Nan

CATEGORIES OF THE SELF-CONSCIOUS NARRATOR IN WOLFRAM, DANTE, AND CHAUCER

The University of Oklahoma PH.D. 1984

University Microfilms International 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106

Copyright 1984

by

Arbuckle, Nan

All Rights Reserved

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

Categories of the Self-Conscious Narrator in Wolfram, Dante, and Chaucer

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

NAN ARBUCKLE

Norman, Oklahoma

1984

"Categories of the Self-Conscious Narrator

in Wolfram, Dante, and Chaucer"

Approved by:

Paul G. Ruggers

Gwenn Davis

Rudolph C. Bambas

Roy R. Male

Marvin R. Barnes

David P. Deal

© Copyright by Nan Arbuckle 1984
All Rights Reserved

Acknowledgements

As with any work this size, many people besides the writer have been involved in the completion. First I must thank Mrs. Marjorie Bradley and Dean Marilyn Affleck of the Graduate College formerly Dean Kenneth L. Hoving formerly of the University Research Council. My participation in the New Chaucer Society Convention in 1980 and the MLA Convention in 1981, allowing me to hear papers related to my study, were due to support of the Graduate College, as was financial support for original typing. Most important, my fellowship in 1980-81 from the Research Council made it possible for me to devote full time to research and so to complete the dissertation with much more care than would have been possible had I been teaching that year.

I would also like to thank those of my professors who have been important in inspiring and in helping the completion of this work. Professor John Paul Montgomery, of Middle Tennessee State University, first introduced me to the idea of process literature and later served on my thesis committee. From him I learned much that informed this longer study. I should also thank Professor William Connelly of Middle Tennessee State University for arousing my curiosity about the medieval narrator by assuring me that the concept of self-consciousness could not be applied to it. His aid in my transfer to the University of Oklahoma to study with Professor Ruggiers insured that I would be able to make that application with just the right person. I must also thank my dissertation committee: Professors Rudolph C. Bambas, Gwenn Davis, David Freanch, and Roy R. Male of English and Mervin Barnes of Modern Languages.

Their helpful suggestions, kind criticism, and patience made the whole process much less painful. Both professionally and personnally I want to thank my Director, Professor Paul G. Ruggiers, for his unflagging insistence that my idea was both solid and important enough to devote extensive time and pages to develop.

As a disabled student, I also have many particular thanks to extend. I could not have come this far without the support of many people. To those I cannot list here I must say a general thank you. Some, however, deserve special mention. First I should mention Linda Zinner of Handicapped Student Services who during my last years as a graduate student helped me to arrange my living situation and became a good friend in the process. I must also pay special thanks to my three typists, Susie George, Jenny Nieb, and Sammi Fields, and to Susie's boss Diane Dennis for her support. These women have dealt with an often rough and generally alien, confusing work and have done a beautiful job in many short time limits. From the original in my longhand to the final in Sammi's clean type, I have been most appreciative for the skill. My graduate school colleagues and friends, J. Lane Goodall and John C. Orr, I thank for listening to my strange and often confused discussions in those especially trying processes of beginning and concluding such as study as this. Anne Phelps Reed and Melissa Hearn get much credit for helping me maintain my sanity through many stages of graduate work; they kept me in touch with something in my life other than bibliographies and antique langauges.

Sherrie Jarvis needs a special separate thanks for listening to unusual theory, for rescuing me from disruptive living situations, and, most of all, for being such a good friend and encouraging me to plan for

life-after-dissertation. Tammy Mason was more family than an aide during both the beginning and ending of this study and can never be thanked enough for her calming laughs at me. In the last hectic stages my sister Katy Arbuckle Grant and my new, but valued, friends Suzette Bacon and Georg Argentos gave those crucial little connections to a real life audience that a self-conscious scholar, as well as narrator, needs in order to remember the humanity for whom art is created.

My last thanks are particularly special. These must go to my father J. W. Arbuckle for letting his "little" girl go where she wanted to find the career she dreamed. He always believed that I could do whatever I wanted despite the obstacles and most of all gave me the stubborn streak and the loving support I needed to do just that. Not even a self-conscious poet can create thanks enough for all that.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Introduction vii

Chapter

I. THE SELF-CONSCIOUS NARRATOR AND MEDIEVAL NARRATOR. 1

II. ATTESTATIONS OF TRUTH: THE POET AS HISTORIAN. 28

III. DIDACTICISM AND THE INTRUSIVE MEDIEVAL NARRATOR. 77

IV. THE NARRATOR AS GUIDE. 138

V. THE VOICE OF THE POET. 198

VI. CONCLUSIONS. 254

INTRODUCTION

With the virtual disappearance of the narrator in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the basic situation of narration, that of a storyteller addressing an audience became easy to overlook. Indeed, the elimination of the intrusive narrator was considered such an advance in narrative technique that those earlier narratives which did include an obvious narrating voice came to be judged as merely primitive or unsophisticated and poorly developed. Since such seminal studies of narrative as those by Scholes and Kellogg in The Nature of Narrative and Booth in The Rhetoric of Fiction, however, a much broader view of narrative technique has been possible.[1] Much has been written, for example, in the last two decades about the narrative as a linguistic process with examination of its smallest structural details.[2]

The current trends in the study of narrative may, nevertheless, once more be leading away from an understanding of the act of storytelling with their emphasis on narratives as systems. The separation of the author from the work and, therefore, the narrator's voice that was begun by the New Critics has been carried even further in structuralist criticism. For example, Lubomir Dolozel's opening remarks to "The Typology of the Narrator: Point of View in Fiction" explain the necessary elimination of the "author" and along with it any reference to the author's intent, his approach, his subjectivity, his impersonality, his telling or showing, and so on.[3] For the structuralist, he goes on to explain, the narrator is only a function, "a purely structural factor" (p.542).

This reduction of the narrator to a functional element is no doubt useful

for avoiding the mistakes of earlier criticism which saw the author himself in every intrusion, but it too has its limitations. The tendency that it creates is just the opposite of that earlier evaluation of intrusive narration as an example of technical naiveté on the part of the author. This interpretation may create the impression of an authorless, audienceless work produced for the sake of narration alone. Again the narration as a story told for an audience with a particular reason for its existence is lost. Narrative becomes a system divorced from actual experience. For surely, no audience, outside the walls of a few academies, would examine a story for linguistic patterns and interpret its narrator as strictly a function. Similarly, few writers before our time, and in all likelihood even now, would have considered the stories they told as entirely beyond their own interests and intents.

A return to earlier narratives may help us to remember these points. In the great medieval romances, for example, the narrator's position as historian, teacher, guide, and, of course, storyteller is so obvious that it forces us to examine the reasons for such complicated intrusions rather than simply describing their functions. But here again we must deal with the judgment that these early narratives are primitive. In The Poetics of Prose Tzvetan Todorov comments on just this point, vindicating early narrative:

> The innocence of scholarly criticism is, of course, a false innocence; consciously or not, such criticism applies to all narrative criteria elaborated on the basis of specific narratives (I do not know which ones). But there is also a more general conclusion to be drawn: there is no "primitive narrative." No narrative is natural; a choice and a construction will always preside over its appearance; narrative is a discourse, not a series of events.[4]

We must not allow any set of critical theories to cloud our examination of narratives from earlier periods. Narration is a discourse as complex as it is old. As a discourse it requires that both the speaker and the audience be

examined in order for the implications behind the narrative to be made clear.[5]

The apparent simplicity of older narrative is based on critical assumptions that are actually quite limited. C.S. Lewis and Eugene Vinaver have shown that the assumptions about the nature of narrative during the Middle Ages were in no way related to the notion of Aristotelian organicism dominant in critical theory only since the Renaissance.[6] Todorov goes on to show, for example, that the supposedly simple narrative of the Odyssey is far from simple and not in the least primitive and that despite the critical commentary, which would consider portions not fitting modern concepts of unity as additions, the narrative is tightly organized. The point is, of course, that narratives, especially the great narratives which seem to have a perpetual modernity, must be examined in terms of their own stories, their own times and narrative traditions, and their own effects, not just in terms of the ways that pieces of them are in line with the narrative patterns of our own age. The sections of narrative seeming almost modern in treatment should not be the only ones that we see as exhibiting the marks of genius; rather, those places where the poet uses the traditions of his own time to create something more than the average and now forgotten story should be the focus of our discussion.

II

Until recently medieval literature has been something of an embarrassment to those studying narrative. For generations the literature of the Middle Ages was excused for its unwieldy nature because prevailing critical belief, even among medievalists, held medieval narratives to be for the most part disjointed and unsophisticated. Even Scholes and Kellogg, who make some important

points about early narrative, admit a certain embarrassment about using the term author to describe what was probably oral composition, claiming that the term literature is most properly applied to the written text.[7] When the author had included his own name in the work, critics tended to treat the single authorship this acknowledged as another example of the naiveté of a poet who did not know enough to keep his nose out of a story he was telling. The attitude was something very like the neo-classical attitude toward Shakespeare: What a genius! Too bad he did not know how to write correctly! In fact, that period's attitude quite naturally extended to the Middle Ages, with Pope himself doing revisions of Chaucer that would make a medievalist cringe.

With the re-emergence of the narrator from his self-effacement of the first half of the century, however, there has been a renewed interest in the presence of the narrating voice within the story. Booth, with his term "dramatized" narrator, Friedman with his "editorial omniscient" narrator, and Stanzel with his "authorial" narrator, have gone far beyond those who saw the total extinction of the narrator as the greatest achievement of the twentieth century.[8] Instead, they have opened the way to the study of the diversity of narrative techniques and the effects achieved by each, and, in so doing, have given justification for study of that medieval narrator who persisted in writing as if he were actually there addressing an audience.

What the critic must now do is to re-evaluate medieval narratives to discover if they are, in fact, connected to the rest of western narrative tradition. In doing this we must examine that self-conscious intrusive narrator so frequent in the most important narratives to understand why such a technique appeared in so sophisticated an application in these works. This kind of an analysis requires consideration of authorial purpose, social conditions, historical ques-

tions, and literary traditions along with the analysis of the function of the narrator in the text. If we try to divorce these considerations from the examination of the narratives themselves, we create a faulty picture, ignoring the essential differences in the influences on early narrative and treating it as we would a contemporary one. We cannot do justice to the sophistication of the medieval narrative poets or to the complexity of their works if we restrict ourselves to a single method of interpretation.

III

What I propose to do in this study is to build from these beginnings examing the self-conscious narrator as a technique of medieval literature and applying my analysis to three of the greatest medieval romances, Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, Dante's Divine Comedy, and Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde. My application of theory to the narrative may seem somewhat reactionary since I do not intend to do a strictly structural approach and thus ignore historical or social reasons for the technique of the self-conscious narrator. But for a study of medieval narrative only a synthesis of critical approaches will result in an accurate evaluation. I hope that my analysis will lay the foundation for the interpretation of medieval narrative as an integral part of the history of narrative.

I will concentrate on the most basic relationship of all, that of the storyteller to his audience on his story. First I will summarize the major critical commentary on the self-conscious narrator and explain the reasons for application of that term to the intrusive narrator in medieval literature. Then I will define and briefly explain the four major categories of

intrusion in medieval narrative: the attestation of truth, the didactic interpretation of the story, the organizational intrusion for coherence, and the emphasis on the poetic process. The next four chapters will then give a careful definition of each of these categories of intrusions, explaining the reasons for their development as rhetorical techniques and then doing analysis of various subtypes. Examples from the three poems will show the effects of these intrusions.

What I hope to prove in this study is that the medieval narrative poet had, in fact, the same narrative techniques that a modern novelist has. In many cases his narrator's intrusions function in much the same way as those of his modern counterpart. In the great romances in the two hundred years between Chrétien, the so-called father of the genre in medieval literature, and Chaucer, the self-conscious narrator becomes a technique as standard as it is in the nineteenth-century novel. While often used for obviously different reasons and drawn from dramatically different traditions in the medieval narrative, the self-conscious narrator, nevertheless, provides just as crucial a focal point in the story as it does in the novel. Indeed, in a genre as chronically episodic as the romance, that intrusive narrator itself becomes even more important as an organizing principle than it does in any but the most disrupted and disjointed of modern narratives.

Notes for Introduction

[1]Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966); Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961).

[2]See for example: Roland Barthes, "An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative," trans. Lionel Duisit, New Literary History, 6 (1974-75), 237-72; Seymour Chatman, "Towards a Theory of Narrative," New Literary History, 6 (1974-75), 295-318; Morton W. Bloomfield, "Stylistics and the Theory of Literature," New Literary History, 7 (1975-76), 271-311; Fredric Jameson, "Magical Narratives: The Romance as Genre," New Literary History, 7 (1975-76), 135-63; Gerard Genette, "Boundaries of Narrative," New Literary History, 8 (1976-77), 1-13; Jonathan Cullers, Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975); Robert Scholes, Structuralism in Literature (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974).

[3]Lubomir Dolozel, "The Typology of the Narrator," in To Honor Roman Jakobson: Essays on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday, Vol. 1 (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), p. 542.

[4]Tzvetan Todorov, The Poetics of Prose, trans. Richard Howard (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 55.

[5]There has been a recent rise in reader response criticism. See for example Wolfgang Iser's commentary in "In Defense of Authors and Readers," ed. Edward Bloom, Novel, 11, i (Fall 1977), 5-26.

[6]See C. S. Lewis on digressions in The Discarded Image (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 192-4, and Eugene Vinaver on the interlace structure of the romance in The Rise of Romance (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 68-98.

[7]The Nature of Narrative, p. 17.

[8]While still defending the effaced narrator as the most sophisticated type, Friedman does not describe the intrusive narrator as a faulty artistry as so many others have done: "Point of View," PMLA, 70 (December 1955), 1162. Also see Franz Stanzel's Narrative Situations in the Novel, trans. James P. Pusack (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1971), pp. 36-58.

CHAPTER I:

THE SELF-CONSCIOUS NARRATOR AND MEDIEVAL NARRATIVE

Any study of the self-conscious narrator must first of all deal with the difficulty in defining that term "self-conscious" as it is applied to the narrator. Three recent dissertations have been devoted to just such a definition with quite different results in each definition and in the flexibility of the application of the term.[1] None of the three offers finally a working definition that is both specific and yet general enough to be translated into use for analysis of narratives outside those modern ones for which the definition was devised. When such an elusive term as self-conscious narrator is applied to narratives like the romances of the Middle Ages, themselves equally difficult to contain in clear definitions of narrative technique and structure, the problems multiply.

Aside from the difficulty in defining the terms of such a discussion, there also arises the problem of justifying the application of a term used for modern narrative to medieval literature. Our critical apprehension of the narrator is based thus far almost exclusively on those definitions developing from the discussion of the novel since the eighteenth century, with only one study taking the discussion of the self-conscious narrator back as far as Don Quixote.[2] Application of the term has simply not extended to the Middle Ages in general criticism.[3] Perhaps because the narratives from that period are epic and romance and not novels, the terms defined for the novel are considered inappropriate. Whatever the reason, the oversight is an unfortunate one, giving the false impression that medieval narrative has no relation to

the rest of narrative tradition.

The first goal of a study of the self-conscious narrator in medieval romance must be, therefore, to draw from the recent criticism a definition that can successfully be used in analyzing medieval as well as modern narrative. Then it must justify the use of that term in discussion of the medieval romance with explanations of literary, social, and cultural reasons why the technique had become a literary tradition at least two hundred years before Don Quixote.

Definition of Self-Conscious Narrator

The first major study of the narrator is, of course, Wayne Booth's Rhetoric of Fiction. Nevertheless, here Booth has only one short section which specifically deals with the definition of the self-conscious narrator. He defines it in general terms:

> Cutting across the distinction between observers and narrator-agents of all kinds is the distinction between self-conscious narrators. . . . , aware of themselves a writers. . . . , and narrators or observers who rarely if ever discuss their writing chores or who seem unaware that they are writing, thinking, speaking, or "reflecting" a literary work. . . .[4]

In discussion of Tristram Shandy, he goes on more at length, however, to discuss the reader's response, pointing out that the reader enjoys the "ornament" of the intrusion and the fact that "the narrator has made of himself a dramatized character to whom we react as we react to other characters" (p. 212). The narrator's intrusions become a sort of secondary story for the reader. For example, Booth points out that in Tom Jones there is "a running account of growing intimacy between the narrator and the reader, an account with a kind of plot of its own and a separate dénouement" (p. 216). Thus not only does the intrusive narrator provide a unifying subplot of reader participation, he

also keeps the reader on the right track in understanding the action of the story, guiding him into the correct perspective. The balance is a delicate one. The narrator may intrude so much that the reader is too distracted, the narrator's guidance seeming a mere pose. But if the reader concentrates on the story and the intrusions work well, the narrator will become "a rich and provocative chorus" (p. 213).

In his earlier article, Booth had stressed the point that Sterne's intrusive, indeed, pervasive, narrator creates "another kind of unity, itself a fusion of various cohesive factors at work in the older 'facetious' and 'chaotic' traditions."[5] That the technique of the self-conscious narrator can itself become the major unifying device, rather than simply disrupting the story, is a crucial distinction. With the extreme of Shandy we have the ultimate in disruptive narrators, yet just that disruption defines the unity of the story, a story more about its own creation, erratic as it is, than about any plot of action external to the act of storytelling.

Norman Friedman's description of the "editorial omniscient" narrator takes much the same direction as this intrusive unifier. He rightly emphasizes the inseparable relationship between the narrator's technique and the narrative's effect:

> The question of effectiveness, therefore, is one of the suitability of a given technique for the achievement of certain kinds of effects, for each kind of story requires the establishment of a particular illusion to sustain it. Editorial omniscience, for example, may be called the "free verse" of fiction: its limits are so wholly internal that an unwary novelist has more opportunities for illusion breaking here than with the others. How much of Whitman, Sandburg, or Masters is flat and dull? And how much of War and Peace--to take the highest--could easily be dispensed with? On the other hand, when the personality of the author-narrator has a definite function to fulfill in relation to his story-say of irony, compassion, philosophical range and depth, and so on-he need not retire into his

> work, so long as his point of view is adequately established and coherently maintained. It is more a matter of consistency than of this or that degree of "impersonality."[6]

The points here are important. The intrusive narrator's interruptions must be linked in a vital way to the story itself, even if they become as Booth suggested a sort of subplot mirroring in some way the action of the story. The second point about the consistency is also significant, if perhaps somewhat misleading. There is little that is consistent in the individual intrusions of a Shandy or even more recently of a Todd Andrews; that is, the point of view may often shift from the ironic to the philosophical to the moral and back. It is just this kind of shifting that has caused many to label medieval narratorial intrusions as inept narration.

The problem with the emphasis on consistency arises because we fail to make a distinction between the types of intrusions. If there were only one voice in Troilus, the critical opinion on the meaning of the story would be much more in agreement. But there is not. Neither is there consistency in any of the complicated narrative voices from Don Quixote on down. What there is, however, is a kind of coherence, a unity extending beyond the various individual intrusions and presenting the whole puzzle with all its odd pieces neatly in place. It is this kind of coherence that we must look for in the unity of the self-conscious narrator, not coherence in the point of view of the separate intrusions. Here we must approach an examination of what Booth calls the "implied author." The intrusions are a device, the coherence the pattern that device creates.

Franz Stanzel also alludes to the patterning provided by the intrusion of the narrator when he defines the relationship between the authorial narrator and the "real" and the "fictional" worlds. The separation of the authorial--or real--and fictional realm is established in "the guise of the

act of narration." This game sets up the situation for the reader's reaction to the story:

> It appears to correspond best to the reader's main illusion expectancy in the authorial narrative situation--that the narrated material must be presented as actually having taken place. This illusion expectancy already discounts the imagination and sudden flash of inspiration as sources of the narrated material. The fictional world claims to be a part of the real world or its historically verifiable copy. In his mediative position the authorial narrator is viewed as a guarantor of the authenticity, the truth (meaning that which can be documented) of the narrated material.[7]

The fact that the intrusive narrator creates the situation of storytelling encourages the audience to react to him as a guide, as the soothsayer. He achieves then a credibility for his story unlike that of the fiction presented without narrator's intrusions. If the story sounds fantastic, we have before us in the "real world" of the storytelling the narrator who bids us trust him, who with his greater knowledge reassures us that the story is a part of the storyteller's world, and since we too are included in that world, it must, therefore, be a part of our world also.

Rather than destroying the illusion of reality, then, the intruding authorial narrator creates another kind of reality. Robert Alter phrases this emphasis on reality in a slightly different way to the same end: "A self-conscious novel, briefly, is a novel that systematically flaunts its own condition of aritfice and that by so doing probes into the problematic relationship between real-seeming artifice and reality."[8] The narrator can function, therefore, to accentuate the "reality" of a story in ways that uninterrupted narrative cannot equal.

SUMMARY

In brief, then, the first main point about the self=conscious narrator

is that he is present in the story; according to accepted description, one I have been using myself, he intrudes. This point is important because the presence of a self-conscious narrator gives us an immediate cue that the narrative is not just the story of an action, but the story of storytelling itself. Taken in this sense, the narrator does not merely intrude; he belongs. He himself is a part of the total effect and purpose of the story, not as Schorer and earlier critics would have it, a flaw in the technique.[9]

The second point is a companion to the storyteller's presence and that is the storyteller's obvious awareness of the act of telling the story. He is not only a necessary presence because in a secondary way the story becomes the description of the narrative experience; he is also essential to the work because he calls attention directly to that secondary plot. The self-conscious narrator is ever aware of the act of storytelling. He is aware of all the events to be recounted. In most cases, he knows the meanings behind those actions. Ultimately, he is even conscious of the audience's reaction to the story and its narration. This consciousness shows through in his intrusions, making the audience aware of the act of storytelling as well.

These first two points about the self-conscious narrator combine to explain the third and last point about the effect of the self-conscious intrusion, the definition of the audience addressed. One look at Tristram Shandy makes immediately clear that the narrator here invents his audience even as he invents his story. This phenomenon has most often been studied apart from the discussion of the self-conscious narrator in studies like Gerald Prince's definition of the "Narratee" and Walter J. Ong's commentary on the fictionalized audience.[10] But it seems best explained when combined with the discussion of that narrator whose very awareness of the act of storytelling causes his intrusions to become just those cues that identify the audience's role.

Simply because the self-conscious narrator is so aware of telling his tale, the audience is compelled to become equally aware of the part it plays in that process. Whether the narrator's direct addresses are so specific as to mention sex, rank, occupation, or personality, the tone of the addresses to the audience and the observable purposes behind them suggest to us the role we are expected to play in listening. We agree to play the game according to the rules that the narrator's intrusions set out for us. In essence, we become the self-conscious audience, allowing ourselves to be guided, joked with, or even preached to, depending upon the requirements of the individual intrusions. This definition of the audience becomes, then, a crucial way in which the narrator directs our perception of the story. While we willingly play the roles suggested, we may also come to certain decisions about the narrative that are outside the bounds of those rules. In the same way that we may discern the intentions of an implied author in the narrator's intrusions, we may discover the reactions of an implied audience behind the projected role.

In these points then we have the basis for that narrator-audience subplot so standard to the self-conscious narrative. The story becomes the common ground around which to arrange the narrator and his audience according to the requirements of the intrusions' cues. There is a willing suspension, not necessarily of disbelief, but of immediate personal reactions as the process of narration guides the audience through the story with the proper perspectives. The audience response may be elicited in subtle ways or in dramatically obvious ones; nevertheless, that reaction is as definite as a child's alert response to the familiar "once upon a time." Examination of the relationship between the narrator's intrusions and the implied reaction of the audience

can provide a clearer and more consistent interpretation of the story than an analysis restricted to the incidents of the plot. As Stanzel suggests, the narrator's intrusions broaden the perception of reality and the fiction's relation to it, thus offering a broader interpretation for the narrative itself.

Application of "Self-Conscious" to Medieval Narrative

While the term "self-conscious" narrator may be happily applied to the voices in Tom Jones, Tristram Shandy, Vanity Fair, or The Floating Opera, there may be some disagreement about its use in describing the voice in Parzival, or even Troilus and Criseyde.[11] Presumably, for many the fact that these are romances and not novels precludes the use of such a term in discussion of their narrators. The fact remains, however, that these romances do include intrusive narrators. The problem, therefore, becomes the justification for applying the term "self-conscious" to those intrusions. The narrators do indeed set up that situation of the speaker telling a story to an audience. The question is: do they do it in conscious manipulation of narrative technique?

Scholes and Kellogg offer an evolutionary reason that suggests interesting--if incomplete--possibilities for the narrator's presence:

> The romances associated with the names Chrétien de Troyes, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Gottfried von Strassburg are probably to be attributed to the creative genuises of those individuals. Such works as the Knight's Tale and Troilus and Criseyde are written compositions in the full modern sense. And yet, in medieval romance we frequently meet with a narrator like Chaucer's and Wolfram's who is depicted as telling a story to an audience. Wolfram's narrator even admits to the audience that he doesn't know a single letter of the alphabet, thereby increasing the distance between himself and the author. The sudden acquisition by medieval narrative artists of the new role of authorship found them unprepared and somewhat ill at ease. Like all authors they attempted

> to "refine themselves out of existence." The most natural course was found to be a fairly straightforward imitation of a teller reciting his story to an audience. But even this emergency measure opened the Pandora's box of irony, giving such masters as Chaucer, Wolfram, and (in the Renaissance) Rabelais and Cervantes new fields to conquer.[12]

The fact that the medieval narrative was presented orally with the roles of a narrator and an audience cannot be denied. But there are undoubtedly other more important reasons for the narrative mirroring this situation than that the new role of authorship, as opposed to oral composition, simply made writers "unprepared and somewhat ill at ease." There is even justification for the estimation that such a technique has its beginnings in Homer, that is, well before written composition. We would be reluctant to attribute such a feeling of disease to Chrétien and yet in his romances, the earliest, and according to some critics the best medieval examples of the genre, there is just that presence of the narrator and his audience, though not in as highly developed a form as we find in Wolfram only a generation later.[13]

Equally unacceptable here is the idea that medieval authors must have aimed "like all authors 'to refine themselves out of existence'" and simply failed. This evaluation also gives the impression of ineptitude on the part of the medieval narrative poets, assuming that the modern goal of eliminating that "authorial" intrusion must have been theirs as naturally as it was Henry James'. This kind of interpretation styles medieval narrative as a poorer early version of modern, thus ignoring the literary traditions and social situations of the times which may more accurately explain the narrator's intrusions. Michał Głowiński suggests one such reason in discussion of the first person novel. Głowiński describes the nature of the first person narration in terms of the conscious use of existing norms:

> The first-person narration is the domain of formal mimetics: an imitation, by means of a given form, of other forms of literary, paraliterary, and extraliterary discourse, as well as--what is a common enough phenomenon--ordinary language. It is a form of appeal resorting to the socially fixed norms of expression, usually firmly rooted in a given culture.[14]

The presence of the first person narration is, therefore, not a matter of "genesis, but a matter of structure" (p. 106-7). As Głowiński points out the first-person is often used to create the illusion of rhetorical narration, as happens in the oral Russian tale, the shaz (p. 107). The distinction between the intrusive first-person consciously used as a means of telling the story, rather than as an inept response to authorship or an unskilled attempt at telling a third-person narrative, is a crucial one. This technique, used to imitate a socially fixed norm, should not be glossed over as the innocent or incomplete artistry of an unskilled age.

For the medieval storyteller in particular, the social norms were major determinants for literary productions. An audience had more homogeneous interests, less literacy, and more significant influence--considering the noble rank of the audience and the importance of patronage to the poet--than the modern storyteller can expect. The medieval narrative poet faced different social restrictions on the basis of presentation alone, for his audience was not the isolated reader in a private study. The audience was, in fact, an audience, listening and reacting to the immediate presentation of the story. Whether the poet himself recited the work or a reader or reciter delivered it, an audience received it. That fact alone accounts for many of the intrusions. Few modern poets and even fewer storytellers, in our time the novelists, encounter live audiences. Because of the rhetorical situation of the poem's presentation, the medieval narrative poet must have been forced into a continual recognition of the act of storytelling in a way more akin to the modern playwright than the novelist.

THE TERM "SELF-CONSCIOUS"

The most important term in this discussion of the medieval narrators is conscious. I have chosen the term self-conscious narrator because that category covers both the first-person and the third-person narrative. But it is also a term which explains much of the reason for the phenomenon it describes. As an art form achieves some sophistication, it also achieves an accompanying sense of itself, a consciousness of what it can and is doing. Witness the films about making films, the novels about writing novels, and the paintings, from the Renaissance and earlier, with the painter pictured painting the group or standing looking on. The narrative poet of the Middle Ages, contrary to the implication of Scholes and Kellogg, was a sophisticated artist, aware of what his art could and did achieve.[15] That awareness itself is, I believe, one important reason for the intrusion of the person of the storyteller into medieval narrative poetry. The poet knows the established forms and traditions of group-oriented, oral presentations of narrative poetry and so consciously uses those forms to achieve his own ends.

The medieval narrative poet includes a narrator as a character because he is telling a story that will indeed have a narrator, whether he creates one or not. The reciter's role was a vital part of medieval literature and its presentation. Every medieval writer of any sophistication would have recognized that point. Not only was the poet who wrote a narrator into his story taking into consideration the natural order of presentation, he was also insuring that another reader or reciter did not interpolate his own commentary on that story. Thus the poet left nothing to chance. He controlled the way the story affected the audience. We can no more expect that the audience of a medieval poetry recital left without discussing the work than we can say that modern moviegoers leave the theater never mentioning the film. A narrator's intrusions would

serve as logical guides for those after-the-reading interpretations, a point that a conscious poet could hardly have overlooked.

The Need for Truth in Medieval Literature

One tradition that the self-conscious narrator uses in his interruptions and that the sophisticated poet manipulates in a variety of ways is that reference to the source or the auctour. The technique is so well established that it became one of the topoi of medieval narrative.[16] The reasons for it and the examples of the ways it develops in the self-conscious narrative are more complex than might be immediately apparent. Nevertheless, the influence is strong enough to explain a great many of the narrator's intrusions.

The first point to be made here is that the Middle Ages is at the end of a long tradition which used the technique of swearing that stories were actual truth.[17] For example, Scholes and Kellogg explain the "truth" of classical epics in terms of traditional stories: "The epic storyteller is telling a traditional story, and therefore his primary allegiance is not to fact, not to truth, not to entertainment, but to the mythos itself--the story as preserved in the tradition which the epic storyteller is re-creating. The word mythos meant precisely this in ancient Greece: a traditional story" (p. 12). In the Middle Ages the emphasis on the tradition of the story became even more an attention to the authority and to what Peter Haidu calls "veridicity," the need to justify the historical accuracy of the story which arose in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[18] The controversy over the truth of literature was so enduring that even Dante was involved in an argument among the Dominicans of his time about the "truth" of poetry and says himself in the Convivio that poetry is "beautiful lies."[19]

This insistence on the actual truth of a story being told would seem odd, to say the least, to a modern audience.[20] But we must remember that it has not been long, as the history of literature goes, since critics believed that an audience would not believe a play that shifted time and locations or since "novelists" felt compelled to authenticate their works by references to discovered documents and collections of letters. No matter whether the idea that literature should be believable as truth comes from interpretations of Aristotle or the church Fathers, it has been a long-established one in the history of narrative. So it should not come as a surprise that a medieval narrative poet, particularly one who was embroidering on an older story, should feel the need to verify the authenticity of his tale.

The emphasis on the veracity of the story being told was especially important in medieval vernacular literature. Eberhard Nellmann points out that beglaubigung, the technique for authenticating the story through reference to sources, other suthors, and simple oaths on the truth of the tale, is almost exclusively characteristic of vernacular literature, not the Latin.[21] It would appear that the rise of vernacular literature created some doubt about the authenticity of the stories. Most important works had been done in Latin, and the language of the Church no doubt gave credibility that vernacular did not offer. If a story is told in Middle High German, what can its source be? Surely, if it is a true story, it should have its roots in Latin. This, it would seem, would be the argument behind the attestation of truth by reference to other sources, Latin ones like, Chaucer's unidentified Lollius, in particular. The poet writing in a vernacular language is already somewhat suspicious; therefore, he must be doubly conscious of the need to verify the truth of his work. By affirming its truth he would avoid being accused of having invented a story on his own, something very near lying and against literary tra-

dition since antiquity.

The result of the need to establish the historical truth of a story is a finely developed system of references to auctoritas. These may be very brief, even half line references, or extended and elaborate references to ancient authors and exotic places and languages. Those more elaborate references sent medievalists of the nineteenth century into long searches and speculations about the originals, as for example, Wolfram's mysterious and elusive Kyot. Contemporary scholars now believe, however, that these sources, still unknown to modern scholarship after long years of search, were equally unknown to the medieval audience and were sheer inventions on the part of the poet. The poet was, it appears, using the tradition of the methodical narrator as historian citing his references to verify a source that simply did not exist. Ironically, then not only are at least some portions of the story invention, so is the auctour. Using sources that we have identified, we can even show that a narrator may cite one source when the poet has actually drawn from another. In other words, the whole technique of attesting the truth of a story becomes for the sophisticated narrative poet a way of calling attention to certain passages, emphasizing the faithfulness of the narrator, and glossing over his own interpolations rather than any sincere attempt to footnote the story. Thus, the self-conscious narrator who chronically cites his sources and otherwise affirms the truth of the story he tells is actually the device of the conscious poet playing with the conventions and using them to do just what they are designed to avoid.

The Justification of Higher Truths

Along with the strong need to adapt to the tradition of telling true stories, comes the peculiarly medieval need to justify the story's higher truth.

The Middle Ages is almost without question that period when western literature was most concerned with the didacticism of its art, that is, when the higher meanings that even a strictly secular work might contain became the focus for examination. Language in general and books in particular were considered extremely influential in this period--recall, for example, the fate of Dante's Paulo and Francesca after they have come under the influence of the infamous story of Lancelot's and Guinevere's adulterous passion.

The emphasis in medieval interpretation, as well as in recent medieval scholarship, on an exegetical approach to secular literature remains the best example of the period's desire for higher truth. For an age which insisted on reading Virgil's "Fourth Eclogue" as a prediction of the coming of Christ, it seems hardly necessary to argue that literature was considered didactic. In fact, St. Thomas Acquinas was moved to point out that secular literature did not actually hold the higher truths offered by Scripture, indicating that he considered the passion for allegorization extreme.[22] St. Thomas' cautions aside, didacticism retains a central position within many medieval narratives. As Scholes and Kellogg explain, no matter how realistic a medieval narrative might appear, there is never realism in the modern sense, that is, realism for its own sake, for behind any realism there is a lesson.[23] No medieval narrative poet could have ever followed the approach of the nineteenth-century naturalist, for example. Neither could there have been art for its own sake. Art was, above all, for the sake of the message it bore.

The emphasis here on medieval didacticism is not to say that we must follow the Robertsonians strictly. It is simply to explain a tradition that a sophisticated poet could not have ignored, and that a self-conscious narrative might well use to its own ends in much the way it might use the reference to authority. Even a writer like Marie de France, whose romances are unavowedly

courtly, follows the didactic tradition on her own way by including commentary whose purpose was to *gloser la lettre* within the story itself.[24]

Indeed, many of the self-conscious narrator's interruptions may be categorized as just these kinds of glosses, resembling the marginal Latin glosses of clerics now simply incorporated into the text of the story.[25] The narrator, in the guise this time of teacher, pauses in the telling of the story to instruct the audience on the proper interpretation of certain parts of the narrative. He thus provides us with a specific perspective from which we are to evaluate the plot, taking no chances that we may overlook an important point.

But just as the technique of citing an authority may be used for different effects, the didacticism so closely associated with the sense of authority may also be adapted to a number of purposes. The didactic narrator in these intrusions must not be accepted as voicing the sympathies of the poet unless there is other support for that interpretation. No matter how straightforward or ironic the intrusion may appear, or how sudden the shift into didacticism, like that drastic shift from the secular to the divine at the end of *Troilus and Criseyde*, the didactic intrusion should be examined as the evidence of a voice trying to control the audience and as such should be assumed to be the purposeful manipulation of a firmly established literary tradition by a conscious artist.

The Influence of Oral Presentation

A third kind of narratorial intrusion, related in some ways to the interruptions by the narrator as historian and teacher, is undoubtedly prompted by the social situation of the poem's presentation. These are the organizational intrusions that provide details and transition for the whole

story. Just as the historian recalls the sources and the teacher knows the meanings, the narrator as guide is ever aware of the whole story in all its intricacies. He steps in to direct and control with confidence no matter how confusing the details of the plot may become for the audience.

While the narrator's roles as historian and teacher are techniques born in the literary tradition of the Middle Ages, the organizational narrator arises from the technical need to maintain coherence in a long oral presentation. Because the audience was for the most part not a reading public, simple details like character identification and transitions require major consideration. A reader may turn back a dozen chapters to refresh himself on whose lady-in-waiting a certain maiden is, but an audience obviously cannot.

When a work reaches the length of several thousand lines as do most romances, the possibility of delivering the whole poem in one evening vanishes, thus compounding the transitional difficulties. Audience members who had not been present for the first evening's recital would be completely lost without some clues about the direction of the story. Imagine the disruption a confused new arrival might create in a recitation of Parzival by turning to another to ask who Trevrizent was an why he was important. Without some organizational intrusions explaining current actions, linking them to previous ones and even reiterating earlier predictions of the outcome of events or of the whole story, the listeners following the narrative over several nights would have a much more difficult time. In fact, the obvious requirements of oral presentation caused these kinds of intrusions to continue in use on into the Renaissance.[26]

While these kinds of organizational intrusions help to control the subject and to avoid confusing the listeners, they may also serve other functions, depending on the ways and times in which they are employed. The organizational function, although justification enough, is often combined with

other functions, particularly the didactic with which it is closely associated. Organizational intrusions, for example, may add emphasis to a point that the narrator has made in his didactic commentary upon the significance of the action. At times they remind the reader of an earlier or later point, forcing an alteration of perspective from that which a straightforwrad depiction would produce. They may even work ironically to support the didactic. By creating the image of the narrator as a superior intelligence they may often bring the audience into an alliance with him, creating that dramatic irony necessary to illustrate a higher meaning than the characters themselves can perceive, thus emphasizing what the didactic narrator may openly discuss.

Whatever the effect of the organizational intrusions, they too force a pause in the flow of narrative. They make the audience step back to consider the story as a whole rather than allowing it to become involved too closely in individual incidents no matter how compelling. This forced distance once more draws vivid attention to the central position held by the act of story-telling itself, for in these organizational intrusions the narrator-reader subplot shows the two in closer association than in any of the other kinds of intrusions.

The Humility of the Creator

The last type of narratorial intrusion combines the literary and social traditions of the earlier ones. Here we find the narrator in the role of the poet for the first time actually drawing attention to his craft. But if the audience is to trust the narrator, he must not style himself simply as an "artificer." Just as his story must be true to its sources, he himself must not

appear too presumptuous as its narrator. We must remember here that anonymity had been the rule for the narratives of the early Middle Ages. The artist should not appear too proud of his creation or boast his own skill, in the early years even to the point of acknowledging authorship. For this reason there developed the humility topos so often used in the narration in the period. A poet may also have had peculiarly social reasons for denigrating his skill since often the poet was from a lower class than his generally courtly audience and so was dependent on the members' good favor.[27]

The humble narrator-as-poet steps out from the narration to explain the very process of creation, therefore, and at the same time creates a new and ironically trustworthy role for himself. Rather than assuming the confidence of the organizational narrator and thus inspiring confidence in the audience, this narrator inverts the roles by presenting himself as lacking confidence and so inviting the audience to assume superiority. The audience trusts this narrator because it is asked to trust its own judgment before his. Rina Indictor describes this kind of intrusion and the way it gives the narrator credibility:

> Pointing to the technical-critical problems involved in the work is, after all, a way of assaulting suspended disbelief. In itself, the critical meditation is a sufficient reminder of the presence of the author, and thus of the fact of invention, of fabrication. The result of the admission of artifice is a sense of the author's sincerity, a sincerity revealed in his willingness to admit contrivance. Since fiction is, by definition, that which is invented, the only uninvented, non-fictional truth it may make is contained in the admission of contrivance.[28] (My emphasis)

This comment recalls Alter's emphasis on the problematic relationship between truth and fiction. While for the Middle Ages it is unusual to find a

narrator willing to admit that what he is telling is a fiction, there is nothing at all unusual about a medieval narrator intruding to discuss the workings of his storytelling. Whatever the reasons and the effect--and I would qualify that the narratorial sincerity fostered by the revelations of process depends upon the specific poem itself--the fact remains that such process intrusions are typical among the interruptions by the self-conscious narrators in this period.

These intrusions like the reference to sources also have a basis in much older narrative. As Todorov suggests, the Odyssey contains the revelation of the game of storytelling in its constant attention to Odysseus' tales, making a dramatic point about self-conscious attention to the act of telling a story. The Siren's song which lures men to their deaths is a song about singing, having such irresistable allure because: "The liveliest speech is the one which speaks of itself."[29] The same point may be made about the medieval poet's work. While he should not be considered strictly an "artificer," he should be considered a conscious artisan. In Chaucer and the Shape of Creation, Jordan discusses the difficulty that modern critics have in dealing with the medieval delight in the appearance of the process:

> The irregularities and inconsistencies of a Chaucerian narrative, particularly the recurrent disruptions of illusion but also other overt evidence of the maker's hand--the exposed joints and seams, the unresolved contradictions, the clashes of perspective--are not simply the signs of primitive genius, as Sydney and Dryden were willing to believe; nor are they trivial stylistic blemishes, as modern advocates of psychological realism and dramatic unity have maintained. They are significant determinants of Chaucer's art, based upon an aesthetic which conceives art not as an organism, a living plant, but as an in-organic material, a "veil" as Petrarch and Boccaccio understood it, or in more complex works such as Troilus, the Canterbury Tales, and, pre-eminently, the Divine Comedy, as a structure

> possessed of archetectonic as well as planimetric dimensions. The role of the artis is not to express himself and not to express a new, unique way of viewing reality, but to shape and adorn the materials of his art.[30]

For an age which could make a graceful ornament of the architectural supports of cathedral, the evidence of the artist's hand were hardly to be considered flaws. They are instead an accepted part of the art.

In the intrusions revealing the process of creation, the narrator gives us a stronger sense of an actual personality than in any other type. Rather than an objective historian, opinionated teacher, or self-confident guide, the narrator as poet presents himself most often as a man facing a formidable task, one he frequently exhibits doubts about his ability to perform. The doubts may range from simple comments on the difficulty of finding the right image for a description, such as in Dante's description of the Inferno, to the full-fledged lamentations over the inability to express a major theme, like Chaucer's narrator's ignorance of love and his insecurity about trying to tell Troilus' story or Dante's pilgrim's failure to capture the experience of Pardise despite his desire to express it. Even the typical invocations of a muse may be seen as one type of process intrusion, especially those frequent calls for inspiration to aid in telling a difficult part of the story.

Along with these doubts about his ability as apoet, the narrator as poet may also offer bits of "personal" information as explanation of his insecurity. Wolfram's narrator will discuss his early poverty and illiteracy, for example, while Chaucer's narrators will claim to know nothing of love and even of writing poetry. The characterization of the narrator is clearest of all in this kind of intrusion, the focus on the artistry broadening to include the artist behind it. Here the narrator is indeed the most self-conscious, not only aware of his literary traditions and social restrictions, but aware of his own personal abilities or failures.

These exhibitions of the process cause an even more abrupt break in the narrative since they do not simply serve to emphasize the story as a story, but instead its creation and its creator. They function exactly the opposite of the didactic intrusions calling attention to the narrative not as higher truths but as art. Often using the guise of humility, they spotlight the difficulty of telling the story well and so, ironically, highlight even more dramatically the actual poet's successes. Essentially these process intrusions do just that: they offer the poet the chance to exhibit his skill and at the same time to stay within the limits of humility required by tradition.

CONCLUSION

Because the intrusive narrator in medieval romance makes the audience aware of the process of storytelling, defines the audience's perspectives, and unifies often disjointed incidents, becoming a major organizing principle in itself, it can with every justification be said to be a "self-conscious" narrator. Behind that self-conscious narrator, there is a conscious and sophisticated narrative poet who utilizes literary traditions and social situations to his own ends, both serious and comic. In a period so concerned with tradition that any new technique would have been immediately suspect, a poet desiring new effects would have been compelled to adapt traditional techniques to produce new effects. To paraphrase the narrator's introduction in Parzival, the mark of his achievement would have been his ability to tell a story that all the audience would have gotten something from, the slow witted enjoying a traditional story, the perceptive discovering a new slant on an old tale.

The ways in which the voice of the narrator interrupts the story will,

therefore, provide clear evidence of the different levels we are meant to perceive. The combinations of the narrator's roles and the frequency of the interruptions force certain kinds of alerted perceptions. Just as how the narrator intrudes alters the audience's role and reaction, when he breaks into the story also creates a shift in our attitude. The briefest reference to an "olde book" at an incongruous moment can modify our response dramatically.

The most important point to be made, then about the self-conscious narrator in medieval narrative, indeed in any narrative, is that its intrusions are the single most significant influence upon the audience's reaction to and therefore interpretation of the story being told. This is not to say that we unwittingly adopt the attitude suggested by one of the narrator's many roles, the didactic for example. Rather, it means that we must be as conscious as that narrator and the poet behind him. We must be aware of the way that the narrator's intrusions function within individual passages, within the context of the story as a whole, and within the pattern of the rest of the narrator's intrusions. No matter how straightforward or ironic the story may finally be judged to be, the predominant, although at times the subtlest, means of bringing the audience to that conclusion is the technique of self-conscious intrusion.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

In the next four chapters, I will expand the definitions and the explanation of effects for the four kinds of intrusions characteristic of medieval narrative. These definitions will be analyzed in each chapter using three of the great romances, Wolfram's Parzival, Dante's Commedia, and Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde. I will show the effects of the intrusion on the specific passage involved and whenever pertinent will connect individual intrusions to the general pattern of similar interruptions. In this way, I will try to demonstrate the ways in which the intrusions of the narrator evince the conscious poet in the background.

PLEASE NOTE:

This page not included with original material. Filmed as received.

University Microfilms International

Notes for Chapter One

[1]Thomas Claibourne Miller, "The Self-Conscious First-Person Narrator: Some Aspects of Illusion and Self-Reference in Fiction," Diss. California-Irvine 1974; Sharon Rose Wilson, "The Self-Conscious Narrator and his Twentieth Century Faces," Diss. Wisconsin-Madison 1976; Rina M. Indictor, "Fictionalization: The Poetics of Literary Self-Consciousness," Diss. New York University, 1976.

[2]Wayne C. Booth, "The Self-Conscious Narrator in Comic Fiction Before Tristram Shandy," PMLA, 67 (March 1952), 163-85.

[3]Rina M. Indictor devotes one chapter to Chaucer's narrator but does not offer a systematic incorporation of Chaucer's work into the rest of narrative history. Sherron Elizabeth Knopp in her dissertation, "The Figure of the Narrator in Medieval Romance and Dream Vision," UCLA 1975, discusses the increasing presence of the narrator's voice but does not apply the term "self-conscious" in any consistent or systematic method, nor does she attempt to connect the medieval use of the technique to its more modern examples.

[4]The Rhetoric of Fiction, p. 155.

[5]"The Self-Conscious Narrator in Comic Fiction Before Tristram Shandy," p. 185.

[6]"Point of View," p. 1180-1.

[7]Narrative Situations in the Novel, p. 41.

[8]Robert Alter, Partial Magic: The Novel as Self-Conscious Genre (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. x.

[9]See in particular: Mark Schorer, "Technique as Discovery, Hudson Rev., 1 (1948-49), 67-81, and Percy Lubbock, The Craft of Fiction (London: J. Cape, 1928), who takes Jamesian effacement of the narrator even farther than James.

[10]Gerald Prince, "Notes Toward a Categorization of Fictional 'Narratees,'" Genre, 4 (1971), 100-106; Walter J. Ong, "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction," PMLA, 90 (1975), 9-21.

[11]See the discussion of the similarities in Sterne's narrative technique and Chaucer's by Dieter Mehl, "The Audience of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," in Chaucer and Middle English Studies in Honor of RossellHope Robbins, ed. Beryl Rowland (London: Allen and Unwin, 1973), p. 175, and p. 187-8.

[12]The Nature of Narrative, p. 55.

[13]Curschmann stresses the point that we should not see the narrator in Wolfram's romances as a direct reproduction of the poet but at the result of a poet who was conscious of his immediate situation and using it in his work, a similar comment to that of Scholes and Kellogg but allowing much more to the poet's skill. See Michael Curschmann, "The French, The Audience and the Narrator in Wolfram's Willehalm," Neophilologia, 59 (1975), 559.

[14]Michał Głowiński, "On the First-Person Novel," trans. Rochelle Stone, New Literary History, 9 (1977), 106.

[15]For support of this statement see the discussion of Dante's concern for the language and literature of his time by Glauco Cambon, Dante's Craft: Studies in Language and Style (Minneapolis: Univ. Minnesota Press, 1969), p. 48.

[16]See Ernst Robert Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, trans. Willard R. Trask, Bollingen Series, No. 36 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), pp. 52f.

[17]The philosophical distrust of poetry can, of course, be traced to Plato, but for a discussion of it in the Greek romance see: Ben Edwin Perry, The Ancient Romances: A Literary-Historical Account of their Origins (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 68-109.

[18]Peter Haidu, "Approaches to Medieval Romance," Yale French Studies, 51, No. 3 (1974), 5.

[19]For an extensive disucssion of the thirteenth-century controversy over the truth of poetry, see: Robert Hollander, "Dante's Poetics," Sewanee Review, 85 (1977), 392-410.

[20]However there is a kind of truth in a convention like this, see: Jonathan Cullers, Structuralist Poetics, pp. 148-52, for discussion of the "conventionally natural."

[21]Eberhard Nellmann, Wolframs Erzähltechnik: Untersuchungen zur Funktion des Erzählers (Wiesbaden: Stiener, 1973), p. 50.

[22]See: St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, 1, 101, 2 (2); 1. 1, 8(2); and 1. 1, 9(1).

[23]The Nature of Narrative, pp. 138-47.

[24]Cited in Vinaver, The Rise of Romance, p. 16.

[25]Similar points were made by Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe about the glossator to Exeter Riddle 40, showing the Latin glossator to be playing much the same kind of games as the later narrator in interpolating his commentary on the text, in "Exeter Riddle 40 and the Enclish Mss. of Aldhelm's Aenigmata: Two Arts of Reading an Anglo-Latin Poem" MLA Convention, Houston, 27 Dec. 1980.

[26]On the persistence of oral technique, see: William Nelson, "From 'Listen, Lordyngs' to 'Dear Reader,'" University of Toronto Quarterley, 46 (Winter 1976-77), 110-24. See also the excellent discussion of oral narrative in Robert Kellogg, "Oral Narrative, Written Books," Genre, 10 (1977), 655-65.

[27]See Dennis H. Green, Irony in Medieval Romance (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1979), pp. 360-4.

[28]"Fictionalization: The Poetics of Literary Self-Consciousness," p. 6.

[29]The Poetics of Prose, p. 58.

[30]Robert Jordan, Chaucer and the Shape of Creation: The Aesthetic of Inorganic Structure (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1967), pp. 8-9.

CHAPTER II:

ATTESTATIONS OF TRUTH: THE POET AS HISTORIAN

The most easily recognized type of intrusion by the medieval narrator is that which attests the truth of the story being told. These may be direct references to sources and authorities or explanations about points the narrator has presumed to conclude from evidence in those sources. They may range from the briefest reference to an unnamed auctour to an elaborate explanation of the history of the story's sources. Caught without a source, the narrator may simply refuse to commit himself to a detail he suspects but has no proof for, or he may give an involved and dutifully humble confession that he has drawn his own conclusion from the details of his story, coming to suppositions his audience had no doubt already reached. While these asservations of truth are among the most obvious of the narrator's intrusions, their effect on the story and the audience's perception of it depends on a subtle combination of length and positioning. As a standard technique of composition they are used by all medieval writers to some degree. But as the device of a conscious narrative poet, their original uses adapted much different effects.

The Tradition of Attesting the Truth

The concern with the truth or falsity of literature can be traced as far as Plato with his concern for the pollution of young minds by lying poets. The concern that a story be a true story--or a history--then well precedes the Middle Ages. Similarly, the technique of attesting the truth within the story itself can be found even in the classical romances. Ben Edwin Perry notes that

for these romances a story in prose is "formally treated not as an artistic creation (which for us is implied by the very words 'story' and 'fiction') but as factual information about what happened or what someone has actually done."[1] This is the reason for the narrative's being told on the authority of someone or something other than the author and his own experience. Perry quotes the rhetorician Theon as declaring that for these kinds of narratives--and even in fact, for the Aesopic --the narration should be done in the accusative case, not the nominative which would thus indicate authorial responsibility for verifying the story (p. 68). This attribution of a story to an external source, whether a history, another story or myth, or even a picture, was properly done according to Theon "in order to mitigate the appearance of relating impossible things" (p. 109). Examples of this shifting of responsibility to earlier sources can be found in Longus' Daphnis and Chloe, preserved for us only in medieval manuscripts, and Achilles Tatius' Clitophon and Leucippe. Both use references to authorities rather than assuming the responsibility for creating the story. That these romances, probably dating from the second century A.D., were known in the Middle Ages and, therefore, offered their use of auctoritas as examples is an important point.

Reference to auctores was also an established tradition in rhetorical principles, both classical and medieval. The support of a point by a string of quotations was a matter of course, suggested and exemplified by medieval rhetoricians themselves. Restrictions on the ways in which these authorities were to be used remained blurred, however, by the practice of working quotations directly into the writer's own language without making distinctions between speakers. The reference to auctoritas antiquitatis was enough to lend credibility to a point simply because of the unquestioned authority of the ancient books.[2]

If the reference to an old book were impressive, even more imposing would be several such references. Murphy describes, for example, one 700-line passage from Alain de Lille which includes fifteen direct quotations from nine different auctores (p. 305). Some of the quotations are acknowledged; some simply went into Alain's own words in the manner of the padded freshman research paper. The significance of the abundant use of such references to authorities lies in the response they are designed to elicit. In composition this use of other works was intended to establish the credibility of the writer and remove any suspicions about the inherent worth of the points being made, whether in a sermon, letter, or narration.

In the Middle Ages the question of the authenticity of stories had taken on something close to a religious justification. Stories were to have worth and to do so they must not be false. Therefore, they must be true stories or histories. Alberic of Monte Cassino in fact uses the term history to designate such a wide range of subjects as noble descriptions of wars and the works of the gods, ordinary subjects like flowers, and lower themes like the dalliance of lovers.[3] The fact is that in the Middle Ages there was little distinction made in what was real history--in our modern sense of the word--and what was pseudo-history. The lines between narrative and history were anything but distinct. As Lewis points out, the manner of a history might easily be what we assume to be appropriate for a fiction.[4] Histories of this period deal with the personal stories of their heroes and villains and may even fall into the language of fiction, like Froissant's "Or dit le conte" ('now tells the story').[5] The shift into such "historical" devices as reference to a previous authority and asservations of historical accuracy in the literature of the times are, then, hardly to be wondered at. The author was not expected to create a new story

but to preserve the good old ones, a tendency which would throw modern copyright courts into chaos. If a story were an old one, then it no doubt must have been a true one, or it would not have survived. The old story told anew, therefore, becomes from its outset a worthy thing to hear. The writers swore their fidelity to their auctores and presented the stories to their audiences changing those points perhaps which seemed to require alteration for the standards of their times.

Sincerity of Attestation

The fact that modern scholarship has uncovered discrepancies in medieval works and their sources has raised certain questions about the sincerity of such references and the credulity of the medieval audience.[6] Did the medieval audience actually believe it was hearing a true story? Did the narrator-historian's attestations actually convince his public that his story was faithful to a source and not an embroidery of his own? Lewis believes that these questions are academic:

> I am inclined to think that most of those who read 'historical' works about Troy, Alexander, Arthur, or Charlemagne believed their matter to be in the main true. But I feel much more certain that they did not believe it to be false. I feel surest of all that the question of belief or disbelief was seldom uppermost in their minds. That, if it was anyone's business, was not theirs. Their business was to learn the story. If its veracity were questioned they would feel that the burden of disproof lay wholly with the critic. Till that moment arrived (and it did not arrive often) the story had, by long prescription, a status in the common imagination indistinguishable--at any rate, not distinguished--from that of the fact.[7]

The assumption here is, then, that references to a source were so much the

accepted pattern that the audience would not think to question the truth of such citations. Behind this acceptance there is also the likelihood that the audience had heard similar versions of a story and so quite naturally accepted the idea that the source was real even if perhaps the versions of the story differed somewhat. The pattern begins to look like the recent creation of a myth that Philip Stevick describes in the tale of alligators in the sewer system of New York City.[8] Having heard the story from a number of quarters people began to believe that the alligators existed despite the fact that there were actually no alligators. People chose to believe the truth of the story rather than the real truth. We respond in much the same way in believing the truth of authorities in advertisements, allowing ourselves to believe a man in a white medical jacket yet knowing he is an actor and not a doctor. We accept the truth of the representation because that is the game we agree to play in watching television commercials, just as the storyteller's audience willingly accepts the games he sets up.

The reasoning behind the faith in the medieval audience's credulity is no doubt solid. A problem arises, however, when we turn to the poet's sincerity. How do we explain a poet who has a narrator swear fidelity to his source just at that point in which he is deviating from it most? Our scholarship has shown by comparing sources that this is, in fact, often the case. On this discrepancy, too, Lewis encourages us to gloss over irregularities by his concentration on the attitude of the writers of the time:

> Far from feigning originality, as a modern plagiarist would, they are apt to conceal it. They sometimes profess to be deriving something from their auctour at the very moment when they are departing from him. It cannot be a joke. What is funny about it? And who but a scholar could see the point if it were? They are behaving more like a historian who misrepre-

> sents the documents because he feels sure that things must have happened in a certain way. They are anxious to convince others, perhaps to half-convince themselves, that they are not merely 'making things up'. For the aim is not self-expression or 'creation'; it is to hand on the 'historical' matter worthily; not worthily of your own genius or of the poetic art but of the matter itself.[9]

This explanation is persuasive and no doubt true for some instances. But it is too simplistic a resolution to the problem of the poet's sincerity.

Complications multiply when we examine the ways that those references to auctoures are used and when we begin to attempt to trace the sources cited. What is the reasoning for citing an author to support a trivial detail? Many of the narrator-historians take great care to cite the smallest detail and yet may ignore the reference to a source for major points or even completely refute the source as Chaucer's narrator does in the point of Criseyde's caring for the wounded Diomede (5, 1044-50).[10] The tactic would seem to be a technique for establishing the trustworthy character of the narrator. He styles himself as the most careful and methodical of compilers, never daring to offer a detail unless he can also offer the source for support or unless he admits that though missing in his source he has taken the liberty to suppose some details, like Wolfram's narrator's carefully undercut hyperbole admitting that saying a knight on horseback flew would be a lie (10.539, 10-15).[11] If this narrator is so conscientious as to refer to his auctour on such minor points or to admit in humble regret that he has found no source for a detail and so offers it as his own careful conclusion, the audience is obviously intended to trust him. But to what degree are they supposed to appreciate his conscientiousness?

References to sources often come just at intense moments in the narrative.

The narrator will intrude with a minor detail and a comment on his auctour or will pause to swear to be telling a true story and then will return to the narration. The effect here is obviously disruptive. It calls the audience from the immediate involvement in the action to an awareness of the story as story.[12] Those careful admissions that details are the supposition of the current narrator and not part of the source are even more disruptive since they often make the narrator seem foolish to worry over points the audience would accept without question. How can these references be anything other than a joke? A courtly audience hearing the narrator's conclusion about the unhorsed knights would have to smile at his simplicity. These interruptive references and comic references must be judged finally to represent more than just the poet's wish to convince his audience of his fidelity to his sources. They must be viewed as conscious techniques for emphasizing certain points about the story and about its storyteller.

The problem over the sincerity of the narrator's reference to his auctour becomes even more complicated when we cannot identify the auctour named. Scholars have, for example, speculated for years over Wolfram's carefully developed references to his Provençal source Kyot and to Kyot's Arabic source Flegetanis. Not only do we not have a manuscript for Kyot's version of the grail story, we do not even have a mention of his work in other poems. Yet Wolfram insists that Kyot's version is the best one, relegating Chrétien de Troyes' version to second best. Modern critical opinion now believes that Kyot and his predecessor Flegetanis were both in actuality inventions of Wolfram's since no evidence solidly supports the existence of such sources.[13] A similar point can be made about Chaucer's narrator's reference to Lollius in Troilus and Criseyde.

It seems, then, that the poet may go so far in manipulating the convention of the authorities as to invent an ancient source to give reliability to his work. In doing so he also carefully insures that no one will contradict his version of the story by comparing it to the original as might have been possible if his real sources were acknowledged fully. That the poet did this kind of inventive citation because, as Lewis suggests, he felt certain that the story must have happened as he tells it seems difficult to accept. Perhaps the invention is indeed a concession to the tradition created by the need to verify the story's history. But it may also be possible that these narrative poets were enjoying their manipulation of those conventions. When Cervantes develops the elaborate story of the Arabic manuscript of Benegeli, we accept it as sparkling irony on the writer's part. Why, then, deny Wolfram the potential for such irony in creating essentially the same story four hundred years earlier? We should consider that perhaps Cervantes is working from a long tradition of comic attestation rather than simply treating a serious tradition ironically.

If we accept Lewis' comment that no one but a scholar could have understood these false attestations, we are forced to question the sophistication of the medieval audience. While modern audiences will willingly accept the authority in a serious commercial, they immediately react to those parodies of television commercials using exactly the same techniques. In cases like these the ridiculous content serve as cues for the audience.[14] In the same way, many of the medieval narrator-historian's references to authorities may serve as cues to his audience that the poet behind the narrator is anything but serious. When the references become extended and elaborate without any apparent justification for such attention or when they are focused upon trivial details, we must examine them for ironic intention and results.

Eberhard Nellman devotes an entire section in his study Wolfram's Erzähltechnik to the beglaubigung or attestation of truth. While he would agree that in part the technique is used to pacify an audience's limited knowledge, he maintains that one of the primary reasons for it was that ironic effect. His study designates six types of attestation based on the points they accompany. The device is used by Wolfram to verify names of people and places, descriptions, unknowable points, narrative patterns, and even hyperbole and metaphor.[15] Of all the examples he designates, only twenty percent can be explained for no other reason than versification. The rest are used to illuminate portions of the narrative, frequently emphasizing an irrelevant point for what can only be seen as the humor in it. Unless we are to assume that Wolfram's audience had no sense of the incongruous and the comic and was, therefore, generally unsophisticated, we must expect that it noticed and appreciated the humor in the serious verification of details like Gawan's breakfast before a joust.[16]

The possibility that some of the members of a medieval audience might have recognized an invented source or at least doubted the authenticity must also be examined. The assumption that the audience would not question the poet's references is based, at least in part, upon an even shakier assumption--that the audience was completely unfamiliar with those sources. While it is true that the literacy level of the period was much lower than it is today, it is also true that those who were literate tended more frequently to be multilingual than the average literate man today. The wide use of French in the courts of England and Germany, the influence of Latin rhetorical education and the range of such stories as the Tristan legend from Brittany to Belgium,

Germany, and even Norway, all indicate a remarkable degree of cultural exchange and even to some degree cultural homogeneity among the nobility. Similar literary awareness is evidenced by the allusions made from one narrative to another, like Gottfried's von Strassburg's scathing references to Wolfram and other contemporaries and Wolfram's own ironic allusion to Hartmann's typical introduction of himself as a knight so learned he knew how to read and write in the Parzival narrator's comment that he cannot do either.[17] Although these kinds of jibes may have been the poets' own jokes, it would seem much more likely that the medieval narrative poet expected his audience to recognize the allusions just as any modern satirist would.

If, therefore, the audience may be assumed to be one of relative sophistication on literary and cultural points, the suggestion that at least some of the audience would wonder at an unheard of source for a familiar story seems plausible. Wolfram, in fact, begins his elaboration on the history of his auctour Kyot with a reference to those who have questioned his story (9. 563, 1-4). The implication is, of course, that some of his audience was familiar with Chrétien's version and had recognized his departure from the French version. The sudden revelation of the mysterious and unknown Kyot would very likely have caused even more comment on Wolfram's fidelity to sources. It seems likely that the involved explanation might be considered far-fetched enough to signal the poet's own invention to those interested in his talent for telling and creating the story.

Lewis' comment that an audience would never have thought to question the historical accuracy or wonder at a source citation may be reassuring about the traditional use of such references to auctoures unless we consider the possibilities for the sophistication of the audience and the clues in the attestations themselves. Based on what we know of the medieval cultural

exchange and what we have in the often exaggerated asservations of truth themselves, we must conclude that the traditional use of auctoures had by the time of the great romances in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries become a device used consciously by the poets to create any number of effects, including the humorous and ironic. How many of the audience perceived the joke in an unnecessary or extraordinarily elaborate reference, we, of course, can never know. That some of the audience would take every reference in all seriousness can be supported by the history of irony and what we know of audience response even to more modern works like "The Shortest Way With Dissenters" and "A Modest Proposal." But the fact remains that many of these attestations of truth and references to old sources have all the markings of consciously used narrative ploys, markings that some in the audience must surely have noticed.

The most important point to be made, then, about the attestation of truth is not so much the long history of the device as that despite the cultural tradition of verifying the authenticity of the story the skilled poet could and did manipulate the technique to new ends. This conscious manipulation is signaled by the intrusions themselves, by their length, by their location, and by the accompanying matter. While we, like the medieval audience, may be unable to check the veracity of source references, we can observe the effect of these intrusions upon the narrative and in so doing draw general conclusions about the poet's use of the tradition. These conclusions must come on the basis of such examination rather than upon any predetermined concept of the tradition and the period.

Kinds of Attestation

Rather than defining categories of attestation strictly according to the

matter verified, as Nellmann does, it seems a better approach first to distinguish them by their own nature, their complexity, their duration, and their effect on the responses to the narrative.[18] The simplest interruptions call for the simplest response and involvement from the audience and are generally no more than a line, often only a half-line in length. These attestations are most often references to some source, an anonymous auctour or an old book, though they may also take the form of short oaths of truth and even direct reference to vividness of experience in the first-person narrative. The more complex references may range from two lines to whole passages. These passages may not only name the anonymous auctour but often also may describe a history for that auctour and so the story itself. In these complex attestations what had before been only vague reference to sources may become a complicated second narrative justifying the present story and the poet's handling of its "retelling." This type of attestation is a much more dramatic break in the central narrative requiring an equally dramatic shift in audience response. There are, of course, no ways to establish absolutes in length and effect for these two larger categories. The simple attestations vary in general according to the amount of reliance placed on the source or auctour and the amount assumed by the narrator. The complex attestations may vary in the length of the interruption and the detail and emphasis with which the auctour is described, in other words, the extent to which the auctour himself seems to become an everpresent character.

The essential difference in the two categories lies not so much in the material verified by the attestations as in the degree to which they interrupt the narrative, calling attention to it as a story, an artifact, if you will, and to the narrator's trustworthiness in retelling that story. Both are securely based on the tradition of telling a story not merely as invention, but as fact. Both assume the audience's familiarily with such a technique. Yet all the while

both function in ways other than simply authenticating the story being told.

Simple Attestation

Simple attestations are brief in their intrusion into the narrative. They may range from a half line or phrase to two or three lines, but in general they will be no longer. They are simple not just because of their brevity but also because they create the least disruption of the narrative and emphasize much less the story as story than do the complex attestations. However, the subtlety of the effects that these brief intrusions can have on the audience's response to the story and to its narrator are often anything but simple. They range from the creation of a sense of the narrator as a dry, meticuluous historian to a feeling of him as a familiar companion. They may briefly emphasize the story as artifact, or they make the characters within that story seem compellingly real as people. Because of this range the types of simple attestation are best classified according to the ways they distance or involve the audience in the story.

Simple Reference to Sources

The first kind of attestation is a short direct reference to a source. These may be to an anonymous or named auctour, to an old book, or simply to the story as history. They may, even, in fact, be references to the act of reading on the narrator's part. These references are generally no more than a line or half line in length. While some few may be justified by the necessity of versification, this is hardly an adequate explanation for the majority of such intrusions. They function most often to verify details, to

provide transitions into an historical tone, and to create subtle shifts in the involvement with the events of the story. Each intrusion establishes in subtle ways the character of the narrator as a sincere, methodical historian.

References to sources may be used to justify any number of details, from the livery of servants and knights to actions of the story. They may cite the auctour by name as Wolfram does with Kyot in half-line references and Chaucer does in Troilus and Criseyde with Lollius, or they may simply mention an old book. Wolfram, in particular, frequently has his narrator refer simply to the story as an authoritative thing in itself, as he does here in describing the distance Parzival rode his first day out from Arthur's court:

> uns tuot diu âventiure bekant,
> daz er bî dem tage reit,
> ein vogel hetes arbeit,
> soldę erz allez hân ervlogen.
> (5.224, 22-25)
>
> (The tale informs us that a bird would have
> been hard put to it to fly the distance
> he rode that day.[19])

Here we have the narrator ingeniously using the tale's own authority for the detail that Parzival rode a long way and for his metaphor of the bird as well. The reference prevents the narrator from seeming too freely descriptive by creating the impression that the metaphor is also in his source, that is that it belongs to the tale and not to the poet's art.[20] In references in other places the narrator is quick to make a similar point like his "ich ensagez iu niht nâch wâne" (2.59,26: "By your leave this is true, I am not romancing, Hatto, p. 41). He offers his story as the story demands and not as his own sense of artistic detail indicates. That is at least the impression these careful references give. Others that play more with the relationship between

storyteller, audience, and story create somewhat different impressions.

Often one of these short references to a source will be used as transition from one mode of discourse to another.[21] In Troilus and Criseyde, for example, Chaucer's narrator drops his first reference to a source just at the point when the story changes from lyric description to history and narrative:

> And so bifel, whan comen was the tyme
> Of Aperil, whan clothed is the mede
> With newe grene, of lustly Veer the pryme,
> And swote smellen floures white and rede,
> In sondry wises shewed, as I rede,
> The folk of Troie hire observaunces olde,
> Palladiones feste for to holde. (1, 155-61)

Here the brief intrusion "as I rede" functions in a number of ways. First, it prepares for the abrupt shift from the description of the green spring of April to the religious celebration of the ancient Trojans. Then it creates the impression of a carefully studious narrator who has read the histories and so can give accurate account of the Trojan customs. This image of the narrator seems especially important at this point since the lyric description just preceding its introduction gives quite the opposite effect. Without the intrusion of the reference to reading we might assume that the story was to go on romancing in this way, an impression we are not intended to receive. Because the phrase, "as I rede" also satisfies the rhyme for lines 58 and 59, it might be argued that it is included simply to fill a need in the rhyme scheme. This interpretation seems hardly acceptable when we note that there is also a pun on the rhyming words, "rede/rede," that is "red/read." Chaucer does not frequently use this kind of verbal irony in the end rhymes in this poem; therefore, we must conclude that the rhyme is not the explanation for the phrase itself. Thus, the poet has doubly accented the shift from lyric to historical by making the reference to a source both a rhyme and a pun.

These references to source or auctour, however brief, create subtle breaks in the narrative. They force the audience's attention away from the action of the story--or as in the example from Troilus away from the expected tone--and focus it on the story as a story. If only momentarily, they draw the audience out of its participation and involvement in the story and emphasize its participation in the act of storytelling itself. They underscore the narrator's pose as the one who knows the whole story because he has read the old books. They illustrate his control and trustworthiness all in a brief departure from straight narrative.

One interesting interplay of address to the audience by the storyteller and of citation from the historian in Parzival can illustrate the way these interruptions effect the story. When describing the brilliant effect Parzival had upon Arthur's court at his second visit there, the narrator breaks off to ask:

> wie was der junge âne bart
> geschicket, dô er gegürtet wart?
> diz maere giht, wol genuoc. (6.307,7-9)
>
> (And how did this beardless youth strike
> the eye when the girdle had been tied? The
> tale says 'well enought,' Hatto, p. 160)

Here we have a remarkable interplay of effects and expectations. First, in the midst of description the storyteller breaks off with an address to the audience creating the expectation that he will tell us. It is one of the standard techniques of Wolfram's narrator to pause as if turning to the group to ask if everyone wants him to go on with the story. Always in control at these points, he, of course, always does. But in this instance the storyteller reverts to the historian, with an ironic overtone. Rather than simply answering the question he has posed himself, the narrator relies on the source with his quip "The tale says 'well enough.'" The question is answered. The audience has

its added detail. However, the second impression created by this interruption is that the story does not give Parzival half the praise he is due. The expectations established by the introductory question call for an elaborate description of his brilliant appearance. But what the "history" gives us is a distinct understatement. The effect is anti-climactic. Denied what we expected we can readily believe that the narrator too feels the source is lacking at this point. The irony is clear. He might as well have said, "The tale only says 'well enpugh.'"

The main point to be made with this brief intrusion is that in three lines we have been drawn out of the action, forced to consider the story and its sources, and then drawn to evaluate it and its narrator. We trust the narrator at this point because he gives us what his source says. But we trust him even more because he seems to feel--as he has made us feel--that the story is wanting. We begin to create our own impression of the characters and the story despite what the original may have said. Thus, the poet has manipulated the relationship between the narrator and the audience in such a way that the reliance on the narrator becomes more important than the actuality of the story. The audience in a real sense begins to create the story for itself.

Although the majority of the simple references to authority do not create such an involved alteration of the narrative, many do serve as a sort of reinforcement for an easily accepted detail or an already obvious conclusion. While these develop the image of the narrator as scrupulously careful in his retelling, they also suggest a somehwat officious, less than intelligent scribe. This image allows the audience to feel superior to the narrator-historian and in a strange way reinforces his apparent reliability. If he is ready to cite even the points which they have already recognized as truth, he must be a trustworthy narrator.[22]

Negative Verification

An unusual twist in the reference to sources occurs with what Nellmann terms negative attestation.[23] These are the admissions by the narrator that he does not know a point with absolute certainty because there is nothing in his source to support him. They may be simply those humble qualifications like "I guess" added to a statement. Or they may be more elaborate explanations of the supposition and the narrator's justifications for presuming to suppose. In several cases, Wolfram even undermines his description by offering either . . . or details. He also emphasizes the narrator's role and the problem of his trustworthiness by having the narrator affirm that the points are tur, adding the afterthought that they are true unless he or the source has lied.[24]

The effect of these negative attestations is generally to encourage the audience to accept a point without an actual confirmation, much the way the ironic reference to the understatement of the source does. For example, when the narrator in Parzival describes Gahmuret's shield, he explains that he does not know how many pelts of ermine formed the anchor on it (1.18, 5-7). Thus, he gives the strong impression of a great number without having to state that firmly, and he retains his image of not wishing to exaggerate or lie.

Often the supposition may be used in a kind of comic false humility. When Wolfram's narrator describes Gawan's dalliance with lady Antikonie, he presents the scene in comic supposition:

> er greif ir under den mantel dar
> ich waene, er ruorte irz huffelin:
> des wart gemeret sin pin. (8.407, 2-4)
>
> (He thrust his hand beneath her cloak and I fancy stroked her soft thigh--this only sharpened his torment, Hatto, p. 209).

The audience should immediately recognize here that the source does not explain quite what Gawan's actions were at this crucial point. The narrator fills in decorously with his own supposition. But all the while the impression he gives is that he is naive in his conception, thus leaving the audience free to create the scene for itself and to enjoy the irony in its description. D. H. Green has suggested that such use of the supposition in phrases like "I guess" or "ich waene" represents the tone assumed by a bourgeois poet addressing a courtly audience.[25] While this interpretation will not explain the use in Wolfram's narratives since he was himself a knight--a point he makes repeatedly --it does indeed characterize the narrator at this point. To say the least, he seems less than assertive, almost apologetic. He is reluctant to let his story create an indecorous impression.

Chaucer's narrator uses similar negative comments to convince the audience, swearing all the while that he will not tell them what he ultimately makes them believe. In describing Troilus' reaction on the night after Criseyde has visited his "sickbed," the narrator says meekly:

> Nil I naught swere although he lay ful softe,
> That in his thought he was somewhat disesed,
> Ne that he torned on his pilwes ofte,
> And wold of that hym missed han ben sesed.
> But in swich cas man is nought alwey plesed,
> For aught I woot, namore than was he;
> That kan I deme of possibilitee. (3, 442-8)

Obviously, the narrator does not want to commit himself by saying outright that Troilus did not sleep well but instead tossed and turned all night thinking of Criseyde. He does not affirm that at all, yet that is exactly the conclusion we must draw.[26] Despite the four negatives in three lines and the unassuming "for aught I woot," we believe without a doubt that Troilus never closed his

eyes that night. The poet manipulates the narrator's words so that we are led unerringly into just the conclusion the narrator swears he will not draw. In this way, the negative confirmation encourages the audience to take a step into creating the story for itself.

Rather than emphasizing the story as a story, these negative confirmations call attention to the storytelling process and how the audience helps to shape that story. While the narrator claims to have no substantiation for conclusions, the audience has already accepted the point, often even enlarging what he supposes or refuses to suppose. The technique does not pull the audience out of its involvement in the story so much as it encourages a deeper involvement because of its own confirmation of the "truth" of the tale. The narrator at this point seems pleasant and often naive, trustworthy if somehwat ridiculous in his conscientious refusal to elaborate on his story.

Oaths of Truth

Another variation in the simple attestation creates the image of the narrator as a more rounded personality than the simple, stiff historian. These attestations avoid the reference to a source and swear to the truth of the points being made. They are the briefest of all such verifications, being confined usually to half-line phrases like "to tell the truth," "I lie to no one," "the truth is," and even the rather folksy "God knows." With these quick and familiar oaths, the narrator moves into his narrative with almost no interruption of the story. They do not call attention to the historical tale at all. Instead, when they do attract attention because of some incongruous positioning, they emphasize the narrator and his relationship to the story.

The narrator's own sincerity and believability become the question in these intrusions and not just his fidelity to his sources. Essentially, these oaths require something more of the audience. They turn on the question of whether or not the audience will believe the word of the narrator when he does not cite his source directly. Although most of these oaths are brief and so easily glossed over by the audience, occasionally the narrator will remind the listeners of their participation. When the narrator says "to tell the truth" and the audience accepts his commentary without question, it has tacitly agreed to believe that he is, in fact, telling the truth. This kind of agreement seems to be the point of Wolfram's narrator in his rather odd reference to oaths and lies in the midst of a description of the Gral procession:

> man sagete mir, die sage ouch ich
> ûf iuwer ieslîches eit,
> daz vor dem grâle waere bereit
> (sol ich des iemen triegen,
> sô müezet ir mit mir liegen),
> swâ nâch jener bôt die hant,
> daz er al bereite vant . . . (5.238,8-14)

> (Now I have been told and I am telling you on the oath
> of each single one of you--so that if I am deceiving anyone
> you must all be lying with me--that whatever
> one stretched out one's hand for in the presence of the
> Gral, it was waiting, one found it all ready and
> to hand . . ., Hatto, p. 126)

The audience, thus, is responsible for what it accepts as truth from the narrator. Given the opportunity to pause and examine the believability of the narrative, we agree to believe unless we pause to question why such a comment should come at this point or to question the point so attested.

In most instances, these little oaths are simple interjections. The hints that the narrator might lie are rare. We recognize them as easily as we might those same oaths in ordinary conversation. And we accept them just as easily.

However, they should not be glossed over too readily when they come frequently or when they seem incongruous. An increase in such innocuous oaths may indicate an increasing irony in the same way that a negative attestation may. If the oath seems particularly out of place in the context and serves no essential purpose like completion of a rhyme, it must be examined as a conscious interruption on the part of the poet who intends the audience to question the narrator at such a point. In these cases the narrator's personal interpretations will often show through his role as methodical historian.

Verification by Common Experience

Often the narrator's verifications of the believability of the actions in the story become almost totally based on the audience's own verification of experience. Here the source and the auctour have the least importance and what might cautiously be termed realism takes over. Among these kinds of verifications, we find the sententia--or proverbs, basing the truth in folksy wisdom--similes, and even direct references to contemporary places, people, and events.[27] When the narrator uses this kind of reference to the familiar, he also alters his own characterization.[28] Rather than seeming the stodgy historian, unsure of anything outside his dusty sources, he appears as an ordinary man with the same experiences and perceptions of his world that the audience has.

With allusions to common knowledge and experience the narrator can gloss over a section of narrative which might otherwise need more extended citation. For example, at the beginning of Troilus and Criseyde Chaucer's narrator builds on common knowledge in his shift from the introduction of the tragedy to the

matter of fact in his story:

> Yt is wel wist how that the Grekes, stronge
> In armes, with a thousand shippes, wente
> To Troiewardes, and the cite longe
> Assegeden, neigh ten yer er they stente. (1, 57-60)

He quickly draws the audience into the historical setting, but by alluding to common knowledge, avoids having to rehash the details of the war's cause, its course, or eventual outcome. If a member of the audience does not know the details, he will hardly wonder at not having them explained since the narrator makes clear with this gloss that they are not the main point.

The same kind of glossing may occur when the narrator asks the audience if it agrees with a detail in the action. To establish the audience's sympathy for Criseyde and trust in her sincere intention to return to Troy, the narrator manages to describe her grief and its cause in a question that calls for immediate audience response:

> What wonder is, though that hire sore smerte,
> Whan she forgoth hire owen swete herte? (5, 62-3)

At this point the audience is encouraged to respond that it is no wonder at all that Criseyde should be suffering. We are drawn into the scene immediately by being compelled to see her sorrow as a typically human one. The narrator's comments here make her seem real to us, at this point, avoiding emphasis on the story itself which would disrupt our involvement.

Wolfram is especially fond of having the narrator refer to current knowledge when describing pagentry and riches. In the established romance tradition, even those occasions and places known to the audience for their splendor are said to seem pale in comparison to the glories the narrator describes. References to the wealth of the Baruc, or the Moslem lords in general, to the

craftsmanship, and to the magnificent spectacle of Arthur's "modest" camp--all are grounded in what the contemporary audience would recognize as marvelous. In this way, the narrator is able to create elaborate pictures in the minds of the members of his audience and at the same time emphasize that the days of his story exceeded any present glory, thus playing on the traditional view of history and achieving even more validation for his tale.

While Wolfram's narrator refers to the courtly experience, Chaucer's narrator in the Troilus, most often gives general support to the characters through the use of familiar proverbs or sayings. They may be as simple as the comment that Criseyde is matchless among women just as the letter A is the first among letters (1, 190-2). At other times they may serve to justify a character's actions by relating them to what the audience knows of experience. For example, the narrator uses this method to explain why the love-sick Troilus refuses to answer Pandarus' questioning:

> And Troilus yet hym nothyng answerde,
> For--why to tellen nas nat his entente
> To nevere no man, for whom that he so ferde,
> For it is seyd, "man maketh ofte a yerde
> With which the maker is hymself ybeten
> In sondry manere," as thise wyse treten
> (1, 738-42)

There can be no doubt why he is reluctant to tell Pandarus. Anyone in the audience would recognize the wisdom of the old expression and sympathize with Troilus' fear that his friend would torment him with the truth if he had told it. In cases like this one, the audience is drawn into an immediate participation with the story. Rather than the objective stance a reference to the auctour would create at this point, this homey justification of the character creates a sense of involvement with the character. This kind of verification

is related to the didactic gloss even though it does not draw the audience away from the story to explain but instead verifies it on a personal level.

The involvement of the audience becomes an essential part of this kind of verification. The story itself is not authenticated so much as the realism of the action in that story. The audience must, in a sense, agree with the narrator's familiar stance here and become equally close to the actions of the characters. The characters and the narrator in turn assume the qualities of real people so that the story seems believable on a strictly human level. It is, therefore, attested on ordinary levels by common experience as well as that other, more pedantic historical level.

First-Person Narrative Attestations

A striking variation in the attestations of truth occurs in the first-person narrative like the Commedia where there is obviously no possibility for citing an old author.[29] These verifications are very similar to the justifications by reference to common experience. Naturally, the first-person narrative concerns the actions and reactions of its narrator. If these are believable as realistic to the common experience or reaction, then the narrative itself will take on that authenticity.

One of the most obvious methods of establishing the credibility of the story is the comparison to ordinary events in much the same way that the third-person narrator establishes the believability of his characters.[30] In the Commedia, for example, Dante's narrator continually uses comparison to the ordinary world to explain his trip through the extraordinary one. In the Paradiso the difficulty in description is especially heightened by the fact that

the visual disappears for the most part. Light is the dominant image. The problem is how to make the supernatural lights seem believable. The solution is to describe them in terms and comparisons common to ordinary experience.

For example, the Pilgrim gives this description of the way the lights of the souls circled:

> E come cerchi in tempra d'orïoli
> si giran sì, che 'l primo a chi pon mente
> quïeto pare, e l'ultimo che voli;
> così quelle carole, differente--
> mente danzando, della sua ricchezza
> mi facìeno stimar, veloci e lente.[31]
> (Paradiso, 24, 13-18)

> (And as wheels in the structure of the clock revolve
> so that, to one watching them, the first seems at rest
> and the last to fly, so those choirs, dancing severally
> fast and slow, made me gauge their wealth, p. 345)

From an almost abstract point the narrator moves to a clear visual image. The circling lights create little or no picture, but lights circling like the cogs in a clock are distinct, immediate, and permanent in the impression created.

The same kind of effect is achieved in this description of the splendors of the church triumphant:

> Come a raggio di sol che puro mei
> per fratta nube già prato di fiori
> vider, converti d'ombra, li occhi miei;
> vid' io così più turbe di splendori,
> fulgorate di su da raggi ardenti,
> sanza veder principio di fulgori.
> (Paradiso, 23, 79-84)

> (As in the sun's rays streaming clear through a broken
> cloud my eyes, sheltered by shade, once saw a field
> of flowers, so I saw many hosts of splendours flashed
> upon from above by burning rays, without seeing the
> source of the brightness, p. 335)

Although the audience could very easily have been lost in a blur of abstractions, here again, the narrator makes the impression a vivid one by the

comparison to the glowing appearance of a field of flowers in a sunbeam.[32] The sight is a common enough one, even more common than the image of the workings of a clock. It draws from the everyday to create the vision of the sublime in just the way an average man would draw from his ordinary personal experience to describe some fantastic event. The immediacy and familiarity gives credence to the description by creating a sharp recognizable image.

Another kind of variation used by the first-person narrator similarly relies on the vividness of experience and in this case on the narrator's reaction to it. These kinds of attestations style the narrator as reluctant to convey a detail or as being as greatly moved by the recollection as in the original experience.

Chaucer's narrator in The Canterbury Tales often uses his reluctance to relate one of the cruder tales as emphasis for his fidelity to experience. In the "Miller's Prologue" the narrator of the tales pauses with this classic warning as an introduction to this "cherles tale":

> M'athynketh that I shal reherce it heere.
> And therfore every gentil wight I preye,
> For Goddes love, demeth nat that I seye
> Of yvel entente, but for I moot reherce
> Hir tales alle, be they bettre or werse,
> Or elles falsen som of my mateere.
> And thefore, whoso list it nat yheere,
> Turne over the leef and chese another tale;
> For he shal fynde ynowe, grete and smale,
> Of storial thyng that toucheth gentillesse,
> And eek moralitee and hoolynesse,
> Blameth nat me if that ye chese amys.
> ("Millers Prol," 3170-81)

The narrator here is caught in a dilemma. If he is true to the experience, he risks insulting some of the "gentil" folk in the audience--or in this case reading public. But he is compelled to be true to his matter, that encounter with the diverse pilgrims, and so feels obliged to warn them that there were

many crude people telling stories and so there will be some tales that may offend polite ears. The narrator seems sincere. Chaucer is no doubt being ironic, being aware that these "cherles tales" would entertain as much as the more edifying ones. Despite the author's irony, the narrator must be believed. He is being true to life by admitting all ranks within his collection of tales just as there would have been all ranks on the pilgrimage.

Dante's narrator creates the same impression of sincerity by describing his emotions at having to relate particularly difficult points in his own pilgrimage. Thus, he describes the sight of the dismembered makers of discord using his own struggles in relating it:

> Ma io rimasi a riguarder lo stuolo,
> e vidi cosa ch' io avrei paura,
> sanza più prova, di contarla solo;
> se non che coscïenza m'assicura,
> la buona compagnia che 'l'uom francheggia
> sotto l'asbergo del sentirsi pura.
> Io vidi certo, ed ancor par ch'io 'l veggia,
> un busto sanza capo andar sì come
> andavan li altri della trista greggia . . .
> (Inferno, 28, 112-20)

> (But I stayed to watch the troop and saw a thing
> I should fear simply to tell without more proof,
> but that conscience reassures me, the good companion
> which emboldens a man under the breastplate
> of his felt integrity. Verily, I saw and I seem
> to see it still, a trunk without a head going as
> were the others of the miserable herd . . ., p. 353)

Here the horror of the experience makes the narrator doubt the telling of it, questioning, it would seem, whether it will be believed and understood, perhaps even questioning his own ability to describe it. The act of describing the figure causes him, as he says, to see it again in all its misery.[33]

These comments assure the audience that the experience must certainly have happened as related. The reluctance to tell a horrible truth, the doubt about being believed, and the goadings of conscience are familiar reactions.

Similarly, the sensation of re-experiencing the incident in the telling of it is a common enough one. If the narrator is so affected by simply telling the experience, we must believe that it was an actual one. Hollander underscores the effectiveness of such attestations when he explains that Dante was pointed out by people on the street not as the man who had written the Divine Comedy but as the man who had been to Hell.[34] The technique is closely related to the third-person narrator's use of common experience to justify the actions of the characters. In the first-person narrative it works to emphasize the sincerity of that narrator who is the main character and to make his experience immediate and believable.

Whether the first-person narrator appears reluctant to relate his experience, claims to feel the same emotion as in the original incident, or simply describes the events in sharp comparison to ordinary experience, the verification of his truthfulness is achieved. The audience responding to a detail in a first-person narrative with that general acknowledgement of having felt the same or seen the same kinds of images is also acknowledging its faith in the story's truth. These kinds of attestations involve the audience more than any other type. They call for its recognition of the narrator as an average man with equally average and understandable ways of telling his story. The audience responds to the narrator as it would to an equal. He is not the scholarly or overly-conscientious historian. He is simply a man with ordinary responses to what are often extraordinary experiences. Both the first-person narrator and his attestations of truth are compelling. They draw the audience into the events, de-emphasizing the story as artifact.

Conclusions on Simple Attestation

The "simple" attestations of truth are upon examination frequently discovered to be anything but simple in their effects. Although they are brief, often that very brevity becomes an integral part of their subtlety. They cause sometimes minor, sometimes major, shifts in the narrator's pose and, consequently, in his audience's repsonse. Some may support the characterization of the narrator as a dull historian, meticulous in his scholarship and translation of countless ancient sources. Others may create the image of a man with obviously human qualities immediately recognizable to the audience.

These simple attestations may be inconspicuous substantiations of details requiring little response from the audience. At times, however, they may seem completely unnecessary, perhaps even ironic, in their overt justification of already obvious points. They may draw the audience into sympathetic response to the story and its narrator or pull it out of that immediate involvement to force an observation on the story as artifact and the process of its communication.

Just as the brief attestations appear in multiple forms, their effects upon the perception of the story and its narrator are equally varied. No matter how brief they create subtle alterations and so should not be overlooked because of brevity. Their location within the narratives, the frequency of the appearance of the various types, and the combinations of these types indicate the ways in which the audience is intended to respond and, therefore, the ways we are to interpret the meaning of incidents within the story and the story as a whole.

Complex Attestations

Although the complex attestation is much more extended in length and in the detail of the reference, its very length makes its effect more obvious than that of the simple attestation. The range and detail of these extended references vary with each poet and work and should, of course, be studied within the context of the patterns of attestations in each work. There are, however, certain patterns which seem to be standards for the third-person and first-person narratives that must be described here.

The most important point about these complex attestations is that they verify the story by establishing its source in careful detail. These do not rely on references to common experience, the narrator's oath of truthfulness, or even a brief reference to an unnamed source. Here emphasis lies wholly on an authority external to the immediate experience of the storytelling. The anonymous old author is now introduced and carefully cited. His work, his language, and at times even his own earlier sources are laid out for the audience. The current narrator styles himself simply as a go-between, conveying his master's words in modern translation.

Some of the complex attestations may be used to support individual details of the narrative much as the simple references to an auctour do. Yet even in this function they create a sense of a much larger story with an undeniable authority. Chaucer's narrator, for example, uses his first reference to named sourced to support his abbreviation of the details of the Trojan war. While he explains the reasons for omitting these details, the narrator carefully gives us the citation for sources he would have used if he had intended to give that history. If we want we may read them for ourselves:

> But how this town com to destruccion
> Ne falleth naught to purpos me to telle;
> For it were here a long digression
> Fro my matere, and yow to long to dwelle.
> But the Troian gestes, as they felle,
> In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,
> Whoso that kan may rede hem as they write. (1, 141-7)

With this kind of reference we can hardly doubt the honesty of the narrator's scholarship. His story is different in purpose; nevertheless, he still knows the important sources on the war. It is not our point here to discuss whether or not Chaucer knew the stories of Dares Phrygius or Dictys Crentensis. Rather it is simply the way that these authorities are used to help avoid delaying with unnecessary details. The narrator impresses us with his knowledge and scrupulous attention to the facts, indeed to all the facts, of the story of Troy no matter whether Chaucer himself knew the sources or not.

Such shorter references as this generally combine with other forms of attestations to create the picture of a careful historian. In fact, this passage comes as the second of four attestations appearing in forty-seven lines. This kind of multiple emphasis becomes a sort of chronic assertion that the story is true. If we do not believe the narrator, we may check his sources.

Somewhat later in the story Chaucer's narrator again offers a citation for his author, this time introducing us to the Latin work by Lollius. In the midst of the description of how the lovesick Troilus mopes around and wonders what to do about his love and so finally composes a song about it, we are suddenly given this reference:

> And of his song naught only the sentence,
> As writ myn auctour called Lollius,
> But pleinly, save oure tonges difference,
> I dar wel seyn, in al that Troilus
> Seyde in his song, loo! every word right thus

> As I shal seyn; and whoso list it here,
> Loo, next this vers he may it fynden here. (1, 393-9)

This reference follows the standard pattern for the complex attestation. It contains not only the mention of the authority's name, but also the careful explanation that he wrote in another language, presumably Latin. The comment works in a number of ways. First, there is a kind of authenticity earned for the song of Troilus because of its having been written in an ancient tongue. The antiquity of the work is supported as well as its seriousness. Therefore, what might look suspiciously like a love lyric written under the influence of the courtly love tradition is given authentication. The second function of the reference to the language of the original is to excuse any minor changes in the passage as the result of the necessities of translation. Thus, the narrator is especially careful to make it clear to us that he is not simply paraphrasing the song, not giving us the "sentence" alone. He is translating for us with as careful an allegience to his source as possible. We need have no suspicions about the song because we have been given a source to verify it, and we even have the song's name presented in its Latin original to heighten the effect.

If we did not know that the Canticus Troili is, in fact, a generally close translation of Petrarch's sonnet "S'amor non e," we might believe this conscientious citation. Knowing this, however, it becomes all the more obvious that this reference is a ploy aimed at verifying a spurious part of the story in any way possible.[35] Whether Lollius was an honest misconception on Chaucer's part or not, this attestation cannot be seen as anything but a false pretence to an accurate history. For much like a plagairized student essay with carefully cited references from sources never used, such a reference might well satisfy a curious audience.

There is an interesting irony at work in this passage that may, however, alert us to the invented source even without the knowledge of the actual source. The intrusion itself gives us the clue that the whole reference is a game. When the narrator interrupts the description of Troilus' creation of the song, he has just been telling us that the major problem Troilus faced at this time was how much to tell anyone about his love for Criseyde. The unintroduced love song would be the logical continuation of the description if it were not for the fact that Troilus has resolved to tell no one about his love, and, therefore, no one could have known what his love song said exactly. Thus, when the narrator breaks in to tell us that he is going to repeat not just the basic content of the song but its exact words--with the translation being the only variation--he is obviously giving us something that it is impossible for him to give. Yet the narrator himself calls our attention to this paradox with the verification from the earlier source. In this way, he puts the burden of proof on the author Lollius. If we are struck by the impossibility of anyone's knowing exactly the words Troilus used, however, we will also wonder how Lollius could have known them. Thus, the introduction of the attestation itself calls our attention to that inconsistency in proving something that can hardly be proven by any source and, therefore, gives us a signal that the whole verification is part of a game.

Interestingly, this particular passage may also be read as a significant break from the source. If we read the reference as saying that the present storyteller will give not only the "sentence" or the general meaning, as told by Lollius, but will also give the word for word translation, which may be read as not having been in Lollius but in Troilus' song, then we have an important comment on the accuracy of the source and of the present story. Read in this

way Lollius' version sounds much less accurate than the present narrator's version. Yet this reading emphasizes even further that paradox in verifying an unverifiable song. If the narrator found only the "sentence" in his source, where, then, did he discover Troilus' song so that he could translate it for us exactly? The reference in this case further exposes the game that the author is playing using these references to the sources for the story. In either reading, therefore, there are clues that the whole attestation is merely the pretence of historical accuracy and is not historical accuracy at all, that the song of Troilus is, in fact, the author's adoption of a courtly love lyric compatible with the development of his character at this point in the story. In other words, the attestation contains clues that the story is doing exactly what the narrator claims it is not doing.

At the opening of Book Two Chaucer's narrator gives us the most obvious example of the way that complex attestations function in the story. Here after calling on the muse of history, Clio, he explains why he needs "noon other art to use":

> Forwhi to every lovere I me excuse,
> That of no sentement I this endite,
> But out of Latyn in my tonge it write.
>
> Wherefore I nyl have neither thank ne blame
> Of al this werk, but prey yow mekely,
> Disblameth me, if any word be lame,
> For as myn auctour seyde, so sey I. (2, 12-18)

This explanation gives us a complete picture of the careful translator, following his source faithfully.[36] He does not claim any credit for his own art; in fact, he swears that there is to be no question of <u>his</u> art. That prevents him from being at fault if there is anything wrong with the story. We know that the story is a Latin one and that this narrator is simply translating

it for us. None of his own feelings are presented here. Any faults are, therefore, the faults of the original auctour, presumably Lollius since his is the Latin name we hear mentioned most frequently.[37]

The effect of this attestation is that complex verification of the truth of the story and along with that the transference of responsibility for the story. The narrator in this way makes us believe what he has to say. But in case there may be anything objectionable in that story he also manages to cover himself by explaining that none of the tale is his invention. The narrator here is merely the historian, little better than a scribe. His humility is equalled only by his desire to avoid criticism. The verification of the story becomes in these kinds of attestations much more than simple reference to a source. It becomes justification for the way that the whole story is told.

In Parzival the complex attestations become so elaborate that at some points they take on the quality of a second narrative.[38] The first mention of Kyot that begins to prepare us for his authority and for this narrator's retelling of the story comes as a sudden verification for a character's name. The narrator tells us that Kyot laschantiure has named him so and that what Kyot told in Provençal he himself will not be slow to tell in German (8. 416, 20-30). Thus we have justification for a simple detail stretched into the justification for the way the whole story proceeds. This introduction of Kyot may prepare us to hear him cited further, but it in no way prepares us for the manner in which he will be presented in the next book.

In Book Nine Parzival encounters Trevrizent who promises to tell him about the grail. We have by this point seen the marvels that accompany the

grail and also have seen Parzival condemned because he has not asked the question to relieve Anfortas. We have seen Parzival leave Arthur's court in search for the grail and a second chance. When he finally meets Trevrizent, we are, therefore, eager to hear the explanation. Yet before we can hear it, we are suddenly pulled out of the story by the narrator's explanation about why he has not told us the details of the grail before now and where he learned the story. The intrusion continues for eighty-four lines, one of the longest digressions in the work.

The first part of this elaborate attestation is the justification for withholding the details about the grail. This explanation is, however, even more complicated than a simple statement that it is done so in the original. Here we find the manner of the narration dictated by the request of an auctour come to life:

> swer mich dâ von ê vrâcte
> und drumme mit mir bâcte,
> ob ichs im niht sagete,
> unprîs der dran bejagete.
> mich bat ez heln Kiôt,
> wande im diu âventiure gebôt
> daz es immer man gedaehte,
> êz diu âventiure braehte
> mit worten an der maere gruoz,
> daz man dâ von doch sprechen muoz. (9.453, 1-10)

(Those who questioned me earlier and wrangled with me for not telling them earned nothing but shame. Kyot asked me to conceal it because his source forbade him to mention it till the story itself reached that point expressly where it has to be spoken of, Hatto, pp. 231-2)

This revelation is an interesting one. First we have the sense that there has been an exchange between the audience and the narrator on a previous occasion when the grail was mentioned and not fully explained. This detail is an important one in itself. But then we move from the sense of an audience that

is immediately involved in the process of storytelling to an even more startling revelation: that the reason for the delay was that Kyot had specifically asked our narrator to withhold the details because his own source so dictated. This attestation is a dramatically complicated one. Not only do we have an older written source that dictates the arrangement of the story's details, we also have an intermediary authority who is still alive and, more importantly, in communication with our narrator. The responsibility for the arrangement of the story is thus at two removes from Wolfram's narrator.

After this information we might expect to go back to the details that we have waited so long to hear and that seem now about to be revealed. But the narrator has even more information for us about the origins of the grail story, information that seems specifically designed to increase our interest in the details about the grail that we left Trevrizent preparing to tell Parzival.

First we must hear how Kyot came to know the story himself. In this portion of the explanation we learn how important the true faith is to the accurate understanding and presentation of the story:

> Kiôt der meister wol bekant
> ze Dôlêt verworfen ligen vant
> in heidenscher schrifte
> dirre âventiur gestifte.
> der karakter â bê cê
> muoste er hân gelernet ê
> âne den list von nigrômanzî.
> ez half daz im der touf was bî:
> anders waere diz maere noch unvernomen
> dehien heidensch list möhte uns gevromen
> ze künden um des grales art,
> wie man sîner tougen innen wart. (9,453, 11-22)

(The famous master Kyot found the prime version of this tale in heathenish script lying all neglected in a corner of Toledo.

> He had had to learn the characters' A B C beforehand without the art of necromancy. It helped him that he was baptized Christian--otherwise this tale would still be unknown. No infidel art would avail us to reveal the nature of the Gral and how one came to know its secrets, Hatto, p. 232)

The point about Kyot's reading is important for the authentication of the story since we have been told that our narrator does not read or write. Without an earlier source discovered by someone who could communicate it to him, this narrator would have to admit to invention. Kyot serves just this purpose. His knowledge and the blessing of his Christianity helped him to recognize the worth of the story in the heathen script, presumably Arabic. Thus, we have a necessary go-between for the narrator and the original of the story.

But having given us this explanation, the narrator still does not return us to the story. Instead we continue with the description of how the story itself came to be discovered. From the corner of Toledo it is traced to the heathen who wrote of it, the scholar and astronomer Flegentanis. We hear his family described and the explanation for his story of the grail being incomplete, again the clue is Christianity, or this time the absence of it (9. 453, 23-454, 16). Then we discover this interesting bit of information about the genesis of his version of the story:

> Flegetanîs der heiden sach,
> da von er blûclîche sprach,
> in dem gestirne mit sînen ougen
> verholnbaeriu tougen.
> er jach, ez hieze ein dinc der grâl:
> des namen las er sunder twâl
> in dem gestirne, wie der hiez.
> ein schar in ûf der erden liez:
> diu vuor ûf über die sterne hôch.
> ob die ir unschult wider zôch?

sît muoz sîn phlegen getouftiu vruht
mit alsô kiuschlîcher zuht:
diu mennescheit ist immer wert,
der zuo dem grâle wirt gegert.'
sus schreip da von Flegetanîs. (9. 454, 17-455, 2)

(With his own eyes the heathen Flegetanis saw--and he spoke of it reverentially--hidden secrets in the constellations. He declared there was a thing called the Gral, whose name he read in the stars without more ado. 'A troop left it on earth and then rose high above the stars. Whether or not their innocence drew them back again, a Christian progeny bred to pure life had the duty of keeping it. Those humans who are summoned to the Gral are ever worthy.' Thus did Flegetanis write on this theme, Hatto, p. 232)

Now we have an even greater authority for the story of the grail. If an old story from a heathen pen could be doubted, this one certainly cannot. There is an indisuptable authority in the signs in the stars. Moreover, the fact that such a story was read by an unbeliever who had no way of understanding it or its import makes the whole thing somehow even more convincing. Such a writer would have no reason for inventing a story about something which he did not understand.[39]

Thus, the attestation has removed us drastically from the first simple explanation of why the details about the grail have been kept secret from us so long. In just a few lines we have left the depicted exchange between the narrator and his wrangling audience far behind. There is now little place for sympathy for those who have wanted to hear the details about the grail too soon. The story has begun to seem much more serious than it had before. What had sounded like a marvel before now sounds much more like a miracle. The effect of the constant emphasis on the Christianity of those capable of understanding the story of the grail fills an essential need here. We are about to hear one of the most important lessons that Parzival has to learn in his development into one worthy of serving the grail. With this insistence already built

into the explanation of the history of the story, such a lesson is carefully prepared for. We do not find it at all incongrous no matter how different it is from his earlier lessons. The story has been written in the stars themselves. There can be little question that this grail is indeed a wonderful thing.

The attestation does not end here, however. Indeed, no matter how convincing the vision of Flegetanis may be, it is, nonetheless, the limited vision of a heathen. So the narrator is careful to finish this shorter quest story by telling us the final step in uncovering the history of the grail. Again Kyot, not our narrator, is the central figure:

> Kiôt der meister wîs
> diz maere begunde suochen
> in latînêschen buochen,
> wâ gewesen waere
> ein volc dâ zuo gebaere
> daz ez des grâles phlaege
> und der kiusche sich bewaege.
> er las der lande krônikâ
> ze Britâne und anderswâ,
> ze Vrancrîche und in Îrlant.
> zAnschouwe er diu maere vant:
> er las von Mazadân,
> mit wârheite sunder wân
> um allez sîn geslehte
> stuont dâ geschriben rehte
> und anderhalp wie Titurel
> und des sun Frimutel
> den grâl braehte ûf Anfortas,
> des swester Herzeloide was,
> bi der Gahmuret ein kint
> gewan. des disiu maere sint,
> der rîtet nû ûf die niuwen slâ,
> die gein im kom der ritter grâ. (9. 455, 3-24)

(The wise Master Kyot embarked on a search for this tale in Latin books in order to discover where there may have been a people suited to keep the Gral and follow a disciplined life. He read the chronicles of various lands in Britain and elsewhere, in France and Ireland; but it was in Anjou that he found the tale.

> He read the truth about Mazadan beyond a peradventure--the account of the latter's whole lineage was faithfully recorded there--and on the distaff side how Titurel and his son Frimutel bequeathed the Gral to Anfortas, whose sister was Herzeloyde on whom Gahmuret begot a son to whom this tale belongs, and who is now riding along the fresh track left by the grey knight that met with him, Hatto, p. 233)

This final stage in the history brings us very neatly back to the hero and the opening of the scene in which he will discover the secrets of the grail. With this last explanation of the origins of the grail story, we have a completely developed history of both the story and its main character. Now we understand why Parzival had been able to reach the grail so easily the first time. His heritage has made him destined for service to it.

Thus, explaining the history of the story does much more than simply verify the authority on which it is told; it also establishes the basic lines for the story of Parzival's quest. By the end of this elaborate attestation, we see that it is in some ways harldy a digression at all because of the way that it supports the details of the story. We have here a remarkably expanded context for the storytelling. With the careful description of the origins of the knowledge about the grail and the details of Kyot's search for the story itself, the narrator gives us a sense that this thing actually does exist. Kyot seems to be a contemporary of our narrator; therefore, the grail itself seems more immediate. The whole story begins to sound as if it is part of our world with recognizable places like Anjou and understandable authorities like the scholar and the heathen seer. By the end of this complex attestation, then, Wolfram's narrator has done much more than justify the location of the details of the grail. He has created a whole history for his story, his own <u>auctour</u>, his <u>auctour</u>'s authority, and even for his story's

hero.[40] This is dramatically different from the simple reference to an old story used to support a minor detail.

These complex attestations must, of necessity, appear in different ways in a first-person narrative. Naturally if the story proports to be the experience of the speaker, reference to another, older story would be impossible. Such narratives generally base the authentication on a technique similar to Wolfram's ultimate reference to the stars, the dream. After the extended journey through the afterworld, for example, we hear St. Bernard tell the pilgrim Dante that the time remaining for his sleeping is rapidly drawing to a close (Paradiso, 32, 139-40). Attributing the events narrated to the experience of a dream thus frees the narrator from charges of having invented fabulous lies. The dream vision is a standard for the Middle Ages as the predominant form for the first-person narrative. If there are bizarre or unbelievable occurances in the story, the reference to its being a dream explains these. Everyone understands and accepts the surreality of dreams. At the same time there is a measure of unquestionable authority here. Who can question the vision of Paradise when the Pilgrim presents it with this qualification on it emphasizing the dream quality of the experience:

> Qual è colui che somnïando vede,
> che dopo il sogno la passione impressa
> rimane, e l'altro alla mente non riede,
> cotal son io, chè quasi tutta cessa
> mis visïone, ed ancor mi distilla
> nel core il dolce che nacque da essa. (Paradiso, 33, 58-63)

> (Like him that sees in a dream and after the dream the passion wrought by it remains and the rest returns not to his mind, such am I; for my vision almost wholly fades, and still there drops within my heart the sweetness that was born of it, p. 481)

With such comments we have justification for the vagueness of the ultimate

vision as well as the verification for the entire narrative.[41]

Besides the fact that no one can refute the statement that the whole story has been a dream, we have in these kinds of attestations the accompanying verification of the dream state itself. Traditionally a dream is accepted as a special kind of truth, either in terms of its prophesy or its symbolism. Therefore, we have not only the experience verified but also what that experience depicted. When the first-person narrator tells us that what he has described was a dream, we have, then, another form of the complex attestation. This one builds on a tradition as acceptable as the ancient sources of the third-person narrator. The authority is as double edged as any complicated tracing of old books into other languages, for it establishes the narrative as a true experience and also provides a special kind of credibility for the events within that narrative.

In these complex attestations then we have a sort of second history, the history of the story itself. Whether the narrator traces the origins of the story to an old source in another language or to a personal dream vision, the story itself becomes momentarily the center of our attention. We cannot overlook these attestations as we might the simple ones. These create unavoidable breaks in the narrative. The audience is forced to drop its involvement with the characters and the action while it hears the history of the story. Here, perhaps more than with any other intrusion except the process one, we are faced with the story as artifact. The characters recede, and all we have is the narrator talking to us about the story, carefully manuevering us into acceptance of it as a true account.

Conclusions

The medieval narrative poet's use of attestations of truth is obviously part of a long tradition. Yet that tradition must not obscure the fact that the technique provides a sophisticated method of shaping the story. The character of the narrator is defined here in a number of ways, depending upon the type of attestation used. Because the characterization of the narrator may directly alter the response to the story, this definition is especially important. Similarly, the type of attestation and the point at which it is used may create dramatically different perceptions of the story. By varying the kinds of attestations and manipulating the points at which they are used, the poet may draw us into an immediate and sympathetic response to the story or may jerk us out of our involvement in the action to force our attention to the story as a whole. An attentive audience will not be taken in by the fact that the technique is merely tradition but will become aware of the ways that the attestations alter the story.

What begins, then, as compliance with a literary tradition centuries old becomes for the conscious poet a useful technique for manipulating the narrative, the narrator, and the audience. This system thus lays the foundation for other kinds of intrusions which deal with the story as an artifact and as a vehicle independent of the actions of its characters.

Notes for Chapter Two

[1]The Ancient Romances, p. 68.

[2]See James J. Murphy, Rhetoric in the Middle Ages (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 89.

[3]Alberic of Monte Cassino, "The Flowers of Rhetoric," in Readings in Medieval Rhetoric, trans. Joseph M. Miller (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana Univ. Press, 1973), p. 136.

[4]See The Discarded Image, pp. 179-82.

[5]Quoted in The Discarded Image, p. 182.

[6]See for example the discussions of the discrepancies between the story and the sources for both Troilus and Parzival: Ida L. Gordon, The Double Sorrow of Troilus (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), p. 77; Carl Lofmark, "Wolfram's Source References in 'Parzival,'" Modern Language Review, 67 (1971), 825-6; Henry Kratz, Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, (Bern: Francke, 1973), pp. 472-83; James F. Poag, Wolfram von Eschenbach (New York: Twayne, 1972), pp. 56-7.

[7]The Discarded Image, p. 181.

[8]Philip Stevick, "Lies, Fictions, and Mock Facts," Western Humanities Rev., 30 (Winter 1976), 9.

[9]The Discarded Image, pp. 210-11.

[10]All references to Chaucer are taken from: The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F.N. Robinson (New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1961), and will be cited in the text.

[11]All references are to the three volume edition: Parzival, ed. Albert Leitzmann (Tubingen: Niemeyer, 1961), and will be cited by book, section, and line in the text.

[12]Mehl suggests that Chaucer's references to sources call our attention to the "real world" of the storytelling situation and the context for that situation in our own worlds, thus obviously taking us out of participation in the action ("The Audience of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," pp. 179-80).

[13]See Kratz, Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, pp. 144-71, and Poag, Wolfram von Eschenbach, p. 125.

[14]Lofmark points out that the constant references to sources for even the most trivial details undermine our credulity, therefore functioning ironically in direct opposition to the stated intention ("Wolfram's Source References for Parzival," p. 829). Kratz also makes similar comments on the persistent verification of the far-fetched (Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, p. 117).

[15]Nellmann, Wolframs Erzähltecknik, pp. 61-6.

[16]Lofmark also points out other comic attestations like the details on breaking the grail sword, that can hardly be taken seriously ("Wolfram's Source References for 'Parzival,'" p. 827).

[17]See Poag, Wolfram von Eschenbach, pp. 28-9, on the feud between Gottfried and Wolfram, and also see the thorough article by Frederic Norman, "The Enmity of Wolfram and Gottfried," German Life and Letters, 15 (1961), 56-67. On this interpretation of the literacy debate see H. B. Willson, "Literacy and Wolfram van Eschenback," Nottingham Medieval Studies, 14 (1970), 38.

[18]Lofmark also classifies types of attestation according to the matter verified, but he also makes some distinction according to the appearance in the text ("Wolfram's Source References in 'Parzival'" pp. 323-4).

[19]Wolfram von Eschenbach, Parzival, trans. A.T. Hatto (New York: Penguin Books, 1980), p. 120. All further translations unless noted otherwise will be from Hatto's translation and will be cited in the text.

[20]Kratz discusses this kind of repeated reference to the story as the authority and connects it to the Spielmannsepos (Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, pp. 115-16).

[21]See Michael H. Frost's discussion of Chaucer's transitions from the elevated style of the historian to the folksy, almost colloquial style, in "Narrative Devices in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," Thoth, 14, ii-iii (1974), 35.

[22]Unless the abundance of citations for trivial details makes us question the reason for all these references, as Lofmark suggests (see p. 43, n. 14), we may assume that the narrator is utterly faithful to his histories. If we come to question the references and even to doubt their validity, they may become a kind of mutual game with the narrator pretending seriousness and the audience pretending belief. See Lofmark's suggestions that this is in fact what happens in Parzival ("Wolfram's Source References in 'Parzival,'" p. 833).

[23]Wolframs Erzähltchnik, pp. 71-4. See also similar discussions by Kratz, Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, pp. 90-2, and Lofmark, "Wolfram's References in 'Parzival,'" pp. 824-5.

[24]See Kratz' comments on this technique (Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, p. 110).

[25]Irony in Medieval Romance, p. 267. Kratz makes a similar point about the irony of this technique and in particular discusses just this passage from the poem (Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, p. 112).

[26]Ida Gordon also discusses sexual innuendo in this passage carefully hidden by the modest refusal to swear (The Double Sorrow, p. 87).

[27]Along this line Mehl says: "Chaucer, as is evident from every one of his major works, was deeply concerned with the function of literature within our experience of reality and our desire for wisdom and reliable authority" ("The Audience of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde." p. 173). See also his further discussion of Chaucer's references to our world, pp. 179-80.

[28]See Frost, "Narrative Devices in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," p. 35.

[29]To say, for example, that there are no source citations for the Commedia is not, of course, to suggest that there are no sources for the poem. Hundreds of studies show that. It is merely to point out the obvious, that there can be no revelation of those sources within the text of the narrative for the source claims to be the first-hand experience itself and not some old book retranslated.

[30]See Allan Gilbert's discussion of Dante's use of similes for this purpose: Dante and His Comedy (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1963), pp. 96-100.

[31]The Divine Comedy, ed. and trans. John D. Sinclair (1939, rpt: New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1979), p. 344. Further quotations and translations will be taken from this standard edition and cited in the text.

[32]For an extended discussion of the way Dante's clarifications of abstractions by comparison to concrete experience functions in the Paradiso, see Irma Brandeis, The Ladder of Vision (Garden City, N. J.: Doubleday, 1960), pp. 145-7. Also see the discussion of asservations and similes in Paradiso by Gilbert (Dante and His Comedy, pp. 7-8), and Benedetto Croce's commentary on the way that the Pilgrim progressively renounces the world all the while that the poet uses the earthiest similes: The Poetry of Dante, trans. Douglas Ainslie (1923 rept.: Marmonek, N.Y.: P. P. Appel, 1971): 38-40.

[33]See Gilbert's discussion of the emotional involvement of the Pilgrim (Dante and His Comedy, pp. 15-17).

[34]Described in "Dante's Poetics," p. 407. See also Hollander's extended discussion of the Comedy's pretense to truth, pp.404-7.

[35]Gordon states flatly that with the major source being Boccacio and the song coming from Petrarch this reference to Lollius must be a "joke" (The Double Sorrow, p. 77).

[36]See Rose A. Zimbardo here on the use of Clio: "Creator and Created: The Generic Perspective of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," Chaucer Rev., 11 (1977), 295-6.

[37]Once again Gordon points out the irony in the claim to be faithful to sources and even in this reference to Clio in the invocation to the book to which Chaucer added the most of his own (The Double Sorrow, p.73).

[38]Lofmark believes that Wolfram was serious in his early references but that when he met criticism from his audience he began to invent "Wolfram's Source References in 'Parzival,'" p. 833).

[39]Kratz calls the story of Flegetanis' star-vision "the sheerest fantasy" (Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, pp. 165-6).

[40]In fact the story of the quest story's history is so compelling that there are still occasional articles trying to identify the elusive Kyot. See, for example; Henry and Renee Kahane, "Wolfram's gekriutze ritter (Parz. 72, 13)--A Provençalism?" Romance Philology, 24 (1970), 86, connecting the story to Guilhem de Tudela. The name most consistently mentioned as the possible original for Kyot is Guiot de Provins; see Kratz, Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, p. 164.

[41]For a discussion of the established authority of dream visions, see: A. C. Spearing's explanations of the tradition of the dream vision and Christianity in Medieval Dream Poetry (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1975), pp. 11-16. Although this work focuses on the English tradition, the Christian background and authority would have been the same for Dante.

CHAPTER THREE:

DIDACTICISM AND THE INTRUSIVE MEDIEVAL NARRATOR

The emphasis on the truth of the narrative so common to the Middle Ages carries over in interesting ways into the interpretations of the narrative's meanings. Just as the tradition of verifying the "truth" of the story was well established by the time of the rise of the great romances in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the related tradition of assuring some deeper truth in the story was equally well established. Although the exegetical tradition naturally first developed in the attempts by the Fathers to trace the connections between the Old and New Testaments, secular writers were not ignored. In Contra Mendacium, for example, St. Augustine offers this explanation of the worth of stories which we know to be untrue which yet signify some other meaning:

> Otherwise, all those things will be lies which, because of certain resemblance to things signified, are told as if they had been done, although they have not been. Of such kind is the long story about a certain man's two sons, of whom the elder remained with his father and the younger took a long journey. In this kind of invention men have assigned human words or deeds even to irrational creatures and things without sense, in order that by such fictitious narratives--but true significations--they might more agreeably intimate what they wished. Not only among secular writers like Horace does one mouse speak to another and a weasel to a fox, so that by means of fictitious narrative true significance may be attached to what is happening. And no one has been so illiterate as to think that similar fables of Aesop, related for the same purpose, ought to be called lies. But, in the sacred writings, also, such passages are found, as in the Book of Judges the trees look for a King to rule over them and speak to the olive and the fig and the vine and the bramble. Surely- all this is invented in order that we may reach the

> matter intended by means of a narrative fictitious, to be sure, but bearing a true and not a false signification.[1]

The point is soundly made. Some stories simply cannot be accepted as truth, particularly the fable. If we are to avoid discrediting such stories, a stand that similar Biblical stories makes imperative, we must then turn our attention not to the actual truth of the narrative, but to the truth of its significance. We, therefore, must become interpretors, seeking deeper meanings under the facade of the narrative's outward "lies."

This background for interpreting both religious and secular stories is an essential point for understanding the didactic voice of the narrator in the romances of the high Middle Ages. By the time of the romances the tradition of didacticism had also filtered into the rhetorical training that the educated poet would have received. This influence and the strong emphasis from exegetical tradition combined to create a narrative technique that the conscious poet could employ to a variety of ends as he slipped that preacher's voice into his tory.

Didactic Commentary and Rhetorical Tradition

Rhetorical treatises throughout the Middle Ages approached the problem of making the meaning behind the language clear. In De arte praedicatoria, for example, Alain de Lille cautions that the use of authorities should be done carefully to avoid confusing the hearers because their "instruction is the entire purpose."[2]

While those treatises devoted particularly to the art of preaching would obviously be styled toward instruction, the general approach to instruction applied equally well to other areas, even those somewhat outside the rhetorical schools and more closely associated with the application of composition's techniques to narrative. Across all lines of rhetoric

there is that conscious study of the methods for making the point of the work clear.

Douglas Kelly, for example, has equated the use of formulae and topoi to just such elucidation of the matter of the narrative. He emphasizes the medieval technique of allowing the matter to dictate the formulae used, in much the same way that a modern writer might let content dictate form:

> The perception of general truth inherent or implicit in the specific matiere--"ceo k'iert," in Marie de France's expression--does not entail imposition of preconceived commonplaces on recalcitrant matter, but rather the elucidation of the matiere by what amounts to generic definition--that is, the identification of the qualities or paramount characteristics appropriate to the matiere and the context chosen for it. The elucidation derives from the formulae which address specific questions to the specific matiere. The author is not to apply the formulae indiscriminately. Cicero, for example, distinguishes between the abundance of formulae he proposed in his Topica and their judicious application in specific works.[3]

This perception of the truth of the work is cited by the rhetoricians as the first stage in every composition from a letter to a sermon. The importance of prologues stating precisely what direction the work is to take as it develops its subject matter apparently grows out of this concern for the truth within the story.

The next step after the identification of the general meanings behind the piece becomes their proper development. Under this heading we encounter the crucial term amplificatio. The techniques for amplifying the material naturally vary from one rhetorician to another. But many of the methods, or colors of rhetoric as the manuals often termed them, can be directly categorized as didactic. These ways of expanding and explaining the points must be carefully connected to the initial purpose. Gallo explains, for example, the connection between Geoffrey of Vinsauf's first technique for amplification and the purpose of the work, using terms that

link it closely to the didactic:

> Geoffrey's first method of amplification is refining, that is, restating the theme in different ways. The presentation should be varied and yet the same. The ideal is diversity in unity. Now this ideal may tell us something about medieval poetry. If the poem has lucidly made clear its essential statement at the very beginning, then the precise task of the poet must be to restate the theme, refine upon it, and draw from it all of its implications and meanings.[4]

The development of the themes through amplification does not, however, imply the kind of padding that we might assume such restatement may foster. In fact, its purpose is to create new emphasis and impact for what may be a familiar old story.

The list of methods for amplifying the points vary with different manuals. Geoffrey of Vinsauf, for example, offers this list in his Poetria Nova: interpretatio, circumlocutio, collatio, apostrophe, prosopopoeia, digressio, descriptio, and oppositio.[5] Others like John of Garland in De Arte prosayca, metrica, et rithmica may include such methods as substituting the cause for the caused, the matter for what is made from it, the consequent for the antecedent, or the whole for the part.[6] No matter what list is adhered to, the central purpose is to clarify the meanings in the work. The writer, or poet, is admonished to use these techniques, as Kelly suggested, not as ends in themselves, but as methods for expounding upon a larger purpose.

In the Flowers of Rhetoric Alberic offers a general principle for the application of such amplifications:

> If a thing is obvious, do not complicate it with circumlocutions: project your thought in a few words, since it is clear even if you say nothing. On the other hand, if the matter is obscure, do not hesitate to take time to let the light of words make the point clear that is inherent in your topic; otherwise you make the obscurity worse by your silence. Furthermore, let all things be kept in proportion: do not treat trivial things too seriously nor momentous things with contempt, nor vice versa. When you have subjected a theme to diligent attention, then decide where and how you should begin speaking.[7]

The emphasis here upon the suitability of the point for dilation is one that should be kept in mind as the intrusive didactic narrator is studied more carefully. The warnings against complication, obscurity, and incongruity in the explanations of points are also essential. If the speaker breaks in to explain an obvious point, he will risk seeming officious and unnecessarily longwinded and thus perhaps risk having his explanations ignored. The writer should be continually conscious of the sense of his subjects. It is intended by this that he first of all be aware of what those higher meanings in his work actually are. But he must also be conscious of the effect his amplifications have on the work and its meanings. The main point, then, is that above all the writer must be conscious of the audience. He must take care, whether in writing a letter as in Alberic's instruction or a poem as in Geoffrey's, to understand the effect of his work on the audience, to anticipate those points needing amplification, and to decide which points to abbreviate so as to avoid any confusion in the audience about the most important point--the meaning.

The general result of the medieval rhetorical tradition is, therefore, to encourage, indeed demand, the writer to be conscious of his subject, its meanings, and his audience's perception of those meanings. This kind of emphasis is the primary support for characterizing the didactic voice in medieval narrative as a conscious manipulation on the part of the poet. It also explains the major categories of didactic intrusions: those framing the narrative, those expanding--or amplifying--internal points like character's actions and responses to action, and even those definitions of the audience itself. As further support for the significance of the rhetorical influence, subheadings of each of the didactic categories can frequently be traced to one of the methods for amplification so prominent in rhetorical treatises of the period.

Didacticism and Allegory

One essential clarification about the didactic narrator in the Middle Ages must be made at this point and that is the connection between didacticism and allegory. The technique of didactic intrusions should not be carelessly assumed to signal the presence of allegory in the narrative. Too often these terms have been linked without the distinction necessary to make their effects clear.

When Scholes and Kellogg describe the medieval poet's consciousness of the concern for the wheat and the chaff, or the truth and the beauty, of the work, they slip from the discussion of rhetoric to the predominance of allegory without distinguishing didactic from allegorical:

> When poetry is subsumed under rhetoric the effect is to reduce the roles of literary art as mimesis and as an expression of private feelings and values. Its doctrine and from the effectiveness of its language in persuading an audience to accept that doctrine as the truth. The view of narrative art as rhetorical and philosophical came naturally to the learned culture of the Middle Ages, trusting as it generally did in the reality of universals and the superiority of authority over experience. The primitive allegories of Prudentius, Martianus Capella, and Alain de Lille were popular with clerics who had been brought up on the natural philosophy expounded in such works as Macrobius' Somnium Scipionis. . . . For such audiences, the Psychomachia, the De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii, and the Anticlaudianus were confrontations with reality, not reality as it might be dimly perceived through the confusion of sensory experience, but reality as it had been clarified by the reason and refined by philosophical tradition. The modern reader must strain his historical imagination to understand that the essential action of primitive allegories is almost purely intellectual and that the patterned movement of ideas can be both beautiful and exciting without bearing any relationship to the empirical data of sensory experience whatsoever.[8]

The easy jump from the reduction of mimesis to the discussion of the intellectual nature of the allegory is one that should be examined more closely. The mere mention of doctrine or philosophical basis in a medieval work seems automatically to elicit a discussion of allegory. Indeed, Scholes and Kellogg continue in a discussion of the literary tradition of

the balance of truth and ornament, emphasizing repeatedly the "narrative topoi and images which resulted from scriptural exegesis and Hellenistic allegoresis" (p.140). These they suggest provided the basis for that balance.

Although the exegetical tradition in large part fostered the didactic tradition, the presence of didacticism within a work should not absolutely mean allegory is also present. We must avoid this casual assumption. What we have in such unquestioned leaps is the subtle influence of the work of D. W. Robertson whose work A Preface to Chaucer encouraged a whole school of allegory hunters as adept in discovering Christian allegory in secular medieval works as their medieval counterparts were in finding it in classical ones. One crucial comment by Robertson should be examined here to underline the distinctions between allegory and simple didacticism. In his introduction of the connections between allegory, humanism, and literary theory, Robertson says:

> Even more important, perhaps, as a deterrent to our appreciation of allegory is the fact that its presence cannot be detected by modern philological methods. Scientific scholarship insists on confining itself to what a text "actually says." During the Middle Ages, this restriction was sometimes regarded not as a virtue but as a mark of illiteracy.[9]

If we accept the judgment, very like the commentary of Scholes and Kellogg, that moderns have difficulty appreciating allegory because we want only what is said and not what may be hidden, then we have also defined an essential difference between allegory and didacticism. The didactic narrator does actually appear. We can identify him without having to peel away the surface of the narrative. In fact, he appears already outside the narrative. Rather than intruding into the flow of the narrative he often seems instead to erupt from it, forcing us to leave it with him.

Robertson's point that in modern criticism we want only what is obviously present must, however, be qualified somewhat. Apparently a jibe at the then dominant school of new criticism, the implication is that very little allegory is as immediately recognizable as that in works like the Divine Comedy or Piers Plowman. But if this is true where are the limits to its discovery? If we cannot find it overtly in the text, are we not liable to use that "hidden" quality to discover it wherever we want? This, in fact, has often seemed the case. This tendency in particular makes those narratives with the obvious presence of a didactic narrator special targets for those searching out that hidden allegory. This confusion of the two seems an unfortunate approach to the narrative, particularly in the interpretation of the romances.

Lotman has described the development of medieval narrative literature as a descent from the religious, citing hagiography as the original form followed by chronicles and annals and then the literary narrative with the text "unwrought" and the speech quoted in a journalistic pose.[10] The reportorial effect of some of the attestations of truth may be seen as a result of this last stage. But equally understandable at this point is the introduction of the didactic as justification for the existence of the literary narrative. The saint's life hardly needs such justification. Similarly, the chronicle by its very historicity carries its own validation. But the poet writing a secular literary story could hardly help but feel the pressure of the didactic tradition in both its rhetorical and exegetical forms. While he might, as so many did, swear that he was simply retelling a story told by an ancient author, how could the love stories, so often adulterous in the tradition of the romance, justify being retold? Obviously, their antiquity alone would not offer sufficient proof of the worth of such material.

The obvious response would have been the inclusion of those amplifications designed to illustrate the story's worth. In other words, the solution was the introduction of the character of the didactic narrator who glossed the story from beginning to end. Overtly didactic comments might very well be included as the speeches of characters within the story. But by far the most frequently used in a narrative was the narrator's own commentary. That narrator might begin with a lecture on the story's meaning and then conclude with a brief summary, thus framing the narrative with a clearly-stated moral. Typically he would also include within the text of the story glosses on the actions, commentary on the characters, and digressions on the themes to support those opening remarks.

Under pressure of what we now call "redeeming social value," the poet would include little lessons as part of the fabric of his story. The narrative poem was, indeed, expected to offer more than simply a story. For example, Anne Middleton describes the communal sense of Richardian poetry and the result in the narrative form:

> These attitudes [of the poets], which constitute the foundations of a secular civic piety, are attended in poetry by explicit and coherent notions about the nature of poetry, about poetry's worldly place and purpose. In brief terms, poetry was to be a "common voice" to serve the "common good." The realized presence of the poetic speaker in this literature became a stylistic means of expressing that purpose and it produced a new kind of experientially based didactic poetry, tonally vivid and often structurally unstable.[11]

The expectation is, then, that there will be a lesson, or at least pieces of wisdom interspersed among the events of the narrative.

This expectation and its fulfillment do not, however, demand an equal emphasis on allegory. On the contrary, an obviously secular story should be examined for the patterns which any didactic intrusions create. If these offer support for a further search for meaning, we may be justi-

fied in looking deeper. But if the didactic intrusions seem inconsistent, disruptive in their attention to trivial details or otherwise incongruent or perhaps ironic, then we must avoid the tendency to search for the "hidden" moral truth and instead examine the text on the basis of such inconsistencies.

The main point, therefore, is that the presence of a didactic narrator should not automatically be interpreted as a signal for allegory. Rather than searching for the hidden truths, what we must do is to examine the ways that the didactic voice is manipulated in the narrative. Just as with those attestations of truth, the type of intrusion, its location, and length will suggest further interpretations. The poet, enjoined by the rhetoricians to be conscious of the way he presented his instructive amplification, could easily use the techniques for a variety of alternative effects. Analysis of the effects will enable us to understand the way that the poet intended his audience to perceive the meanings behind his story. But only when this preliminary analysis suggests further interpretation should we allow ourselves to take that next step and investigate the possibility of "hidden" truths in allegory.

Didacticism and the Self-Conscious Narrator

With the didacticism of the medieval narrator clearly established, it becomes necessary briefly to justify the association of the term with the self-conscious narrator. While the medieval poet was taught by the rhetoricians to be ever conscious of his effect upon his audience, that admonition may not necessarily imply that the didactic voice resulting is a self-conscious one. Yet there are several ways in which a didactic narrator is, in fact, a self-conscious one. The connection between the two hinges on the control both maintain over the audience's perception of the story.

While the didacticism of the medieval narrator is unquestioned, it may be contended that the self-consciousness is not. The self-conscious narrator at first seems so much more concerned with the process of telling the story that we may wonder whether his attention extends to the didactic. He is a critic of his own work obviously enough, but is he a social critic as well?

One look at Tom Jones and the narrator's instructive lectures will support the strong connection between the self-conscious narrator and the didactic narrator. The self-conscious narrator has superior understanding for the most part. He is concerned that the audience perceive the point of his story and often will go so far as to direct it to a particular opinion. The voice in Tristram Shandy while hardly manifesting the dignity and control of the narrator in Tom Jones is, nevertheless, perpetually concerned with the way certain audience members will understand what he has been saying. His addresses to individuals within the audience are strongly reminiscent of the same type address in Parzival.

The point is, then, that one of the main characteristics of the self-conscious narrator is the control he exercises over the response of his audience, a control clearly associated with didacticism. Friedman's term for this type of narrator, the editorial omniscient, appropriately distinguishes the roles. The narrator is an editor because he chooses what to include and what to eliminate. But he is also an editor in the sense that he offers direction for interpreting the work. This capability develops from his awareness of the whole story and his consciousness of the audience:

> The reader accordingly has access to the complete range of possible kinds of information, the distinguishing feature of this category being the thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of

> the author himself; he is free not only to inform us of the ideas and emotions within the minds of his characters but also his own. The characteristics mark, the, of Editorial Omniscience is the presence of authorial intrusions and generalizations about life, manners, and morals, which may or may not be explicitly related to the story.[12]

In terms of cateogires of intrusive narrators, therefore, the didactic seems an obvious type of the editorial omniscient narrator. In other words, that didactic voice which interrupts to comment upon a character's ideas and his own, to offer general theory of the narrative, and even to present general social commentary can rightly be termed a subcategory of the self-conscious narrator.

Booth describes such discursive narrators as manipulators.[13] These narrators make overt comments on otherwise certain standards, thus "molding beliefs" and encouraging us to agree with their norms so that we also "judge their characters accurately in the light of those norms" (p.195). This function is one particularly applicable to that intrusive didactic voice in medieval narrative. In works in which characters may act in socially unacceptable ways, for example, in fin or fol amours, the narrator must take special care to present the benefits or harm to the character. Once again we expect the narrator to provide a basis for forming opinions about the story, as well as to suggest such opinions.

The self-conscious narrator, therefore, in many instances exhibits the same tendencies characteristic of the traditional didactic narrator in medieval narrative. That didactic voice is self-conscious in the sense that it calls direct attention to the messages within the story, thus enforcing a break in the audience's reaction to the story. The distance created by these intrusions requires of the audience much different reactions than an uninterrupted, unglossed narrative would. This overt manipulation of the audience's response is one of the most obvious charac-

teristics of the self-conscious narrator. Not only is the didactic narrator conscious of his story's deeper meanings, he compels an equal consciousness from his audience. Indeed, this type of self-conscious narrator, perhaps more than any other, requires that the audience also be self-conscious.

Types of Didactic Intrusions

Just as with other categories of self-conscious intrusions, there are obvious subdivisions in the didactic intrusions. A generally consistent tone and unremarkable length variations reduce these as distinguishing features for the variations. Instead, the most obvious divisions appear according to the different functions provided by these intrusions.

There are three major variations in the didactic intrusions besides the minor variations within these major types. The first type of didactic intrusion is that which defines the audience in direct address and thus suggests a particular point of view from which it is to interpret the narrative. This kind of intrusion may appear at any point in the story although it is especially likely to come at major division points. The second kind of intrusion comes at either the beginning or end of the story or, at times, both. These framing intrusions, often used in combination with definitions of the audience, present the meanings to be considered in judging the narrative as a whole. The opening commentary will most often suggest the morals to be kept in mind. The concluding remarks will either remind the audience of those introductory statements or, if there have been none, will draw out the points to the preceding narrative. These may also at times appear to be a retraction or recantation of what that narrative has been. The third subdivision is made up of those internal glosses during which the narrator steps away from the immediate story to

illustrate some point or qualify a meaning offered in the narrative. These may be comments on the feelings, words, or actions of a character or general evaluations of characters or action. They may also be seemingly digressive sermonettes on an underlying, although perhaps not immediately obvious, theme.

The interplay of these three types of didactic intrusions and the frequency with which they appear provide a basis for interpreting the narrative itself. If the commentary is infrequent, incongrous, or unconnected in any obvious patterns, we may be forced to evaluate the sincerity of its use. If there is an obvious pattern with recognizable intent, we may be encouraged to look beyond the didactic intrusions for a submerged allegory. The important point is that the interpretation be based upon what the poet actually provides rather than on some preconceived notion of what medieval narrative offers.

Definitions of the Audience

One of the most striking types of didactic intrusions is the one which defines the audience and its response to the narrative. This kind of intrusion in particular reveals the complications in the relationship between the poet, his narrator, his story, and his audience. Perhaps more than any other kind of intrusion, except those discussions of process, it presents us with a sharp sense of the poet's awareness of his audience's reaction to his work.

The intrusions characterizing the audience may at first appear more in line with the Shandyean tradition and so may be surprising in medieval narrative.[14] There are, however, several explanations for their use in this period; again of primary interest are those originating in the importance of language and in the study of rhetoric.

Rina Indictor connects these intrusions first to the poet's need to exercise control over language:

> During the Middle Ages belief in the power of the word along with the belief in extra-literary truth (Christian) encouraged the need to write into the medium the audience's reaction to the narrative and bared the writer's mistrust of his medium. The consequence of this mistrust surfaced in the involvement with the manipulation of the audience toward a particular reading or interpretation. Yet the need to manipulate the audience to one particular reading would have been obviated if the narrative proceeded omnisciently, and through a single voice, instead of antithetically and ironically.[15]

This concern over what the language will actually communicate is a central problem in the romances in particular. The stories told are most often unquestionably secular, yet in the telling the narrator must make concessions to the didactic conventions. This conflict could often create antithetical and apparently ironic intrusions. Yet we must remember that the antithesis arises within the complex of narrative voices themselves. While the intrusive narrators are, almost without exception, omniscient ones, that is, each intrusion itself operating from a complete view of the whole story, different intrusions may be using that omniscient view for different ends.[16] The multiple voices of the narrator may in themselves set up the irony or emphasize an already existing conflict between the matter of the tale and the lessons presented by the didactic voice.

This complex relationship between poet, narrator, story, and audience is in part explained by what Indicator later calls the "fictionalized audience" which is created by such intrusions:

> Fictionalization of audience tends to investigate the degree to which audience's critical expectations determine the creative act itself. In this category, critical self-awareness is complicated by the discovery that in the triangular relationship author/work/audience, persuasion is not uni-directional: that authors respond to critical demands placed upon them by their readers no less, perhaps more, than the audience responds to the writer. This recognition is formalized with the introduction of a character named reader. Such a character tends to consist of a complex of conven-

> tional, critical attitudes which the fictionalized author would mockingly seduce, and more seriously attack in order to demonstrate that one convention is not more sacrosanct than another, that since the literary medium proceeds by convention and invention, the artist should be free to invent his own conventions. . . . The conscious explication of the adversary relationship between author and audience takes a step away from the imitative representative towards an expressive conception of art.[17]

The effect of the conventions in the audience response and criticism, therefore, makes its way into the fabric of the story as representations of encounters between audience and narrator. While use of the term "expressive" to characterize medieval narrative should be cautious, those intrusions which offer extended justifications for the story and even thinly-veiled attacks on the audience's understanding do strongly support the narrator's integrity and reasons for relating his story.

Much of the awareness of audience and the convention of audience definition also has roots in rhetoric, both classical and medieval.[18] As Murphy explains, the definition of audience in classical rhetoric was occasional, drawing its limits from the nature of the speech.[19] However, by the time of Pope Gregory's treatise Cura pastoralis in 591 A.D., the definitions had shifted from concentration on the occasion to actual recognition of the make-up of audiences. Gregory sets up thirty-six pairs of opposites in an attempt to explain the problem of audience diversity and presents a sermonette suitable for each pair.[20] This work continued to be an important influence for preachers throughout the Middle Ages. Essentially the main influence was to remind such speakers to be conscious of the different levels of audience perception, distinguishing, above all, the learned from the unlearned (Murphy, p. 279).

While it might be argued that these precepts were established for the delivery of religious lectures and not for secular works, it is, nevertheless, apparent from secular narratives themselves that the influence had

crossed over into these works. Wolfram's introduction to Parzival and several of the internal intrusions turn on just that distinction between the "wiser" and the "tummer," that is, the smart and the dumb. The technique of distinguishing the level of the audience a-dressed is, in fact, one of the most consistent in the secular narratives.

Definitions of the audience function in three ways. The first kind of intrusion anticipates potential criticism of the story and attempts to define the audience's reaction in such a way as to avoid criticism before it arises. The second type of defines the specific group within the audience at which certain portions of the narrative and their lessons are aimed. The last defines the wise members of the group, explaining and encouraging their careful analysis of the action in the narrative and the meaning behind it. Each of these characterizations may preface a further lesson, thus serving as preparation for it by establishing in advance the reaction desired from the audience.

Among the first kind of definitions are all those direct addre-ses to the audience which plead against a certain reaction to the story, whether it be disbelief, reluctance to search for meanings, or sheer antipathy. Chaucer's narrator's address to his readers in the "Prologue" to the Canterbury Tales comes under just this heading because it anticipates a prudish rejection of some of the pilgrim's stories and counters that response by attributing to the audience instead a sophisticated awareness of the requirements of truthful storytelling:

> But first I pray yow, of youre courteisye,
> That ye n'arette it nat my vile vileynye,
> Thogh that I pleynly speke in this mateere,
> To telle yow hir wordes and hir cheere,
> Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely.
> For this ye knowen al so wel as I,
> Whoso shal telle a tale after a man,
> He moot reherce as ny as evere he kan
> Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
> Al speke he never so rudeliche and large,
> Or ellis he moot telle his tale untrewe,
> Or feyne thyng, or fynde wordes newe.

Crist spak hymself ful brode in hooly writ,
And wel ye woot no vileynye is it.
Eek Plato seith, whoso that can hym rede,
The wordes moot be cosyn to the dede.
(Prol., 725-42)

Here we have an ingenuous counter to any critical attitude toward the stories and the narrator for retelling them. Before the readers can react to them--indeed before they see any of the stories--the narrator suggests their response. The readers are to be courteous in understanding that the stories are told as they are in deference to the truth of the pilgrimage. They are to accept along with the narrator that one telling another's story must not alter parts of it. They are characterized as those who acknowledge the wisdom in the reference to the "brode" speech of Christ; therefore, they are obviously good religious folk. Finally, the readers are cast as the educated who recognize Plato and his authority, if, in fact, they do not read him themselves. In fifteen lines, then, the poet has manipulated the narrator's address to the audience so that it is styled as a sophisticated, generous, educated group ready to enjoy even low tales with a sort of elitist appreciation for the words of the churlish pilgrims.

Although this kind of extended characterization is not the standard for these redirections of the reader's response, it clearly illustrates the subtlty with which the audience's reaction may be manipulated.[21] Others, like this caution by Dante's narrator against turning away from the resolve to lead a good humble life, may be more direct and in turn more demanding in their didacticism:

Non vo' però, lettor, che tu ti smaghi
di buon proponimento per udire
come Dio vuol che 'l debito si paghi.
Non attender la forma del martire:
pensa la succession; pensa ch'al peggio,
oltre la gran sentenza non può ire.
(Purgatorio, 10,106-11)

> (But I would not have thee, reader, fall away from good resolve for hearing how God wills that the debt be paid; do not dwell on the form of the torment, think of what follows, think that at the worst it cannot go beyond the great judgement, pp. 135,137)

Here the narrator anticipates waning courage among his readers when they hear of the punishment meted out to the proud. But he does not intend for this failing spirit to be in any way related to the meaning of this section of narrative. He must, therefore, at this point be quick to counter this wrong reaction and to take steps to replace it with the correct one. Thus, the narrator may direct his readers' responses in either subtle manipulation of language or in direct and obvious lectures. Both function to suggest the reaction the audience is expted to have and so help to guide the audience's perception of the story.

Much like the narrator's interruption to avoid an undesired reaction are those intrusions in which he warns certain audience members that they should be especially attentive to the upcoming scenes. In the opening stanzas of Troilus and Criseyde, for example, Chaucer's narrator directs the story to the lovers in the audience and instructs them at some length on how they should respond:

> But ye loveres, that bathen in gladnesse,
> If any drope of pyte in yow be,
> Remembreth yow on passed hevynesse
> That ye han felt, and on the adversite
> Of othere folk, and thynketh how that ye
> Han felt that Love dorste yow displese,
> Or ye han wonne hym with to gret an ese.
>
> And preieth for hem that ben in the cas
> Of Troilus, as ye may after here,
> That Love hem brynge in hevene to solas. . . .
> (1,22-31)

By opening his address to the audience in this manner the narrator defines precisely what group within that audience he especially means the story to address. Not only does he tell the story of Troilus for lovers, but he also

specifies the point of view which those lovers are to try to maintain. They are to remember how unhappy they may have felt over love and how hard it has been for them at times to win or keep love. With these considerations in mind, they will then be better able to respond sympathetically to Troilus' plight and to wish him--and others in similar misfortune--relief from the pain. The narrator has, therefore, not simply addressed a single group in the audience; he has established at the very outset of the poem the point of view which that group should maintain.

While the narrator in Troilus addresses a large group like lovers, other narrators may be more selective in addressing audience members. These addresses may also become even more didactic lectures to the audience on broader points than the proper attitude for listening to the story. In Parzival Wolfram's narrator goes so far as to isolate groups within the audience and to lecture them on their own actions, occasionally using points drawn from the narrative. In these passages we lose almost entirely the sense of the narrative, feeling instead the immediacy of the experience of storytelling. In the introduction to the story, the narrator uses just this kind of address. After explaining that the wise man will listen carefully to the story to discover its meanings, he turns his attention to the ladies in the audience as he will do so often later in the narrative:

dise maneger slahte underbint
iedoch niht gar von manne sint:
vür diu wîp stôzę ich disiu zil.
swelhiu mîn râten merken wil,
diu sol wizzen war si kêre
ir prîs und ir êre
und wem si dâ nâch sî bereit
minne und ir werdekeit,
sô daz si niht geriuwe
ir kiusche und ir triuwe.
vor gotę ich guoten wîben bite
daz in rehtiu mâze volge mite:

schamę ist ein slôz ob allen sitern.
ich endarf in niht mêr heiles biten.
diu valschę erwirbet valschen prîs.
wie staete ist ein dünnez îs
daz ougestheize sunnen hât?
ir lop vil baldę alsus zergât.
  manec wîbes schoenę an lobę ist breit:
ist dâ daz herze konterfeit,
die lobę ich als ich solde
daz safer in dem golde.
ich enhân daz niht vür lihtiu dinc,
swer in den kranken messinc
verwürket edelen rubîn
und al die âventiure sîn:
dem gelîche ich rehten wîbes muot.
diu ir wîpheit rehte tuot,
dâ ensol ich varwe prüeven niht
noch herzen dach daz man siht.
ist si innerhalp der brust bewart,
sôst werder prîs dâ niht verschart.
(1.2,23-3,24)

(These manifold distinctions do not all relate to men. I shall set these marks as a challenge to women. Let any who would learn from me beware to whom she takes her honour and good name, beware whom she makes free of her love and precious person, lest she regret the loss of both chastity and affection. With God as my witness I bid good women observe restraint. The lock guarding all good ways is modesty--I need not wish them any better fortune. The false will gain a name for falsity.--How lasting is thin ice in August's torrid sun? Their credit will pass as soon away. The beauty of many has been praised far and wide, but if their hearts be counterfeit I rate them as I should a bead set in gold. But I do not reckon it a tawdry thing when the noble ruby with all its virtues is fashioned into base brass, for this I would liken to the spirit of true womanhood. When a woman acts to the best of her nature you will not find me surveying her complexion or probing what shields her heart: if she be well proofed within her breast her good name is safe from harm, Hatto, pp. 15-16)

In this long lecture the narrator divides quite clearly the kind of women who may be in the audience. Beginning with the comment that his distinction between wise and slow-witted does not apply only to men, he goes on immediately to show how such wisdom manifests itself in women. Interestingly, it is when he turns to the women in the audience that the narrator becomes the most direct in his moralizing. While his earlier address is clouded with obscure comparisons and even mixed metaphors, this passage is reason-

ably free from such indirection. His division of women according to their modesty and the restraint with which they offer their favours is more straightforward here than anywhere else in the narrative, though references to fickle and unworthy women creep in throughout the works.

Such a direct lecture seems on first examination to have little or nothing to do with the story, especially coming as it does before the tale has even been opened. Yet it functions here in much the same way that the address to the lovers in the opening of the Troilus does. We can imagine that there must have been at least a rustling of skirts among the audience as the ladies present digested the message here. Those described as a bead in brass--following immediately the pun on "ich solde," pronounced i solde, and the familiar name Isolde--will not be able to appreciate the worth in this story and will instead find themselves surveyed and probed by the narrator. What the narrator does, then, is to explain that this story is not going to praise the falsity in women, as some stories like those of Tristan and Isolde do. Not only will the narrative itself not praise these women, the narration, that is the storytelling, will make any such women who happen to be in the audience feel uncomfortable because of its pointed references to them. This description sets up modest bearing almost as a requirement to hearing the story comfortably and to getting more than personal criticism from it. Such an address must have made some of the women listening at least momentarily uncomfortable. In general, it would encourage all of them to maintain the proper demeanor for the performance of the story. These addresses to particular audience members are, therefore, decidedly functional passages and not simply acknowledgments of those who may be present for the recital. They suggest the perspective which the audience is to assume if it is to understand and enjoy the story. By bringing the

audience itself immediately into the experience, they may also establish more clearly the relationship between audience and narrator, defining the ways in which the narrator will be teacher or even preacher.

The last type of audience definition may almost be styled as a tease. In this kind of intrusion the narrator describes the difficulty of understanding what he has to say and addresses himself only to the wisest of the audience members. Obviously, this technique is designed to encourage all the audience to concentrate on the meanings presented, for none there would want to admit himself among the slow-witted. In this way the narrator seemingly offers his points only for a select group while the poet actually manages to manipulate the entire audience into close scrutiny of his work and the meanings behind it.

This kind of intrusion is closely related to those discussions of the process of creating the story. It treats the difficulty of understanding much the same as the others treat the difficulty in expressing these meanings. Dante's pilgrim-poet's address to those who could follow him into the experience of paradise offers a good example of the relationship between the narrator, audience, and work:

> O VOI che siete in piccioletta barca,
> desiderosi d'ascoltar, seguiti
> dietro al mio legno che cantando varca,
> tornate a riveder li vostri liti:
> non vi mettete in pelago, chè, forse,
> perdendo me, rimarrests smarriti.
> L'acqua ch' io prendo già mai non si corse;
> Minerva spira, e conducemi Apollo,
> e nove Muse mi dimonstran l'Orse.
> Voi altri pochi che drizzaste il collo
> per tempo al pan delli angeli, del quale
> vivesi qui ma non sen vien satollo,
> metter potete ben per l'alto sale
> vostro navigio, servando mio solco
> dinanzi all'acqua che ritorna equale.
> Que' gloriosi che passaro al Colco
> non s'ammiraron come voi farete,
> quando Iason vider fatto bifolco.
> (Paradiso, 2,1-18)

> (O Ye who in a little bark, eager to listen, have followed behind my ship that singing makes her way, turn back to see your shores again; do not put forth on the deep, for, perhaps, losing me, you would be left bewildered. The waters I take were never sailed before. Minerva breathes, Apollo pilots me, and the nine Muses show me the Bears.
>
> Ye other few that reached out early for the angels' bread by which men here live but never come from it satisfied, you may indeed put forth your vessel on the salt depths, holding my furrow before the water returns smooth again. Those glorious ones who crossed the sea to Colchis were not amazed as you shall be, when they saw Jason turned ploughman, p. 33).

The warning here is obvious. Those who follow only for the song, that is, the pleasure of the poem, will soon be lost. The metaphor of sailing offers a vivid point about the difficulty of the coming section of the narrative.[22] These will be treacherous waters for those not already prepared. The narrator warns them to turn back before they are over their heads. Others who are ready to understand because of their previous spiritual searches the narrator encourages to follow him. Here we also discover the poet-narrator aware of the seriousness of his work and the potential difficulty in fathoming it. The didactic voice then dominates the passage in its admonition to the readers. But after the enticement of an amazement superior to that of those who discovered Jason ploughing, who would want to give up and so class himself among the frivolous and weak?

In all the types of audience definition we find just these kinds of subtle manipulations. The narrator redirects the audience's attention, thus eliminating possible misinterpretations, in such a way as to instruct his listeners on how to respond to further incidents in the story. He often provides ready-made the role that the audience is to assume, leaving nothing to chance. When he isolates certain members of the audience for a lecture either on the story and their reaction to it or on their own behavior and attitudes, he compels those members to reconsider the story and their relationship to it, thus, increasing its immediacy. If he warns

those of little wit or stamina that they should turn away from the rest of the story, he insures that all in the audience will concentrate even more. Like Wolfram's narrator who addresses himself to the honest and decent people rather than those who have forfeited their chance at heaven (8,404, 13-16), these narrators manuever the audience to perceive itself in certain elevated ways designed to encourage them to view the story in a more thoughtful and sophisticated manner. Of all the didactic intrusions these definitions of the audience are perhaps the most subtle method of manipulating the listeners' perspective and controlling their interpretations.

Framing the Story with Morals

The second major type of didactic intrusion is similar in effect to the definition of the audience. These intrusions actually function as the introduction and conclusion for the story as a whole or for the individual books of the story. They may, therefore, hardly merit the classification as intrusion since they do not come into the middle of the action of the story. They too address the audience and occasionally define it--as we have been in the opening of Troilus and of Parzival. But in general they have a broader emphasis than merely a definition of audience. They not only suggest how the audience responds, but they may also suggest the meanings to be found in the work. Not all the narratives, of course, will have both the introductory and concluding lectures. But most will have the introductory discourse, with some even having them for the openings of the story's subdivisions.

These introductory comments can also be traced to the rhetorical tradition and its emphasis on making major points clear before getting to them. Alberic's suggestions for opening a letter may be as easily applied to the opening of a narrative:

> Anyone who is preparing to decorate his work with a prologue, or (to put it more accurately) to enhance the beauty of the other members by means of a beautiful face, must observe the proprieties and use the suitable figures. First, the prologue must be drawn from the subject of the work as from the very womb of its mother. For example, if you intend to treat of the virtues and the vices and the strife between them, you will outline fittingly from that area what you intend to offer. . . .
>
> You see that the messengers sent before are born of the thoughts that will follow, that authors foreshadow the story that is to come by giving to the mind a preview. Indeed if you would offer any other kind of beginning, it would be the same as giving a stone to one whom you have promised gold. It should also be noted that in such a beginning a response is often made to unspoken objections, so that it will be clear that the work should not be considered the product of insufficient effort. Therefore the author should set as the purpose of his preface to render the mind of the reader attentive, receptive, and open. This will be the light and beauty of the work as the eye is of the head.[23]

The poet who begins a narrative with an introductory lecture is, then, preparing his audience by creating interest in what his story will present and by anticipating and averting objections. Naturally, the prologues will follow patterns depending on the narrative itself.

While introductions may be generally the same in that they open the work and defend against potential critics, the tone is a feature to this "beautiful face" that must be carefully observed. Though much of the opening commentary may be listed as didactic, this categorization will not explain variations in the tenor of the remarks. The tone with which the didactic narrator introduces his work provides obvious clues about audience response and, more importantly, about the later intrusions by this narrator. We learn, therefore, early in the presentation exactly how much we are to accept of the narrator's lessons and how much we may draw from our own judgment.

The contrast between the openings of Troilus and Criseyde and of Parzival illustrates just this early revelation of the complex relationship between narrator, work, and audience. While Chaucer's narrator is essen-

tially humble in his commentary, making his points by drawing the audience's sympathy for Troilus and for himself as narrator-poet, Wolfram's narrator seems almost arrogant in his approach, obscuring his points with unusual and even mixed metaphors and lecturing on the worth of his tale for the intelligent and stupid alike. The tones thus established remain consistent throughout the majority of the didactic intrusions in the rest of each work.

Chaucer's narrator opens his story of Troilus' tragic love with modest requests for audience sympathy and understanding. After addressing the lovers in the audience to remind them of the pains love can cause and so to encourage their pity for Troilus, he turns his request for prayers for himself and more generally for those in love:

> And ek for me preieth to God so dere
> That I have myght to shewe in som manere,
> Swich peyne and wo as Loves folk endure
> In Troilus unsely aventure.
>
> And biddeth ek for hem that ben despeired
> In love that nevere nyl recovered be,
> And ek for hem that falsly ben apeired
> Thorugh wikked tonges, be it he or she;
> Thus biddeth God, for his benignite,
> So graunte hem soone owt of this world to pace,
> That ben despeired out of Loves grace.
>
> And biddeth ek for hem that ben at ese,
> That God hem graunte ay good perseveraunce,
> And sende hem myghte hire ladies so to plese
> That it to Love be worship and pleasaunce.
> For so hope I my sowle best avaunce,
> To prey for hem that Loves servauntz be,
> And write hire wo, and lyve in charite;
>
> And for to have of hem compassioun
> As though I were hire owne brother dere,
> Now herkneth with a good entencioun. . . . (1,32-52)

Rather than dictating what the audience will discover in his tale, the narrator pleads for a charitable attitude toward all those who have anything to do with love, even himself as a servant of those who serve love. He asks prayers for those in despair, for those falsely slandered, and even for those at ease in love. All three types, we will later discover, may

be found in the characters of Troilus and Criseyde, but he does not explain or even hint at this connection here. Instead, in all humility he merely attempts to establish a generous mood among the audience members so they may respond most favorably to the sad tale he has to relate.

Wolfram's narrator shows much less concern for his audience's good wishes. He, on the other hand, lectures on the value of his story and its meaning. Interestingly, if the story may in part be criticized for its obscurity, the introduction can be doubly critcized since here the narrator styles himself as intentionally playing games with his audience by hiding his meaning in "flying metaphors" thus complicating his presentation. He begins with just such a tease:

Ist zwîvel herzen nâchgebûr,
daz muoz der sêle werden sûr.
gesmaehet und gezieret
ist swâ sich parrieret
unverzaget mannes muot,
als agelstern varwe tuot.
der mac dennoch wesen geil,
wandę an im sint beidiu teil,
des himels und der helle.
der unstaete geselle
hât die swarzen varwe gar
und wirt ouch nâch der vinster var:
sô habet sich an die blanken
der mit staeten gedanken.
diz vliegende bîspel
ist tumben liuten gar ze snel:
si enmugens niht erdenken,
wandę ez kan vor in wenken
rehtę alsam ein schellec hase.
zin anderhalp an dem glase
gelîchet und bes blinden troum,
diu gebent antlitzes roum,
doch mac mit staete niht gesîn
dirre trüebe lihte schîn:
er machet kurze vreudę alwâr.
wer roufet mich dâ nie dehein hâr
gewuohs, innen an mîner hant?
der hât vil nâhe griffę erkant.
sprichę ich gein den vorhten och,
daz gelichet miner witzę iedoch.

wil ich triuwe vinden
aldâ si kan verswinden
als viur in dem brunnen
und daz tou an der sunnen?
  ouch erkandę ich nie sô wîsen man,
er enmöhte gerne künde hân
welher stiure disiu maere gernt
und waz si guoter lêre wernt.
dar an si nimmer des verzagent,
beide si vliehent unde jagent,
si entwîchent unde kêrent,
si lasternt und êrent.
swer mit disen schanzen allen kan,
an dem hât witze wol getân,
der sich niht versitzet noch vergêt
und sich anders wol verstêt.
valsch geselleclîcher muot
ist zuo dem helleviure guot
und ist hôher werdekeit ein hagel.
sîn triuwe hât sô kurzen zagel
daz si den dritten biz niht galt,
vuor si bî bremen in den walt.
(1.1, 1-2,23)

(If vacillation dwell in the heart the soul will rue it. Shame and honour clash where the courage of a steadfast man is motley like the magpie. But such a man may yet make merry, for Heaven and Hell have equal part in him. Infidelity's friend is black all over and takes on a murky hue, while the man of loyal temper holds to the white.

This winged comparison is too swift for unripe wits. They lack the power to grasp it. For it will wrench past them like a startled hare! So it is with a dull mirror or a blind man's dream. These reveal faces in dim outline: but the dark image does not abide, it gives but a moment's joy. Who tweaks my palm where never a hair did grow? He would have learnt close grips indeed! Were I to cry 'Oh!' in fear of that it would make me as a fool. Shall I find loyalty where it must vanish, like fire in a well or dew in the sun?

On the other hand I have yet to meet a man so wise that he would not gladly know what guidance this story requires, what edification it brings. The tale never loses heart, but flees and pursues, turns tail and wheels to the attach and doles out blame and praise. The man who follows all these vicissitudes and neither sits too long nor goes astray and otherwise knows where he stands has been well served by mother wit.

Feigned friendship leads to the fire, it destroys a man's nobility like hail. Its loyalty is so short in the tail that if it meet in the wood with gadflies it will not quit a bite in three, Hatto, p. 15)

Although in many ways much of this passage may also be classified as a process intrusion because the poet steps forward to discuss the poem itself, the major effect of the passage is to direct the audience in its approach

to the poem and not simply to alert its attention to the story as artifact.

The narrator's obscure metaphor on the magpie and vacillation may be connected to Parzival and his wavering in his quest for the grail. But the connection is not made by the narrator directly. He never assumes here the role of teacher in the strictest sense. Rather he entices the audience, tantalizing its members with the promise of a story full of edification for those with stamina and wit enough to track it. This narrator exercises much more control than the narrator in Troilus. He would never stoop to pleading with his readers to enlist their sympathetic reaction. A request that they pray for his ability to tell the story would be completely out of character for this self-assured narrator. He knows the secret meanings of the story he is about to tell, but he will not reveal them to just anyone. The listeners must learn to pluck at the hair in his palm, to grasp for things that at first may not seem to be there. They must not vacillate or go astray but must follow the track of the elusive story and its often equally wily narrator.

The opening of Parzival is, therefore, a challenge.[24] There is no humility in it. It defends the poem from any critcism of obscurantism by attacking those who might call it obscure, labelling them dull-witted. The audience is, consequently, thrust into a subordinate position. This story-telling will not allow the audience to assume a position as superior to the narrator or even as the condescending companion that Chaucer's narrative establishes. On the contrary, in order of importance here the audience comes last, below the work and far below its agressive didactic storyteller.

Concluding passages in the narrative may also signal the didactic narrator to step forth for his last pronouncements on the meanings of the tale before the storytelling ends. These passages may at times appear to be simply afterthoughts, moralistic lectures tacked on to the end of an other-

wise less than moralistic poem in an effort to make the subject acceptable to contemporary moral standards. Those who would read the closing passages in this way must, however, justify their conclusions by first proving an inconsistency between these passages, the opening ones, and the internal didactic intrusions. Inconsistency, or perhaps contradictory tone, would substantiate claims that these concluding passages are merely the poet's concessions to social pressures and are not, in fact, part of the general plan for the narrative.

The concluding stanzas of Troilus and Criseyde have caused just such a controversy over their logical connection to the matter of the story.[25] Though the discussion is not one to be dealt with fully at this point, we may examine a portion of those closing remarks and note their connections to the end of the story and to its beginning. Before the actual conclusion of the narrative, the narrator inserts one strong moralizing note on the action, explaining that although Troilus weeps much "Swich is this world, whoso it kan byholde; / In ech estat is litel hertes reste. / God leve us for to take it for the beste!" (5,1748-50). The added prayer here is a chronic pose for this narrator who, as we have seen, opens his tale with prayers to his audience to join in sympathy for those in despair over love. Here the focus is shifted somewhat, and we are asked to accept the bitterness love and life can bring as a sort of lesson. Now not only our sympathy is involved, but also our judgment.

Only four stanzas later we again encounter the didactic narrator; this time he is instructing the ladies in the audience not to judge him too harshly (5,1772-78). He explains that the lesson in the story is not just for the men to learn of betrayal but for the women also:

N'y sey nat this al oonly for thise men,
But moost for wommen that bitraised be
Thorugh false folk; God yeve hem sorwe, amen!
That with hire grete wit and subtilte
Bytraise yow! And this commeveth me
To speke, and in effect yow alle I preye,
Beth war of men, and herkneth what I seye.
(5,1779-85)

Again we have the definition of audience and the prayers standard in the first addresses of the poem. Although the narrator here is bold enough to offer a lesson, "Beth war of men," he is still humble enough to add the "I preye" to his suggestion that the ladies listen to him.

The shift in judgment effected in these lives is also crucial to the conclusion of the poem. We are asked again to sympathize, but this time to sympathize with the narrator who will not condemn Criseyde no matter what other books say about her guilt. From this sympathy we are asked to condemn all who would betray a love bestowed on them. The transference from Criseyde to all "false folk" establishes the framework for the most significant didactic intrusion in the poem's conclusion. After explaining Troilus' laugh on looking back to earth and the scene of his old tragedy and death, the narrator again turns to the audience with a request and a lesson:

O yonge, fresshe folkes, he or she,
In which that love up groweth with youre age,
Repeyreth hom fro worldly vanyte,
And of youre herte up casteth the visage
To thilke God that after his ymage
Yow made, and thynketh al nys but a faire
This world, that passeth soone as floures faire.

And loveth hym, the which that right for love
Upon a crois, oure soules for to beye,
First starf, and roos, and sit in hevene above;
For he nyl falsen no wight, dar I seye,
That wol his herte al holly on hym leye,
And syn he best to love is, and most meke,
What nedeth feynede loves for to seke? (5,1835-48)

Here we make the shift from the sympathetic involvement with the lovers to the general lesson for the audience.

That the narrator here addresses the lesson to the "yonge, fresshe folkes" is important because it suggests a change in his approach to the members of the audience. At the opening of the poem he has called on those experienced in the ways of love to share his sympathy for this Troilus and those like him. But here the narrator does not ask these lovers to join him in prayers; instead he prays that the inexperienced, those growing in their knowledge of love, learn that there is only one constant love, only one who "nyl falsen no wight." The use of the noun "wight" here is also significant since it allows for both young men and women. The more experienced lovers addressed at the opening have been presented as knowing that love in this world is transient since they are asked to recall the various stages in their own search for it and asked to pray to God for those who have "ben despeired out of Loves grace" (1, 42). Now at the end of the tale begun with the appeal to the sympathy of experienced lovers, the narrator turns to those less experienced and bids them learn from the story of Troilus so that they too can realize that this world is inconstant. The lesson will not necessarily make them disdainful of the joys and sorrows of the world, but it will soothe the pain as Troilus' distance after death soothes his. Finally it will make them able to join with those who at the opening of the poem are asked to pray for those serving Love and have a brotherly compassion for them and the narrator serving them (1,48-52).

The point in these connections between the opening passage of the Troilus and the pattern of the didactic sections of the conclusion is the sense of circularity in the addresses. The narrator does not step out with the kind of arrogant authority characteristic of Wolfram's didactic voice. Even though the lesson may seem at first glance to be a dogmatic shift into Christian moralizing, it is not inconsistent with the last intrusions be-

fore the conclusion or even with the didacticism of the opening sections. The one notable alteration is in the members of the audience addressed, and even this change follows a logical pattern. The more experienced lovers must be addressed first so that they feel sympathy for Troilus and, therefore, do not laugh at him as he later does at himself when his vision is enlarged. In the end, the younger lovers who have not been likely to find Troilus foolish, but instead may more nearly see him as sublimely tragic, are reminded that there is a lesson here for them to learn, just as Troilus himself learns. The narrator's definitions of the audience work here to direct his lessons, to suggest the best perspective for each group, so that his story can reach the widest audience with the widest effect. For this reason--aside from any connections with the internal didactic intrusions--the moralizing tone of the conclusion can be considered to connect to the pattern of the didactic narrator whether it fits the story's action to the satisfaction of all its commentators or not.

The concluding sections in the narrative must be examined carefully when they exhibit extended sections in the didactic voice. These passages are obviously the poet's last chance to utilize that voice to manipulate his audience toward intended conclusions. When the conclusion offers scanty moralizing only vaguely connected to the rest in the work such as Wolfram's does, we may conclude that its presence is conventional. If, however, the didactic voice controls much of the final commentary, we must examine it more carefully. We must discover whether connection to other intrusions can provide a more complete sense of progression in the narrative technique and the response it is intended to elicit or whether its incongruous addition should suggest a poet behind the voice who will accede to convention, but not without giving us clues of his unwil-

lingness to do so. No matter what the conclusion reached, it should be based upon examination of patterns in the didactic intrusion and not simply on the action of the story itself.

Didactic Amplification of Details

The didactic narrator also intrudes in the main body of the narrative to comment, clarify, or expand upon the details of the story or its theme.[26] In brief intrusions he may explain an incident or justify an opinion on a character. In other places he may go on for several lines in a sort of sermonette lecturing the audience on a theme related to the action or perhaps even in a digressive theme. Each intrusion of this type must be examined individually for its immediate effect upon the narrative and for its part in the whole system of the didactic intrusions.

Many of these internal didactic intrusions may also be classified as rhetorical devices suggested for amplification of the points. In particular the use of parenthesis, correctio, and qualifications like moderatio fall into the category of didactic intrusions. Bede, for example, describes parenthesis as the interruption of a thought "by inserting a reasoned explanation."[27] In one way many of the didactic intrusions fall into this category because they offer expansion on a point, an added description or explanation to make the detail of the narrative more easily understood and also more easily connected to the general messages behind that detail and story.

When these interruptions serve to alter a point through restatement or understatement, they may be seen as versions of correctio or moderatio. Alberic, for example, describes the purpose behind correctio in terms equally applicable to the purpose of a didactic narrator and his emphasis on levels of meanings when he explains: "This type of figure either

allows one to rise to a higher plane or it disdains one expression and replaces it with another."[28] When the poet wishes to emphasize the seriousness of a point, he may utilize this kind of alteration. Often, especially in Chaucer, however, we may find such highflown interruptions used to restate a trivial matter. In cases like these we must examine the passage for the presence of verbal irony.

Closely associated to correctio and equally often used for ironic emphasis is the figure moderatio. Here the narrator alters what he has said with the tone of recantation. Again Alberic clarifies the technique with emphasis on the level of the work and the suitability of certain kinds of phrasing: "This is a technique which points out, as it were, a new light on what was written; it does not spare the object, but seems to soften the attack on a thing by suggesting other words as somehow more suitable. Here let us append an example from Horace (Ars Poetica 270-272): yet our ancestors were wont to hear Plautus and his rhymes, / And to praise them, to enjoy his wit; this admiration was tolerant / (I shall not say foolish) to an extreme."[29] What Alberic does not note here but what seems more than obvious is that in refusing to call the fashion foolish Horace actually does just that. He leaves us with the conviction that he feels those who so admired Plautus were in fact fools.

One other qualification which Alberic relates to moderatio and correctio also may be included under the didactic intrusion because it clarifies a point just made. This type is based on the use of qualifying phrases like "as if," "somehow," "I wouldn't say," or "more accurately, I should have said" (p.161). The use of such softening phrases is aimed specifically at controlling the reader's response. Alberic explains the reasons for using the technique and its effect in this way: "when added, it will please the reader more than the others; pleasing him, it will

move him and serve its purpose; serving its purpose it will enhance and sell the work. Rarity will further strengthen it" (p.161). The careful use of such qualifications, is, therefore, an important part of writing in order to control the response of the audience.

If we find these kinds of brief qualifications, we may consider them first of all as rhetorical tropes. If, however, we begin to discover such qualifications in abundance, in incongruous positions in the narrative or in combination with other related intrusions, then we must examine them as evidence of conscious manipulation on the part of the poet. The controlling force behind the narrator may utilize such standard rhetorical techniques like these simply for rhetorical ornamentation. But he may also employ the ornamentation in such a way that forces us to step back to re-evaluate the narration and so to judge the story and its characters. Other rhetorical devices which likewise create that distance from the story may also be used by the didactic narrator to compell the audience to consider the work separate from its own sympathies for the characters.

Explanations of Actions. The intrusions which explain an action in the narrative are generally the least complicated in terms of their length and the audience involvement. They are, however, likely to be the ones which seem the least necessary and so may be the most ironic of these internal lessons. In his explanation of actions the narrator often clarifies points that are already clear. In a related way he may also use such intrusions to call attention to a question that the audience had not considered, thus changing its attitude toward the action. The narrator's careful instruction to the audience on how it is to understand

the actions is the dominant pose in each of these kinds of intrusions.

An obvious example of the ironic use of such explanations is the comment to the audience about Parzival's method for preventing his falling with his horse down a deep gulley. After his joust with a templar from Munsalvaesche, as the horse plunges headlong down the gulley Parzival grabs a cedar bough with both hands. The narrator has already been lecturing the audience by describing the joust in terms a teacher might use to explain where to land a blow on an opposing knight. At the point when Parzival grabs the tree, he breaks in to caution the audience: "nû jehts im niht ze schanden, / daz er sich âne schergen hienc" (9.445, 2-3: "now do not account it a disgrace in him that he hanged himself without an executioner," Hatto, p.228). This sudden and dramatically incongruous instruction can only be meant for the humor. The tension developed in the joust has built to a crucial point when Parzival's horse smashes itself down the gulley. But the narrator's unusual reference to the hangman here breaks the tension and underscores the comedy in this rather odd manner of dismounting. Parzival is safe, and the audience is forced to stop and note the almost ridiculous image of him dangling in full armor from a cedar tree. Again, as so often happens in this tale, the narrator has undercut the knight's dignity by emphasizing the oddity--if also the resourcefulness--in his behavior.

In much the same way that the narrator calls our attention to the comedy in Parzival's dismounting, Chaucer's narrator calls our attention to a crucial question in the love between Troilus and Criseyde. In Book Two when Criseyde begins to think kindly about Troilus' prowess, renown, and devotion to herself, the narrator breaks in with three stan-

zas trying to counter any suggestion that her love for him was too sudden and, therefore, possibly insubstantial:

> Now myghte som envious jangle thus:
> "This was a sodeyn love; how myght it be
> That she so lightly loved Troilus,
> Right for the firste syghte, ye, parde?"
> Now whoso seith so, mote he nevere ythe!
> For every thyng, a gynnyng hath it nede
> Er al be wrought, withowten any drede.
>
> For I sey nought that she so sodeynly
> Yaf hym hire love, but that she gan enclyne
> To like hym first, and I have told yow whi;
> And after that, his manhod and his pyne
> Made love withinne hire herte for to myne,
> For which, by proces and by good servyse,
> He gat hire love, and in no sodeyn wyse.
>
> And also blisful Venus, wel arrayed,
> Sat in hire seventhe hous of hevene tho,
> Disposed wel, and with aspectes payed,
> To helpe sely Troilus of his woo.
> And, soth to seyne, she nas not al a foo
> To Troilus in his nativitee;
> God woot that wel the sonner spedde he.
> (2,666-686)

The elaborate advance response to the jangling of the envious emphasizes the fact that there is a case to be made about the suddenness of Criseyde's love.[30] The response that "every thyng a gynnyng hath" is characteristic of this narrator who, like Pandarus, greets difficult situations with platitudes and proverbs. His explanation that first she began to "enclyne to like hym" and then his worthiness made love in her heart does not, of course, answer the criticism that the narrator has himself proposed. Even though she follows the logical stages in falling in love and even though Venus herself is on Troilus' side, the narrator still does not manage to respond to the question of whether this was not a "sodeyn love." The implication in his defense is that its origins were natural, perhaps even fated. But we are, nevertheless, left with that question about her sincerity in this sudden progression from inclination

to love, a question we might not have paused here to ask if the narrator himself had not suggested it for us first. When we come to the end of the story and have knowledge of its outcome equal to his, it is a question that we are compelled to return to as we make our final judgments about both of Criseyde's loves and the meaning of the tale.

The narrator's commentary on the action in the story may also serve to point out a real lesson behind the tale rather than just to emphasize minor details or questions of plot. For example, Dante's Pilgrim meeting Fra Alberigo in the ninth circle of Hell promises to clear the damned man's eyes of ice if he will tell his story, but when the story is finished, the Pilgrim says: "E io non lil' apersi; / e cortesia fu lùi esser villano" (33,149-50): "And I did not open them for him; and it was courtesy to be a churl to him," p.413). The refusal to clear the man's eyes after the promise to do so would seem criminal were we not reminded by the extra comment that such treatment is due those in Cocytus. These are the traitors; Fra Alberigo for the horror of his crime is tormented in Hell even before his body has left life. Responding without sympathy, in fact responding in treachery, to such a one is presented here as the only kind of courtesy possible. At this point we have a dramatic commentary on the Pilgrim's development from the faint-hearted and sympathetic man who wept earlier at the pains of the damned to the coldly rational man who accepts the justice of damnation and adds his own personal bit of punishment. Without the brief explanation of why he refuses to help Fra Alberigo, we would be left wondering and would no doubt condemn the Pilgrim for his own treachery.

The intrusions which explain details of the action thus serve to maintain a certain level of audience awareness. They suggest for us

connections between individual incidents and the rest of the narrative.[31] They may also emphasize a certain overriding tone or encourage us to contemplate particular directions in the plot.[32] At times they may even force us to connect minor incidents to overall themes. No matter what their individual function, they all compell us to follow the narrator and withdraw--if only momentarily--from our involvement in the action to examine it as a story. We must become as self-conscious as audience members as the narrator is as storyteller.

Commentary on Characters. Those intrusions which comment on a character within the story reveal the didactic narrator at his most human. Here we find him justifying or even at times rationalizing the action of characters as people and not just as figures in a story. He responds to them as one person to another, explaining their feelings or behavior in much the same appeal to common experience that the historian uses in establishing the credibility of his tale. By directing the intrusions in this way the didactic narrator draws us into the tale in a different way. Rather than standing back to notice the details of the narrative as we do in the commentary on action, we respond to these intrusions in a much more personal way because the narrator himself responds more personally. We follow his direction and view the characters as people and so in a subtle way take their story as more applicable to our own lives. Here again we have a touch of what might be termed realism in the sense that we appreciate the humanity of the characters and not just their symbolic nature.

Wolfram's narrator is particularly fond of commenting on character. Repeatedly throughout the story he pauses to tell us how he feels about a character. These judgments may be in direct opposition to the impres-

sion the story itself gives. Most often these comments are directed toward the female characters who, considering the didactic narrator's tirades against certain types of women, might be misjudged if he did not explain his real attitude toward them. Such a one is the lady Antikonie who allows herself to be all but seduced by Gawan and then when they are discovered and assailed leads him to a turret joining him in the fight by throwing heavy chess pieces at their pursuers. In this situation Antikonie hardly maintains the role of a lady. In fact, the narrator compares her to the market women at Dollenstein who fight in ruffian games at Shrovetide (8,409, 5-11). This image is not, however, one that befits a lady Gawan is wooing and the daughter of a noble. So the narrator pauses briefly in his description of this almost comic battle of chessmen to comment:

> swâ harnasrâmec wirt ein wîp,
> diu hât ir rehtes vergezzen,
> sol man ir kiusche mezzen,
> si entuoz dan durch ir triuwe. (8.409, 12-15)

> (If one were asked to judge of their modesty, women who begrime themselves with armour forget their nature, unless loyal affection inspires them, Hatto, p. 210).

Antikonie cannot be criticized for befouling herself, therefore, since her actions are inspired solely by her love for Gawan.

In case Antikonie has nonetheless suffered in the opinions of the members of the audience, the narrator later breaks off once more to extol her and re-establish her image as a virtuous lady. When Gawan finally makes peace with her brother, she leads him before the crowd to the King. Once again the narrator interrupts to describe this lady who was first mentioned as having bought a great store of modesty (8.404,24-7):

> mit lobe wir solden grüezen
> die kiuschen und die süezen
> vroun Antikonîen,
> vor valscheit die vrîen,

wan si lebete in solhen siten,
daz ninder was underriten
ir prîs mit valschen worten.
alle die ir prîs gehôrten,
ieslîch munt ir wunschte dô
daz ir prîs bestüende alsô
bewart vor valscher trüeben jehe.
lûter virree als ein valkensehe
was balsemmaezec staete an ir.
daz riet ir werdeclîchiu gir. (8.427, 5-18)

(We should welcome sweet, modest, true-hearted Antikonie with praises, for her conduct was such that her good name was never overrun by calumny. All who ever learned of her high repute would wish that it should stand unclouded by murky slander. Her constancy, lambent as balm, was clear and far-sighted as a falcon's eyes urged on by a noble keenness, Hatto, pp.218-19).

After these descriptions we can hardly doubt that we are to understand Antikonie as an example of a true lady. Her behavior is not to be understood as frivolous or common, but as dictated by her love for Gawan. The narrator's high praises of her make Gawan's forgetting her later an obvious comment on the fidelity of this notorious Knight.

Not all this narrator's justifications of characters, however, can be accepted with equal ease by the audience. When Gawan escorts the lady Orgeluse, for example, we have difficulty in understanding why the narrator exonerates her after giving such vivid descriptions of her pride and ruthlessness (10.516,3-14). Later in the tale we discover that she has been all along a heart-broken woman wanting someone to help her in revenge. Such eventual support of the narrator's estimation does not always follow, however.

When Chaucer's narrator in the Troilus must at last turn to description of Criseyde's betrayal, he tries to soften the condemnation first by telling us that no auctour relates how long a time elapsed before she began to love Diomede over Troilus and then by telling us simply how he himself feels about her and the infamy the story has connected to her name:

> Ne me ne list this sely womman chyde
> Forther than the storye wol devyse.
> Hire name, allas! is punysshed so wide,
> That for hire gilt it oughte ynough suffise.
> And if I myghte excuse hire any wise,
> For she so sory was for hire untrouthe,
> Iwis, I wolde excuse hire yet for routhe.
> (5,1093-99)

Here the narrator's sympathies for Criseyde are at their most obvious.[33] He bewails the fact that her name is slandered and himself forbears to punish her further out of pity, knowing she has already suffered much. This reaction is that of one person to another, not that of narrator to character. At this point we lose the sense of Criseyde as simply a character in a story even though we have the narrator before us discussing his own storytelling.[34] Because he responds to her personally and sympathetically, we too are encouraged to respond in those ways.[35] We are led to believe that she had been duly repentent for her infidelity, although we will never be shown her sorrow as we are shown that of Troilus.

Just when we might begin to judge Criseyde harshly, therefore, the narrator steps in to give us a lesson on her character. His guidance does not allow us to come to our own conclusions drawn from the action of the story. He tells us how she feels, how he feels, and in consequence how we should feel about her actions. In this way we are in some manner prepared to see in her letter to Troilus the regret that might otherwise sound hollow and stiff in its restraint. We are also less surprised when the narrator in concluding dissociates himself from Criseyde's guilt and turns his last lecture to the general topic of betrayal and all those "false folk," in what seems almost an absolution of woman's infidelity. The concentration on the character as person here thus keeps us from reading the story as an example of the faithlessness of women and leads

us to think of Criseyde as another kind of victim of the instability of love.

In general, then, the straightforward discussions of characters serve to make us respond to them as people and, therefore, often create a more sympathetic reaction than the character's part in the story might warrant. Here we find the didactic narrator the most believable as a person. He responds to the characters as people, anticipates our reactions, and directs us to see them as people too and not to judge them simply as symbols representative of certain actions or types. Drawn into such personal response to the characters we are, thus, led to see the personal quality of their stories and to relate them to our own experiences, learning from their lessons.

Apostrophe to the Character. The form of didactic comment on characters which most often creates distance rather than sympathy is the apostrophe, also taken from the rhetoric of amplification. Though generally used for those semi-digressive sermonettes, the apostrophe may at times be directed to characters themselves. When this occurs we discover a paradoxical alteration in the narrator's, and consequently the reader's, involvement with that character. While it would seem logical that a direct address to a character would create a sense of personal response and sympathy, the opposite is more often true. When the narrator speaks to the character, rather than taking the character's side, he speaks out of a greater understanding of the events of the story than any available to the character. In other words, he displays his knowledge in a way that distances himself from the character. As the audience and companions to the narrator, we are necessarily on his side of such knowledge, and

so we too are distanced from the character. We may continue to view him as a person, but our perspective shows him severely limited in his understanding and therefore lower than we and less apt to involve us closely in his actions.

Chaucer's narrator's address to Troilus after his having received the first letter from Criseyde from the Greek camp illustrates the subtle way our sympathies are altered by this device. The narrator first describes Troilus as wondering why her letter sounded so light and so empty when his had been as tormented as he himself was. Then the narrator turns directly to Troilus to say:

> But Troilus, thow maist now, est or west,
> Pipe in any ivy lef, if that the lest!
> Thus goth the world. God shilde us fro meschaunce,
> And every wight that meneth trouthe avaunce!
> (5,1432-5)

This comment shows us dramatically Troilus' naïveté about the world. It also reveals it in a way that makes it seem less than charming. Such naïveté can be hazardous. Not to know that the world changes can only bring a person into pain. Troilus here is presented as a fool, while we join the narrator among the wise who ask for a shield from such mischance, fully aware all the while that such things happen.

By addressing the character the narrator has, then, withdrawn us from such immediate sympathy as his earlier description might have inspired. We are forced to step back from Troilus to see with the narrator's own broader vision. Instead of putting the narrator and the character on the same level as a direct address might suggest, it actually distances the two, once again defining the narrator as the man of wisdom, knowing much more about the world than his "sely" character.

The Narrator's Thematic Lectures

Closely related to the apostrophe to characters and often developing from them are those intrusions which address broader questions than action or character. These too may often take the form of apostrophes, addresses to the gods, to fortune, even to cities and the world itself.[36] Others may simply be short lectures on topics related to the actions or the themes of the story. No matter what form these intrusions take they constitute the most disruptive of all didactic interruptions because they force a complete abandonment of the story's action and characters and require us to turn our attention to larger topics. In many ways these lectures present the same tone as those framing didactic commentaries. The narrator steps back from the work not just to discuss it as a poem but to present it as a lesson, thus making his didactic tone most obvious.

Of the three works we have used as representative of the self-conscious narrator, Dante's Commedia is the most obviously didactic. Yet the didactic intrusions by its narrator are not nearly so frequent as we would at first believe. Instead the overt lecturing is generally done by the ghostly guides and various shades the Pilgrim encounters. When the narrator intrudes with his own commentary, it is, almost without exception, done in an address to a definite audience group or in an apostrophe. The apostrophes to cities in Italy are particularly interesting for the tone they present. Especially noteworthy among the apostrophes to cities is the narrator's address to his own city of Florence. After relating his encounter with five Florentines in the seventh level of Hell, that circle reserved for thieves, the narrator opens the next canto with this digressive tirade:

GODI, Fiorenza, poi che se' sì grande,
che per mare e per terra batti l'ali,
e per lo 'nferno tuo nome si spande!
Tra li ladron trovai cinque cotali
tuoi cittadini onde mi ven vergogna,
e tu in grande orranza non ne sali.
Ma se presso al mattin del ver si sogna,
tu sentirai di qua da picciol tempo
di quel che Prato, non ch'altri, t'agogna.
E se già fosse, non sarìa per tempo:
così foss'ei, da che pur esser dee!
chè più mi graverà, com più m'attempo.
(Inferno, 26,1-12)

(REJOICE, Florence, since thou art so great that over land and sea thou beatest thy wings and through Hell thy name is spread abroad! Among the thieves I found five such citizens of thine that shame for them comes on me and thou risest now to great honour by them. But if near morning our dreams are true, thou shalt feel ere long that which Prato, not to say others, craves for thee; and were it come already it would not be too soon. Would it were, since indeed it must, for it will weigh the more on me the more I age, p. 321)

The irony here is almost painful in its bitterness. The speaker praises and in so doing damns as he often does those other cities whose citizens he finds in the depths of the Inferno. But the condemnation becomes more pointed because the speaker's association with the city makes him grieve at its shame. That the citizens of Florence are so well represented among the damned is connected, as is usual on the subject of the city's troubles, to its political situation. The narrator's lesson to the city thus reflects his own hopes--that it will either correct itself willingly or else certain upheaval will force its alteration.

The narrator's address to Pisa is less personal and so in some ways more specifically critical than his rebuke to Florence. Discovering Ugolino, a citizen of Pisa in Cocytus, the narrator once again turns his angry judgment from the sinner to the city that spawned him and his murderer:

Ahi Pisa, vituperio delle genti
del bel paese là dove 'l sì sona,
poi che i vicini a te punir son lenti,
muovasi la Capraia e la Gorgona,
e faccian siepe ad Arno in su la foce,
sì ch'elli annieghi in te ogni persona!
Chè se 'l conte Ugolino aveva voce
d'aver tradita te delle castella,
non dovei tu i figliuoi porre a tal croce.
Innocenti facea l'età novella,
novella Tebe, Uguiccione e 'l Brigata
e li altri due che 'l canto suso appella.
(Inferno, 33,79=90)

(Ah, Pisa, shame of the peoples of the fair land where sounds the si, since thy neighbours are slow to punish thee may Capraia and Gorgona shift and put a bar on Arno's mouth so that it drown every soul in thee! What if Count Ugolino had the name of betraying thy strongholds, thou shouldst not have put his children to such torment. Their youthful years, thou new Thebes, made them innocent, Uguccione and Brigata and the other two named already in my song, p. 489).

The warning here is implicit in the fact that both representatives of Pisa are emprisoned in the lowest realm of Hell. The treachery that the city itself breeds is damned as its citizens are damned.[38] The city is condemned for its own sins by the comparision to Thebes, renouned for horrors in ancient myth. The narrator here warns Pisa that its neighbors may rise up against it--as had happened to Thebes--unless it alters its practises and ceases to spawn such sinners and to tolerate such atrocities as the story of the starvation Ugolino tells. Thus, the narrator has taken us away from the story, away even from the sinners themselves, to see that much of the guilt lies in the society that produced and accepted the crimes. We are forced to pass judgment, not just on the individuals but on the whole system.

This kind of step backward from the immediacy of the personal experience to the evaluation of the whole national system of city states is crucial to the direction of Dante's poem. That these apostrophes

come from the voice of one who has gone back into the tainted world and continues to speak for its reform is one of the most significant points about these lessons. We have here not just the voice of a narrator commenting on a story he is recounting; we have the voice of one lecturing his own contemporaries about a very real and immediate existence.

The didactic apostrophes in Parzival are much less pointedly social than in the Commedia. Here the narrator's long lectures turn on the subject of love with the narrator addressing Lady Love herself. Although he rails at her often in minor and major intrusions, his interruption in the scene when love has made Parzival entranced by the blood drops on the white snow and so a witless victim to the attacks by Arthur's knights is particularly pointed in its descriptions of the damages love fosters:

> vrou Minne, wie tuot ir so,
> daz ir den trûregen machet vro
> mit kurze wernder vreude?
> ir tuot in schiere teude.
> wie stêt iu daz, vrou Minne,
> daz ir manlîche sinne
> und herzehaften hôhen muot
> alsus enschumphieren tuot?
> daz smaehe und daz werde
> und swaz ûf der erde
> gein iu deheines strîtes phliget,
> dem habet ir schiere an gesiget.
> wir müezen iuch bî kreften lân
> mit rehter wârheit sunder wân,
> vrou Minne, ir habet ein êre
> und wênec deheine mêre:
> vrou Liebe iu gît geselleschaft,
> anders waere vil dürkel iuwer kraft.
> vrou Minne, ir phleget untriuwen:
> mit alden siten niuwen
> ir zucket manegem wîbe ir prîs
> und râtet in sippiu âmîs
> und daz manec herre an sînem man
> von iuwer kraft hât missetân
> und der vriunt an sînem gesellen
> (iuwer site kan sich hellen)
> und der man an sînem herren.
> vrou Minne, iu solde werren,
> daz ir den lîp der gir verwent:

dar umbe sich diu sêle sent.
vrou Minne, sît ir habet gewalt,
daz ir die jugent sus machet alt,
der man doch zelt vil kurziu jâr,
iuwer werc sint hâlscharlîcher vâr.
(6.291,1-292,4)

(Mistress Love why do you cheer an unhappy man with such short-lived joy? For swiftly do you slay him. Is it seemly in you, Mistrezs Love, to overthrow manly sentiment and stout-hearted aspiration so utterly? In how short a space do you win the victory over noble and base alike and everything on earth that is at war with you! Truly beyond all doubt we must concede your might. Mistress Love, you have one merit and no others: Mistress Affection keeps you company. Else would your rule be sadly wanting!

Mistress Love, with old ways ever-new you foster disloyalties. You snatch their good name from many women; you prompt them to take lovers over-near of kin. Under your suasion many a lord has wronged his vassal, vassals their lords, friends their companions; thus do your ways lead to Hell. Mistress Love, you should be ashamed that you inure the body to such craving as will bring the soul to torment. Mistress Love, since you have power to age the young in this fashion when youth is in any case so brief, your works bear the cast of perfidy, Hatto, p. 152).

Here we have a concise survey of all the ills created by love. From the brief happiness followed quickly by despair to the sapping of manly courage and even ultimately to social disruption, love inspires, according to the narrator, not the best but the worst in men. This commentary is quite opposite what we might expect from a courtly epic, yet it does, in fact, correspond to much of what Wolfram's story shows us.

The service to Minne that we find in Parzival is not such an ennobling thing for the knight as it is in other tales of the period.[39] Gawan is the only knight we see performing deeds to win the love of a lady and the depiction of his adventures hardly show him as a model for knighthood. In the service of Orgeleuse, he looks, in fact, somewhat foolish. Parzival himself does not spend his energies in service to his love. Instead, he devotes himself to re-discovering the gral and asking the all-important

question he had failed to pose on his first view of it. In his adventures he uses his own skill at arms and his courtesy, but he does not depend to any great degree upon his love. When he finds the blood drops in the snow and stands in a trance dreaming of his wife, he too becomes less knightly, and so the narrator intrudes to condemn Vrowe Minne. Only after the spots are covered so he can no longer see them does Parzival return to himself and the sense of his knighthood. Despite the fact that he sends defeated knights to pay homage to various ladies, his service to love does not finally win for him the second chance at the gral. Only his constancy to hi knightly code and to affection sustain him through to the end.

Because Minne is short-lived and divisive, the narrator's tirade serves to remind us of things of greater importance. We are not allowed to see Parzival's behavior at this point as noble or admirable. Instead, because of the narrator's commentary, we view him as we might view someone suffering from a sickness that drains his strength. Thus, the narrator keeps us conscious of the direction of his story, preventing us from being sidetracked into considering love as an ever-ennobling force, so often prominent in its depiction in other courtly epics.

Chaucer's narrator also manipulates his internal lectures to keep us conscious of themes behind the story's action. When, for example, the proud Troilus is ensnared by love early in the first book, the didactic narrator breaks off from the story in one of his longest internal lectures. From his apostrophe on the world and people's ignorance of its ways, he proceeds to the point that man cannot refuse to love without denying his nature and so should let himself love to receive its ennobling effects--a point on the surface quite the opposite of Wolfram's narrator's commentary.

To emphasize the ridiculousness of attempting to avoid love the narrator uses a parable of the animal world:

> As proude Bayard gynneth for to skippe
> Out of the weye, so pryketh hym his corn,
> Til he a lasshe have of the longe whippe;
> Than thynketh he, "Though I praunce al byforn
> First in the trays, ful fat and newe shorn,
> Yet am I but an hors, and horses lawe
> I moot endure, and with my feres drawe."
> (1,218-24)

The comparison that follows is a pointed one because it turns from the horse and "horses lawe" to the "fierse and proude knyght" who is "a worthy kynges sone." If the knight is subject to the same kinds of laws of nature as the horse, we see him suddenly not just as proud, but rather as foolish as the horse if he believes he can escape his own traces.[40]

The narrator uses this subtle denigration to form the basis of the next stage in his lecture. Turning to the audience even more obviously than before, he warns the "wise, proude, and worthi folkes alle" (1,233) to learn from the lesson of this knight. There is no doubt a careful irony here in characterizing the audience members who need to learn with two of the adjectives used to describe Troilus. The addition of the term wise is the key alteration here. They may be just as proud as the knight, but being wise they thus have a chance to avoid his folly and to learn from his story. We are essentially back to the same message that the opening and closing lectures give us: learn from the story of Troilus.

At this point in the narrative, however, the lesson to be learned is somewhat different from that in the concluding stanzas of the poem. Here we have only the preparation for love's beginnings, not the whole last commentary on the transience of love. The narrator sums up the lesson on nature with these lines:

> For evere it was, and evere it shal byfalle
> That Love is he that alle thing may bynde,
> For may no man fordon the lawe of kynde. (1,236-8)

If, then, no one can avoid loving, if it is what makes all men alike or what binds them into one kind of being, the only possible course is to accept love and gain from its experience.

> And trewelich it sit wel to be so
> For alderwisest han therwith ben plesed;
> And they that han been aldermost in wo,
> With love han ben comfoted moost and esed;
> And ofte it hath the cruel herte apesed.
> And worthi folk maad worthier of name,
> And causeth moost to dreden vice and shame.
>
> Now sith it may not goodly ben withstonde,
> And is a thing so vertuous in kynde,
> Refuseth nat to Love for to ben bonde,
> Syn, as hymselven liste, he may yow bynde.
> The yerde is bet that bowen wole and wynde
> Than that that brest; and therfore I how rede
> To folowen hym that so wel kan yow lede.
> (1,246-59)

From this point the narrator returns to the story of the King's son "bothe of his joie and of his cares colde" (1,264). We are given, therefore, a lesson on what we should at this stage learn from the story Troilus. The commentary on the inevitability of love and on its potential for bringing relief from pain and ennoblement of character leads us to the conclusion that one should not avoid love. Finally, we are told, with some ambiguity, to follow "hym that can so wel yow lede." Whether the "hym" here is Love, Troilus, or perhaps even the narrator himself, we are left to decide. Ultimately, all three will lead us to the same conclusion when we have learned all that we can learn from love in this "blynde world" with all its "blynde entencioun."

We have, then, in the first book of Troilus and Criseyde an early moral for the tale. We must learn not to deny our own nature, but learn

to love and gain all that we can from the experience. Finally, we must learn from the experience of others when it offers, as does the experience of Troilus, a lesson for the worthy and proud who are yet wise enough to learn about love from other sources than their own experience. Thus, the narrator has moved from his simple commentary on the blindness of the world to a general explanation of how to approach the story he has to tell and what it offers in its first stages. By the time we come to the end of this lecture we have come a long way from our involvement in the story of how Troilus falls in love with Criseyde and have gone a long way to understanding the comments we will encounter at the end of the tale. The lecture digresses because it removes us from immediate sympathy with the action, but it also connects to the story because it brings us back to our involvement with a broadened perspective and a clearer understanding of the lessons that story offers.

The most important point to be made here about the internal commentary lecturing on broader themes is that it does not digress from the whole effect of the story no matter how disruptive it may seem. While such commentary does take us away from the details of the narrative in a much more drastic way than the commentary on characters or actions, it suggests to us other perceptions of the story which other kinds of commentary cannot. Consequently, we are drawn away from the incidentals of the narrative and made to see the whole pattern. Rather than enhancing our understanding of the story by explaining its details, it helps us understand the messages behind that story, thus directing us in internal commentary much the same way we are directed by those framing comments discussed earlier. This last connection is an essential one, for without a sense of similarity between these internal topical intrusions and the framing lectures we lose the sense of a unified story. If there are incompatible variations in the lessons

these two present, we must perceive them as the possible result of an overriding irony and turn our attention in that direction. Very close compatibility with the framing sections will, on the other hand, help us to conclude that these overtly didactic sections have not been simply pasted on in order to make the story socially acceptable. These internal lectures are, therefore, essential to our understanding of how the meaning of the poem is to be discovered and understood.

Conclusions

The subject of the didactic narrator in medieval narrative is a complex one which even this extended discussion cannot hope to treat thoroughly. For an age that perhaps more than any before or since concentrated on the morals behind even the most obviously secular story, that intrusive voice lecturing on the greater truths can only have been a recognizable staple of narrative technique. The fact that the rhetorical handbooks of the time instruct writers in the best methods to make such didactic clarifications substantiates the assertion that this voice is one of the most carefully manipulated in the narrative. What we must remember about the presence of this didactic narrator is just that attention. It is a carefully planned and controlled voice which may create a variety of effects designed with equal consciousness.

Perhaps the most important function of the didactic narrator is also one of the most curical of any of the self-conscious intrusions: they define the audience and suggest the point of view it is to assume in examining the meaning. This function fits neatly between those intrusions which swear to the truth of the story and those organizational intrusions which guide us through the often labyrinthine incidents of the medieval narrative. Just as the attestations of truth verify the historical truth and, there-

fore, the importance of the story, these intrusions verify the higher truths to be found in it. Further, like the organizational intrusions to be discussed in the next chapter, didactic intrusions provide a way of organizing and interpreting what may seem a series of unrelated incidents by directing our attention to the reasons for characters' behavior and other actions and by suggesting meanings for the whole complex action of the story. As such the didactic voice provides one of the best examples of the poet's conscious manipulation of narrator, text, and audience.

In no way, however, should we necessarily assume that this voice is the major voice or the one which suggests the most important view of the story. Because the didactic voice is the one that interprets the narrative for meanings, we may, if not careful, accept those interpretations as the "real" message of the story. This limited approach to the rich texture of narrative technique can create a faulty picture of medieval narrative.

This didactic voice is one of a larger complex of voices. We should not let the obviousness of its intrusions or a vociferous critical controversy lead us into the careless conclusion that the obvious presence of this didactic strain signals an underlying allegory or even a predominantly didactic sentiment. What we should see instead is the pattern which the kinds of didactic intrusions create and examine that pattern as one piece of the whole puzzle of narrative voices. Compatibility between the kinds of didactic intrusions themselves and between these didactic intrusions and those of other narrative voices will suggest a more complete interpretation of the story.

Notes for Chapter Three

[1]St. Augustine, "Against Lying," in The Fathers of the Church, vol. 14 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1952, pp. 161-2.

[2]Cited in Murphy, Rhetoric in the Middle Ages, p. 308.

[3]"Topical Invention in Medieval French Literature," in Medieval Eloquence, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1978), p. 235.

[4]Ernest Gallo, "The Poetria Nova of Geoffrey of Vinsauf," in Medieval Eloquence, pp. 80-1.

[5]See the treatise of the Poetria Nova and commentary on its methods in: Ernest Gallo, The Poetria Nova and Its Sources in Early Rhetorical Doctrine (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), pp. 24-51 and pp. 166-95.

[6]Cited in Murphy, Rhetoric in the Middle Ages, pp. 177-9.

[7]Alberic of Monte Cassino, Flowers of Rhetoric, trans. Joseph M. Miller, in Readings in Medieval Rhetoric, eds. Joseph M. Miller, Michael H. Prosser and Thomas W. Benson (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1973), p. 134.

[8]The Nature of Narrative, pp. 140-1.

[9]A Preface to Chaucer (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1962), p. 287.

[10]J.M. Lotman, "Point of View in Fiction," trans. L. M. O'Toole, New Literary History, 6 (1974-75), 341-2.

[11]"The Idea of Public Poetry in the Reign of Richard II," Speculum, 53 (Jan. 1978), 95.

[12]Norman Friedman, "Point of View," p. 1171.

[13]The Rhetoric of Fiction, pp. 177-95.

[14]We often tend to think of that audience in the medieval romance as somehow representative of the actual audience. Yet the audience as a part of the story must be taken as a device of the narrative. Mehl explains that even something like the frontispiece to the Corpus Christi Ms showing Chaucer reading to his audience is in all likelihood as much a result of the sense of the audience in the narrative itself as it is a reproduction of an actual reading ("The Audience of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," p. 173). For another commentary on the audience as represented in this illumination see: Alfred David, The Strumpet Muse (Bloomington, Ind.: Univ. Indiana Press, 1975), p. 10.

[15]Indicator, "Fictionalization: The Poetics of Literary Self-Consciousness," p. 8.

[16]Note for example Frost's cryptic comment on the narrator in Troilus: "As a guide, however, he is periodically but conveniently nearsighted" ("Narrative Devices in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," p. 36). What is actually more an explanation for this "nearsighted" pose is that the various narrative postures are in many ways exclusive of each other, each controlling its own area of knowledge in a sort of literary split personality.

[17]"Fictionalization," p. 12.

[18]See Kratz's commentary on the traditional nature of many of the "digressions" to the audience in Parzival for example (Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, p. 109 and p. 117).

[19]Rhetoric in the Middle Ages, pp. 294-6.

[20]Listed in Murphy, Rhetoric in the Middle Ages, p. 215.

[21]As Curschmann says of the audience address in Willehalm and Parzival: "The imaginary audience is used to create a live audience that will respond more readily to the intricacies of a highly involved narrative, that is, after all, communicated orally" ("The French, The Audience and the Narrator in Wolfram's Willehalm," p. 554).

[22]See the discussions of this metaphor's preparation for the canto offered by Edmund G. Gardner, Dante's Ten Heavens (1900; rpt. Freeport: Books for Libraries, 1972), pp. 55-7, and Robin Kirkpatrick, Dante's Paradiso and the Limitations of Modern Criticism (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977), pp. 108-12.

[23]Alberic of Monte Cassino, "Flowers of Rhetoric," in Readings in Medieval Rhetoric, pp. 133-4.

[24]Poag points out that the prologue was notorious even in Wolfram's time for its "dicing terms," that is, the haphazard way it threw things together (Wolfram von Eschenbach, pp. 42-3). The agressive tone and other textual evidence has led to the speculation that it was added after much of the story had been presented and, it is supposed, objected to because of its obscure passages. See Kratz, Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, p. 171.

[25]As a sample of the commentary on this passage we find: Gallagher's discussion of the sinful, vain story in "Theology and Intention in Chaucer's Troilus," Chaucer Rev., 7 (1971), 44-66: Donaldson's early comment on the modesty topos and the success it gave the Palinode in Speaking of Chaucer (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970), pp. 84-101, and his later comment that it is "an uphill battle against a reduction to silence, a valiant effort to find something constructive to say about what he had so lovingly created, an effort to fill the emptiness" which Donaldson feels ultimately fails, in"Chaucer's Three P's: Pandarus, Pardoner and Poet," Michigan Quarterly

Rev., 14(1971), 300; Garbaty's connection of the Palinode's reference to "tragedye" to other sources and the significance for the work, in "Troilus V. 1786-92 and V. 1807-27: An Example of Poetic Process," Chaucer Rev., 11 (1977), 299-305; atlock's discussion of the six stages in the conclusion in "The Epilog of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyede," Modern Philology, 18 (1921), 625-26; and finally Steadman's thorough discussion of the enforced distance in the Palinode and its relation to the rest of the narrative in Disembodied Laughter (Berkeley: Univ. California Press, 1972), pp. 143-67.

[26]See Curschmann's discussion of the narrator's commentary aimed at explicating the "narrative content" ("The French, The Audience and the Narrator in Wolfram's Willehalm," p. 554).

[27]Bede, De Schematibus et Tropis, in Readings in Medieval Rhetoric, trans. Gussie Hecht Tannehaus, p. 113.

[28]Alberic, "The Flowers of Rhetoric," Readings in Medieval Rhetoric, p. 160.

[29]"The Flowers of Rhetoric," p. 161.

[30]There is an interesting variation of opinion on this passage. Elizabeth Salter explains it as evidence of the poet's honest fear that he is not being obvious enough in his narrative, a comment which does not seem likely since the passage is not accompanied by any of the standard lamentations about not being able to express the situation correctly; see "Troilus and Criseyde: A reconsideration," in Patterns of Love and Courtesy (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), p. 95. On the other hand, Gordon (The Double Sorrow, pp. 81-3) and Donaldson (Speaking of Chaucer, pp. 66-7) both maintain that the narrator's own comment introduces the idea of our objecting about the rapidity with which Criseyde gives her heart to Troilus, thus encouraging our doubt of her rather than apposing it.

[31]See Frost's discussion of the way such commentary frames scenes and so provides a clear idea of the development ("Narrative Devices in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," p. 37).

[32]These intrusions may also be used ironically, for, as Mehl points out, they may make "simple judgements in order to suggest to us how inadequate such judgements are" ("The Audience of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," p. 180).

[33]See Gordon's comment on this passage that here the narrator's voice is no longer ambivuous but is instead "the voice of the mature, humane poet himself" (The Double Sorrow, p. 87).

[34]Passages such as this one have sparked commentary like Donaldson's explanation that the narrator wants us to think the best of Criesyde and that above all the important point is to realize that he loves her (Speaking of Chaucer, p. 68).

[35]Mehl suggests that Chaucer's is a kind of two-way didacticism with equal exchange from the narrator and the audience ("The Audience of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," pp. 186-7).

[36]Allen C. Koretsky points out that the narrator in Troilus has the most apostrophes next to the two main characters themselves, "Chaucer's Use of The Apostrophe in Troilus and Criseyde," Chaucer Rev., 4 (1970), 252.

[37]See J. A. Symond's discussion of the satire in this passage: Introduction to the Study of Dante, 4th ed (1872; rpt. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906).

[38]See Cambon's discussion of the pain also implicit here in the love for the language and the corruption of the sins of those who use it (Dante's Craft, p. 43).

[39]See Poag's discussion of the Ovidian tradition and Starkiu minne in this scene: "Wolfram von Eschenbach's Metamorphosis of the Ovidian Tradition," Monatshefte, 57 (1965), 64-74.

[40]For the two ways of interpreting this passage see Elizabeth Salter's conclusion that it is a serious didactic comment on the futility of trying to avoid love ("Troilus and Criseyde: A Reconsideration," pp. 91-2), and Ida Gordon's discussion of the ambiguities and irony at work in the comparison of a man in love to a horse in traces (The Double Sorrow, pp. 65-9). Jordan (The Shape of Creation, pp. 93-4) and Frost ("Narrative Devices in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," pp. 35-6) share Gordon's opinion on the irony of this passage. Examination of succeeding passages in the poem will show a paradox in the statements made here and the eventual result of giving in to love and, thus, emphasizes the irony in the situation of the poem's main action.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE NARRATOR AS GUIDE

> Our doctrine is, that the author and the reader should move along together in full confidence with each other. Let the personnages of the drama undergo ever so complete a comedy of errors among themselves, but let the spectator never mistake the Syracusan for the Ephesian; otherwise he is one of the dupes, and the part of a dupe is never dignified.
>
> Trollope from Barchester Towers.

While intrusions attesting the truth of the story may at times suggest a common humanity shared by narrator and audience and while didactic intrusions may offer guidance in drawing conclusions on the lessons of the story, no intrusions provide the sense of companionship and guidance that the organizational narrator does.[1] In these intrusions the narrator appears most clearly as the teller of the story. He knows all the details and, in fact, often knows details of other related stories remaining unknown to us except through his summaries. Here he assumes complete control, making it clear to us how the lines of the story connect and even at times forcing such connections by his manipulation of the threads of the story. What the didactic narrator does for the themes of the story, the organizational narrator does for the plot. One important difference, however, is the way in which this narrator approaches the audience. Although he retains control over the story, he assumes the role of guide in such a way that we feel we are being led through the complex of incidents by an old

friend.[2] The narrator may even pause in the midst of a description to address us directly and ask what more we would like to hear.

Such easy familiarity reduces the obviousness of the narrator's manipulations, thus making us less likely to notice unusual transitions or juxtapositions. In this way we do not feel that the narrator is interfering with our perceptions of the story, as we may with the didactic narrator. Upon examination, however, we will often discover that the conscious interruption in the plot and the handling of incidents has indeed its own subtle effect on our responses.[3] The effects of this narrator are unequalled in subtlety by any intrusions except perhaps those attesting the truth. In fact, the variety of effects created by these kinds of intrusions offers a remarkable example of the way a conscious poet can utilize a necessary convention to underscore his work.

The Importance of the Narrator in Long Oral Narrative

The starting point for a discussion of the organizational narrator must be a recognition of the essential differences in medieval narrative from the modern. These differences appear in the presentation of the narrative and in its structure. Both provide justifications for including an organizational narrator.

As explained briefly in the first chapter, the most striking difference in medieval and modern narrative is that the medieval story was generally intended for public recitation. Whether the poet himself delivered the poem before his patrons, as we see in representations of Chaucer's reading to Richard's court, or whether another reader presented it, the story would have been recited to an audience. This recitation in itself would have created peculiar technical difficulties with which modern

storytellers need not concern themselves. William Nelson summarizes the resulting effect on plot in his study of the transition from essentially oral to privately read stories:

> The author of a short narrative which can be read aloud in an hour or two may indeed, like a playwright, conceive his tale as a complex but unified whole, with beginning, middle, and end. But for long works which require many reading sessions, perhaps with shifting audiences, such unitary plotting can have little meaning. The listener cannot remind himself of the antecedents of the action, nor, for that matter, can he skip ahead to see how it ends. The author may introduce an episode with a brief reference to the situation described in an earlier reading, enough to remind the forgetful and to allow a newcomer in the audience to follow the story. Like the serial novelist, too, he may incorporate a continuing narrative involving characters who re-appear from time to time. But unless the end of the story is known beforehand, the author cannot depend upon a concluding resolution to justify and give meaning to beginning and middle. Nor for that matter, need a work of this kind, like a television soap opera, have an end at all.[4]

Thus, the episodic nature of the long recited narrative is in itself a justification for the inclusion of a controlling voice. For the plot to insure the audience's understanding of the story depends either upon a unified plot line or upon a single sitting recitation. But an episodic work extending into several books, as does Parzival, would take much longer than one evening to hear. The result is that some method to connect incidents must be used so that the audience will be able to follow the story. An organizing narrator offers just such control.

Nelson's point that the demands of recitation may have helped foster episodic narrative structure suggests again the crucial function of the organizing narrator's commentary on the episodes. Far from being Aristotelian in its structure, the medieval narrative was most often based on an altogether different architectonic.[5] In the more sophisticated works, the narrator's guiding commentary on the action is hardly the sign of a disjointed narrative; rather it is a unifying element. As Jordan explains

of Chaucer's narrator in the Troilus, for example, the organizing voice points out the intricacies of the action and smoothes the difficulties of following the plot:

> In guiding us through the linear ordonnance of the story the narrator fulfills one of the major requirements of the Gothic--the clarification of structural design. His apparent gaucherie and frequent overstatement only increase our awareness of how closely the poem follows the Gothic penchant for "clarification for clarifications sake." Not only structurally but also with reference to content and meaning, the narrator's explicitness maintains the poem's close association with principles of medieval aesthetics. . . . The process of composition, whether architectural or poetic, begins with a preconception of the nature of the truth and proceeds deductively to represent it in exemplary fashion, disposing of the parts within the controlling framework.[6]

Thus the presence of the narrator who directs our attention to that framework is essential to our correct apprehension of the story. The lines of the plot which may seem like so many loose threads in some chivalric romances, as for example in Parzival, will come together under the direction of this organizing voice to form the whole cloth of the story. This voice functions specifically as the poet's device to help us follow the complicated poem.[7]

The function of the organizing narrator's interruptions may seem at first paradoxical to their immediate effects: interruptions for clarification. Yet, while they may at times impede the movement of the action, their long range effect is to underscore that larger movement. These intrusions may even assume a pose similar to the didactic narrator when they serve to enlighten the audience on the eventual outcome of individual incidents or even the whole story. By revealing future actions the narrator insures that the audience will not become too concerned with immediate details and so overlook the larger points of the story.

Whatever the connection made by the organizing intrusions, it is

important to remember that although there is perhaps enough justification for including such an intrusion in order to clarify the direction of the story, there are also other functions provided by these intrusions. We must not, for example, ignore the way they are used for emphasizing crucial points in the plot. These intrusions do not simply direct the audience through the often labyrinthine episodes of the plot; they also suggest key points, illuminate incongruities, and so, ultimately, help to shape the audience's interpretation of the story.

The Organizing Narrator and Didacticism

At this point the relationship between the organizing narrator and the didactic narrator should be clarified since both can and do direct the audience to specific conclusions about the story. Obviously, the two are closely related. While the didactic points out the messages behind the action of the story, the organizational makes that action clear so that the meanings are more apparent. Both kinds of intrusions provide a broader perspective from which the audience can interpret the story.

The organizational intrusion does, in fact, often accompany the didactic intrusion, particularly in passages where a thorough understanding of the action is imperative for a correct understanding of the meaning. At other times, however, the organizational intrusion serves as the example and allows the audience to make its own judgments on the implications.

For instance, an intrusion which foreshadows an upcoming incident may expose deception in a character's actions or speeches, thus allowing the audience to establish an objective distance. The narrator may also remind us of earlier incidents and so create much the same effect. At times the organizational narrator may break into the middle of a scene to

shift us suddenly into another part of the story. These rapid transitions can illustrate major points of the story far more dramatically than the didactic intrusions. Unexpected juxtapositions of good and evil, of fidelity and treachery, of love and lust present vivid clarifications of thematic complications that even an extended lecture from the didactic narrator cannot equal. Similar effects may be created by summaries of action. With a brief undetailed summary, the narrator moves his listeners away from immediate participation in the action, thereby suggesting the obvious conclusion that summarized portions are less important. At other times following a carefully described scene, a summary may serve as a last word, reminding the audience of everything that has occurred and encouraging them to keep this scene in mind.

Such directional intrusions do not require the additional support of the didactic voice to explain the significance of the action. They are based instead on the assumption that the audience will draw the correct conclusions if the directional signals given are clear. Any superiority this narrator may exhibit consists solely of his greater knowledge of the action of the story. Yet in revealing that to us, he shares the insights into meanings behind that action without actually having to assume the role of lecturer. We are expected to come to the logical conclusions because he has given us the information necessary to arrive at them.

When we find intrusions from the organizing narrator and the didactic narrator together, we should perceive the combination as obvious emphasis on this portion of the story. If the effect of the organizational narrator is underscored by a lecture from the didactic narrator, we must be especially careful to take note of the points made. If at times there appears to be a discrepancy between the conclusions suggested by the one and the

morals presented by the other, we must examine both voices carefully in their relation to the story. Such incongruity may be a signal for an underlying irony in a scene presented with this kind of paradoxical commentary.

The important point to remember about the distinction between the organizational narrator and the didactic narrator is the difference in the relationship to the audience. While the didactic narrator assumes a position of authority, explaining carefully the meaning behind actions, the organizing narrator is the guide, pointing out connections in the action and trusting to the audience's ability to make the correct judgments about that action. He does not style himself as concerned with the audience's immediate and conscious recognition of meanings so much as with presenting material from which those meanings can be drawn. His role is that of an equal, not a moralizing authority. His concern is to make the details of the story clear so that we can follow it with him, drawing the logical conclusions about its meanings for ourselves.

Distinctions Between Exposition and Organization

Before the various kinds of organizational intrusions and their effects on the narrative can be analyzed, it is essential to clarify the nature of the organizational narrator. The most important distinction to be made is the one separating the organizing voice from standard exposition. Although the differentiation may at points seem fuzzy, it is necessary to make the delineation if the function and effects of the organizing voice are to be understood.

One of the most important observations about narrative in the last twenty years has been the recognition of the presence of the author's control even in the most objectively presented narratives. As late as the 1940's the disappearance of all signs of authorial control--and often,

in consequence, the voice of the storyteller--was being celebrated. For example, in the "Situation of the Writer in 1947," Jean-Paul Sartre derided his predecessors who made both the author and the act of storytelling obvious. He defined the new trend as the abolition of providential control in the novel:

> They [the predecessors] thought that they were justifying, at least apparently, the foolish business of storytelling by ceaselessly bringing to the reader's attention explicitly or by allusion, the existence of an author. We hope that our books remain in the air all by themselves and that their words, instead of pointing backwards toward the one who has designed them, will be toboggans, forgotten, unnoticed, and solitary, which will hurl the reader into the midst of a universe where there are no witnesses; in short, that our books may exist in the manner of things, of plants, of events, and not at first like products of man. We want to drive providence from our works as we have driven it from our world.[8]

While in a footnote Sartre admits that devoting a book to twenty-four hours rather than any other time span "implies the intervention of the author and a transcendent choice," he goes on to affirm that this kind of intervention can be dealt with: "It will then be necessary to mask this choice by purely aesthetic procedures, to practice sleight of hand, and, as always in art, to lie in order to be true." The truth in Sartrean terms, of course, is the nonexistence of that author and his choices. If, as Sartre claims, the writer can manage this creative disappearing act and if the reader does, in fact, forget "to see himself while he looks," then the story may retain the "innocence of a virgin forest whose trees grow far from sight" (p.229). The author can objectively show and not tell. According to the theory, the modern writer might then be able to create a story without an author as a controlling providence.

Yet hardly more than a decade after Sartre's projected disappearance of the writer, Wayne Booth began The Rhetoric of Fiction making clear that there is always a recognizable control over the narrative, no matter how

adept the author may be at sleight of hand. Even after we have eradicated "every personal touch, every distinctive literary allusion or colorful metaphor, every pattern of myth or symbol," all of which betray an author's presence, we will still have that presence implied in the order and choice of what is told.[9] Even if the author contents himself with retelling the simplest story, as Booth suggests "The Three Bears," he will nonetheless still be obvious because he has chosen not to tell another story. The conclusion is the inevitability of the presence of an implied author.

> In short, the author's judgment is always present, always evident to anyone who knows how to look for it. Whether its particular forms are harmful or serviceable is always a complex question, a question that cannot be settled by an easy reference to abstract rules. . . . we must never forget that though the author can to some extent choose his disguises, he can never choose to disappear. (p.20)

If we have, then, the undeniable presence of an author, no matter how disguised, we have to deal with exactly how much that presence evidences itself in the story. Expository passages in particular have been chosen as obvious sections for an observable presence even when no actual address by the narrator appears.

Here we must make the distinction between the authorial presence and what we have been calling the narrator. While the author actually exercises the choice over what is to be told or shown and how, the narrator is the mask of that controller. It is the narrator, the figure characterizing itself as storyteller, whose presence we are concerned with here and not so much the subtle evidences of authorial control on the story, except as they are apparent in the manipulation of the storyteller as a character.

In the passages of exposition, or "mere narrative" as Leonard Lutwack describes them,[10] the narrator's voice is naturally present but we have

no sense of the character behind that voice. Instead, we have more often passages of apparently objective presentation in which large blocks of what Sternberg calls "represented time" are compressed in a short "representational time" with few specific details to vivify the portion of the action thus described.[11] The action is not presented in any concrete way. Scenes with dialogue and carefully described encounters between characters are omitted in preference for a general summation of action. In more traditional terms, the story is <u>told</u>, not <u>shown</u>.

If the organizational narrator is considered the voice of the storyteller, or the guide, the problem becomes distinguishing between what are synoptic intrusions by that narrator and such passages of exposition. Any effort at describing the effects of the organizational narrator would be useless if we defined among its intrusions passages of simple exposition. Obviously, such a broad definition would make even the distinction of a category worthless.

To clarify the difference between the organizing voice of the storyteller and the passages of exposition, we must turn again to the emphasis on self-consciousness. Clearly those portions of the narrative which present an easily distinguishable voice can be identified as different from straight expositions. This happens for example in the transitional intrusions which turn our attention to another thread of the storyline or another character. When we have the unquestioned presence of the narrator stepping forward to change times, to remind us of preceding or to predict future actions, we have an observable narrator making an alteration in the direction of the narrative which can only be described as the narrator's self-consciousness of the story's development and his attempt at creating an equal consciousness in his audience.

A more difficult distinction comes with the passages of summary which the organizational narrator may use either to speed up the story, abbreviating description and thereby increasing our distance from the action, or to delay the narrative, restating in needless repetition action already described at length. Of the two kinds of summaries, the last is most easily identified as the organizational narrator. When we have been given a clearly related scene, or even a passage of more generalized exposition, any restatement, no matter how objectively presented, will strike us as redundant on the part of the narrator.[12] Such an apparently needless repetition should be viewed as the organizational narrator's version of a didactic intrusion. The synopsis after the fact says clearly: "In case you overlooked the important points I will reiterate for you." This technique can be quite useful in a narrative intended for oral presentation because there is, in fact, a likelihood of an audience missing details of the action in such presentations.

Those passages which summarize action that remains otherwise undescribed may, however, be somewhat more difficult to distinguish from exposition. The difference lies in the degree of summarization, in the suddenness of the break from scenic presentation to summary, and, therefore, the abruptness of the shift in distance, and finally in alteration of our established expectations for the next section of narrative. While occasionally the narrator may introduce such a summary with an obvious address to the audience, generally there are no introductory clues given for this kind of abbreviated presentation. It is far more likely to discover the narrator's direct address at the end of such a passage, notifying us that we will return to the story and the usual combination of scene and exposition.

Sternberg gives a description of the correlation between the rapid exposition of a long period of represented time and the lack of specificity in the narration applicable to these synoptic passages:

> Such a very short passage [Job. 1.1-6] . . ., with its meager quantity of representational time in relation to a very long span of represented time, can only touch briefly on some of the occurrences referred to and/or summarize some of their habitual, recurrent features. In other words, the texture of such a passage cannot be specific, for, the passage being short and having such a long period to cover, the narrator cannot afford to go into the details of the events that took place in the course of the represented time, but is compelled to resort to very broad, generalized strokes of summary. Neither can it be concrete, that is, it cannot restrict itself to the representation of incidents that existed only once in time and space, but, having to telescope a long fictive period into a confined space, the writer is constantly forced to summarize the fixed or recurrent traits of characters, incidents, or situations.[13]

Although this definition is intended for exposition, it will also serve as a starting point for the first distinction between simple exposition and the organizational narrator's summary of action.

The more that a passage departs from a sort of scenic description the more we become aware that there is a controlling voice or, to recall Sartre, a providence ordering what we hear. If exposition is that type of narration which condenses a long period of time into a short narrative space with few concrete details, the organizational narrator's summaries take that condensation a step further. The concrete disappears almost completely, as does our sense of the time period being summarized. What we are left with is not story but the narrator's voice, although not in so friendly an address to the audience as in something like the transitional intrusions. He presents us in a very matter of fact way with the general ideas that are important in the material he is summarizing. Much, if not most, of the action is gone. We are given abstractions rather than details. Most importantly, we are forced to step back from the story.

These passages do not give us so much the sense that the narrator is telling us this section of the story; instead he is telling us about the story. The narrator himself also seems distant from the action of the story here, more so, in fact, than in any other of the organizational intrusions. The point of these synoptic passages is to keep us informed about the major lines of the plot in a short space and to break us away from any real involvement in that plot. The narrator's transitional comments so often following such passages thus serve as signals that we are going to rejoin the story at a new point.

The synoptic passage may also be signalled by the degree to which it interrupts our expectations of what comes next in the narrative pattern. Sternberg points out that every narrative includes sections of exposition all through the work and not simply at its opening, as earlier use of the term might seem to imply.[14] There also arises for every work a pattern for the combination of scenes and exposition (p.49). The audience will come to follow this pattern naturally. If, however, there is a sudden variation in the pattern including, for example, a distanced synopsis immediately after a scene rather than an anticipated section of narrative exposition or if we have such a break actually within a scene, then we have the signal that the organizational narrator is leading us away from our involvement in the action into a more objective look at the lines of the story.

Thus the narrator's synoptic passages call us away and focus our attention on the story as a story. They make us become once again the self-conscious companions of a conscious narrator.[15] When we have been led to expect the action to be detailed in a straight-forward way and are given instead an abstract overview drawing us suddenly from our participation

in the scene and the represented time away to an altogether uninvolved perspective, then we may be assured that the passage is the synoptic intrusion of the self-conscious narrator. Whether these synoptic passages follow directly upon a carefully described scene or whether they preface the longer divisions of the narrative, they serve to separate us from the story. We do not need the introductory clues of the organizational narrator to warn us, although he sometimes will tell us that he must speed the story along. Being forcibly drawn away and whisked through a rapid summary will focus our attention on the pattern of the story rather than on the individual details of the plot. The narrator's address that will so often conclude these synopses simply helps to ease us back into the established pattern of scene and exposition, thus telling us we can return to our involvement in the action.

Some intrusions of the organizational narrator may, therefore, at times be closely related to those passages of narrative that might be termed exposition. Just as the author's implied presence is observable in the choice of what to tell and how to tell it, the organizing narrator is observable in the way he abstracts us from even the expository telling of the story, in the way he speeds up the normal narrative process to compell our detached examination of the whole story. The organizing narrator's intrusions may be as easily recognizable as Sartre's description of the providential author revealing the act of storytelling, or his summaries may be as subtle as the most objectively presented living thing. Understanding this voice depends on observing the clues of his presence and examing the effects of his intrusions.

Kinds of Organizational Intrusions

The intrusions by the organizing narrator fall into two major

categories: the connective intrusions and the synoptic intrusions. The connective intrusions are the most easily recognized because they utilize an obvious address to the audience by the narrating voice. They are generally direct and specific in their purpose of guidance for the audience. However, their effects may be quite varied, depending upon the kind of connection made and the location in the narrative. The synoptic intrusions are somewhat more elusive. They do not always include an overt explanation of their purpose by the narrator and so may blend more freely into the narrative. While more subtle, their functions are no less influential in manipulating the audience's perception and response to the story. Both types of organizational intrusion are particularly important for their effects upon the audience's comprehension of the total narrative.

Connective Intrusions

The connective intrusions are the most obvious of the interruptions by the organizing narrator. They are also the most easily recognized and understood of all self-conscious intrusions because they represent the familiar technique used by the eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century novelists to guide their readers through an often complicated plot. The voice that is traditionally associated with narratorial intrusion we almost automatically connect to phrases like "Dear Reader" and "Our Hero." This kind of intrusion is the more modern version of the organizing narrator. Nevertheless, we will find the medieval counterpart to be equally masterful in escorting us through complex plots and crowded lists of characters. Additionally, we will also discover very nearly the same mixture of benevolence and condescension in the medieval guide's tone as we so often find in that of the intrusive nineteenth-century narrator.

Connective intrusions fall easily into three categories: the proleptic,

the reflexive, and the transitional. These three kinds form all the possible connections logical to a narrative. They predict forthcoming events in the action, thus providing the audience with a broadened perspective on the immediate action. They may refer us to earlier events, both those already narrated and those prior in represented time to the story's opening. In this way we are periodically forced to notice the development of the action and the characters as we see the patterns of incidents emerge. Finally, these connective intrusions will transfer our attention from one thread of the storyline to another, revealing simultaneous actions to clarify events or shifting focus from one character to another to reveal their actions.

Just as with other kinds of intrusions, the location of these organizational intrusions in the story is crucial. But with these perhaps more than with any of other kinds, the location of the intrusion often constitutes part of the texture of the narrative itself. While an incongruous attestation of truth may color our response to a passage and an outright lecture from the didactic narrator will influence our judgment on the actions, nothing can so direct and shape our response as these manipulations of the story itself. We may overlook the citation of the historian; we may even disagree with a sermonette from the didactic narrator. But we are not likely either to overlook or to discredit the narrator who so carefully leads us through the story. His intrusions warning us of some forthcoming twist in the story are not seen as attempts to manipulate our response to the immediate action, even though they may very well do so. Instead we feel that this very simply is the way the story goes. We do not stop to question why we are suddenly directed to turn our attention to another character or another incident; we just follow directions.

Even though these connective intrusions may be among the most obvious

in the story, their close association with the plot of that story acts as a sort of camouflage for their manipulation of our responses. To question these intrusions seems very like questioning the author, if not, indeed, questioning the story itself. But we must examine these intrusions as carefully as we would any others. Despite appearances to the contrary, they may be just as skillfully manipulative as other intrusions. They provide remarkable examples of the way an author may use a narrator to emphasize a point in the story in such a way that we acknowledge his point without our ever noticing that we have been manipulated.

Proleptic Intrusions. One of the most basic organizational interruptions is the proleptic intrusion. This technique of forecasting later events is particularly useful for oral narrative, as Nelson has suggested, for without such predictions an audience would have much more difficulty in following the general episodic stories over the course of several openings' readings. The device is one that can be found in one version or another in most oral narratives.

Along with the importance of prolepsis as practical connection in stories for oral presentation, the technique can also be traced, like many other narrative tactics, tc medieval rhetoric. For example, Bede cites prolepsis as the first in his list of important figures to learn for their usefulness.[16] He goes on to explain it as:

> anticipating or taking up in advance, . . . a figure in which those things which ought to follow are placed ahead, as in the Psalms (87:1-2):
>
> His foundation is in the holy mountains.
> The Lord loveth the gates of Zion.
>
> The word "His" is used first, and thereafter it is made clear that the reference is to the Lord.
>
> (p.96-7)

The effect in the single sentence in Bede's example is to alter the normal order of the sentence, connecting the last clearly to the first by with-

holding the referrent for the pronoun. Thus, the normal order of the sentence is inverted causing more attention on the way its parts function and giving increased emphasis to certain parts that would not appear as important if they came in normal order. The effect is much like that of a periodic sentence.

On the larger scale of the story this same kind of manipulation of the order can have interesting effects. Rather than our being surprised when we arrive at crucial turns in the plot, such proleptic intrusions may have prepared us for whole series of incidents long before they appear in representational time. When the narrator begins with the explanation of the outcome or interrupts the narrative in the middle of a crucial scene to tell us its eventual conclusion, he forcibly removes us from our immediate involvement in that moment. We step back from the story to share his perception of it. Thus the emphasis suddenly becomes the story as a whole or the process of the action and the way the action comes to its end. We are no longer caught up in <u>what</u> will happen but rather turn our interest to <u>how</u> it will happen. Todorov maintains that this technique is one of the primary reasons for the complex narrative structure of the supposedly primitive oral narratives like <u>The Odyssey</u>.[17] That poem has no surprises; everything is foretold. The result is that for narratives like this the structure is in "radical opposition" to our conceptions of plot as a series of causally related events (Todorov, p.65). Instead the story using proleptic intrusions becomes one of predestination, diverting attention from the conclusion to the story itself.

The most immediately obvious proleptic intrusions occur at the very beginning of a story. The tradition of establishing the subject often develops into an outright explanation of the conclusions of the story.

When Wolfram's narrator concludes his didactic introduction, for

example, he assumes his role of storyteller to set up the tale. This introduction is filled with enticements just general enough to encourage the audience's close attention. Its grand claims for the hero and his story do not reveal the conclusion explicitly, yet they hint at the unknown hero's trials. It is an introduction worthy of the Coming Attractions at a local theater, and it fills the same purpose:

> nû hoert dirrę âventiure site:
> diu lât iuch wizzen beide
> von liebe und von leide,
> vreudę und angest vert dâ bî.
> nû lât mîn eines wesen drî,
> der ieslîcher sunder phlege
> daz miner kûnste wilderwege
> (dar zuo gehôrte wilder vunt):
> ob si iu gerne taeten kunt
> daz ich iu eine kûnden wil,
> si heten arbeite vil.
> ein maerę ich iu wil niuwen,
> daz saget von grôzen triuwen,
> wîplîchez wîbes reht
> und mannes manheit alsô sleht,
> diu sich gein herte nie gebouc.
> sîn herzę in dar an niht betrouc,
> er stahel, swâ er ze strîte quam,
> sîn hant dâ sigelîchen nam
> vil manegen lobelîchen prîs.
> er kûene, traeclîche wîs
> (den helt ich alsus grüeze),
> er wîbes ougen süeze
> und dâ bî wîbes herzen suht,
> vor missewendę ein wâriu vluht,
> den ich hie zuo hân erkorn,
> erst maereshalp noch ungeborn
> dem man dirrę âventiure giht
> und wunders vil des dran geschiht.
> (1. 3, 28-4, 26)

(Hear, then, what manner of tale this is, telling of things both pleasant and sad, with joy and trouble for company. Grant there were three of me, each with skill in match of mine: there would still be need of unbridled inspiration to tell you what, single-handed I have a mind to tell!

I will renew a tale that tells of great fidelity, of inborn womanhood and manly virtue so straight as never was bent in any test of hardness. Steel that he was, his courage never failed him, his conquering hand seized many a glorious prize when he came to battle. Dauntless man, though laggard in his discretion! Thus I salute the hero.--Sweet balm to woman's eyes, yet woman's heart's disease! Shunner of all wrongdoing! As yet he is unborn to this story whom I have chosen for the part, the man of whom this tale is told and all the marvels in it, Hatto, p.16)

Thus the narrator sets up for us the general outline of the story. There will be the mixture of pleasant and sad; nothing will come too easily. Although a fine warrior, the hero will be found wanting in discretion. This footnote to his personality in direct contrast to the rest of the description will be an important one to keep in mind. There will be the appropriate attention to love in the story with the emphasis on fidelity. The overall effect of this introduction--especially coming as it does immediately following the moralistic lecture--is to emphasize the vitures and trials the hero will endure. The undercutting of skill at arms with the attention to discretion, to the knight's thoughtful action, adds to the idealization of the hero as more than simply a warrior. This description of manly virtue culminates in the comment that the hero will shun all wrongdoing.

After this description of the hero and the general lines his story will follow, we might naturally look for these qualities in the first knight we hear described. But the narrator also prepares us for our first meeting with him and prevents such misunderstanding by announcing that when we begin the tale "our hero" has not yet been born. Consequently, we will see the preliminary descriptions of Gahmuret's adventures simply as preparation for the birth of his son, a still greater knight, and so will have no doubts about the nobility of this young knight despite his early less than heroic acts. The narrator has, therefore, convinced us beforehand of the worth of this unknown knight and made us eager to learn his story. Although we have not been given complete details, we begin the story convinced that it will have a happy ending with sufficient excitement along the way to keep us involved.

Dante's narrator can create much the same impression of a positive resolution of his story when in the midst of his description of the "selva

oscura," the dark wood at the middle of his life, he interjects this intention: "ma per trattar del ben ch'io vi trovai, / dirò dell' altre cose ch'i' v'ho scorte" (Inferno, 1, 8-9: "But to give account of the good which I found there I will tell of the other things I noted there," p.23). We learn from this that even though the experience has been painful and the story of it may contain unpleasant things there will in the end be something beneficial found in it. Because of the way the narrator takes us into his confidence here, in fact making us the reason for his attempting to narrate the experience, we face the darker aspects of the description with the reassurance that the end will be a good one. This kind of reassurance is particularly important here at the beginning of the description of the Pilgrim's descent into hell.

Chaucer's narrator goes even farther in preparing us for the story he is about to tell. Instead of simply introducing the tale with the abstractions of pleasure and sadness as Wolfram's narrator does, he goes on to explain the joy and sorrow and how they relate to the hero, Troilus. He wastes no time with other kinds of introductions as preface to his revelation of the story's movement. On the contrary, he opens the poem with a matter-of-fact statement on its plan:

> The double sorwe of Troilus to tellen,
> That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troye,
> In lovynge, how his aventures fellen
> Fro wo to wele, and after out of joie,
> My purpos is, er that I parte fro ye. (1, 1-5)

He begins with the specific comment on a double sorrow and then straightaway explains that this is a cyclical sort of pain. When he describes Troilus' adventure going "Fro wo to wele, and after out of joie," we can have no doubt about the conclusion of the story. We know that Troilus' story will end unhappily. While Wolfram's narrator leaves us believing that his hero can have nothing but a happy conclusion for his adventures

and Dante's narrator creates the expectation of a good end to the dark times, Chaucer's narrator does not take chances with simply creating the impression of a sad ending. He insists on it with the very first line of the poem.[18]

Specific as these opening lines are, we do not yet know the causes of Troilus' eventual sorrow. Then in a long address to the audience, the narrator instructs those experienced in love to pity those like Troilus. Thus, we are given the detail that Troilus' woe is caused by love. Despite the fact that most of the narrator's lecture at this point treats love's inconstancy, we might still overlook the connection between this lecture and the eventual conclusion. Finally, therefore, the narrator breaks off his pleas for the audience's compassion for Troilus and gives us this brief but significant last comment on the story's direction:

> Now herkneth with a good entencioun,
> For now wil I gon streght to my matere,
> In which ye may the double sorwes here
> Of Troilus in lovynge of Criseyde,
> And how that she forsook hym er she deyde.
> (1, 53-56)

This comment is the first mention of Criseyde. Up until this point the story has been described as Troilus' adventure. It has been his sorrow that was the focus both of the opening lines and the lecture on love. The name of his lover thus withheld for more than fifty lines seems somehow less than central. The narrator's repetition even here of the emphasis on Troilus' sorrows in loving centers our attention on him. Indeed, Criseyde is not even termed Troilus' lover, but instead she is described as the one who Troilus loved and, prophetically, as the one who "forsook hym er she dyde."

This last bit of prediction is crucial to our later interpretation of the story. Without it we might easily become as involved with Criseyde's

side of the story as with that of Troilus. But with this proleptic intrusion the narrator attempts to avoid such a response. The story is not to be about the love between both Troilus and Criseyde. The narrator makes that point clearly. It is instead the story of Troilus' loving and of Criseyde's betrayal. Listening to this kind of prediction there should be little question how we are to view the rest of the action.

The proleptic intrusions standard to the openings of stories can, therefore, function in a variety of ways depending upon the specificity of the predictions made. They may at times serve mainly to arouse the audience's interest by offering a general description of the movement of the story. Some will explain that the story contains a lesson beneficial for the audience even though it may, like all lessons of worth, be a difficult one to learn. In other cases, the narrator's commentary may be more specific about the plot of the story, thus establishing immediately the point of view that the audience is to assume and avoiding with clearly stated directions any misunderstanding of the development of the story.

The internal predictions function in a much different manner from these introductory ones. While the opening predictions set up the rest of the narrative, those elsewhere in the story generally only connect the individual incident they accompany to later action. The incident may at times be tied to the general direction of the plot, but much more frequently it is simply connected to related incidents.

Wolfram's narrator generally uses internal prolepsis simply as a means for connecting incidents to later developments in the character's adventures. The essentially episodic nature of his story does not offer the careful association of causally related events. Rather it depends much more on prediction and reflection to tie together what might otherwise seem to be a disconnected series of unrelated battles and encounters.

Many of the narrator's predictions are brief, mere hints of later actions. These function for the most part to prepare the audience for changes in the direction of the plot or in a character's fortune. For example, when Gawan first encounters Lady Orgeluse de Logroys, he falls in love with her immediately, gladly doing little deeds for her for no thanks. The narrator interrupts his description of Gawan's feeling to give us this insight into later action:

> swie sîn herze gein ir vlôch,
> vil kummers si im doch drîn gezôch.
> (10. 514, 29-30)
>
> (Although his heart sought refuge with her she brought much suffering to it, Hatto, p.261)

By this point, we have already heard the ladies of the land predict that Orgeluse has no good intentions toward Gawan, and have heard for ourselves her sharp tongue. But the narrator's intrusion here prevents us from misunderstanding anything about the situation. Gawan will not relent in his love for her, and Orgeluse will not cease to torment him simply because of that love. The combination of the predictions by other characters and by the narrator thus prepare us for a series of incidents in which Gawan gets only ridicule for the service he pays her. While Gawan's adventures with Orgeluse are hardly the main plotline, they do serve as a counterpoint to Parzival's dedication to his wife and her more ladylike response to him.[19]

In other places Wolfram's narrator may use his predictions to set up the main storyline. For instance, when Cundrie the Sorceress appears at Arthur's court to denounce Parzival's failure to ask Anfortas the question which would have relieved his pain, we may feel that Parzival's career as a knight is over. Defamed before the entire court, Parzival hears Cundrie ask the other knights to seek the grail and release its master. Yet the hero does not give up but vows to redeem himself.

At this point, Parzival's future looks bleak. But then the narrator interrupts the departure scene with these predictions for Parzival's future and instructions forour judgment on it:

> swaz aventiure gesprochen sint,
> die endarf hie niemen mezzen zuo,
> ir enhoeret alrest was er nu tuo,
> war er kere und war er var.
> swer den lip gein ritterschefte spar,
> der endenke die wile niht an in,
> ob ez im raetet stolzer sin.
> Condwiramures,
> din minneclicher bea curs,
> an den wirt dicke nu gedaht.
> was dir wirt aventiure braht!
> schildes ambet umbe den gral
> wirt nu vil guebet sunder twal
> von im den Herzeloide bar.
> er was ouch ganerbe dar. (6.333,16-30)

> (Now whatever marvels have been told until now, let no one draw comparisons til he has heard what Parzival does later, which path he chooses and where his journey leads him. Let those who shun knightly combat not think of him meanwhile if their proud spirits so persuade them.
> Condwiramurs, how often the memory of your lovely person will be evoked! What marvellous exploits will be laid at your feet! From now on the Office of the Shield will be pursued by Herzeloyde's child with the Gral as his mark, and indeed he was co-heir to it, Hatto, p.173)

Obviously, we are prevented from doubting whether Parzival will regain his honor. The narrator makes quite clear that his former skill at arms will soon be surpassed. Further, the direct address to Parzival's wife, Condwirmurs, makes plain that the knight will not forget his commitments, no matter how many battles he fights. The movement in this passage from predicting his valour, to his fidelity to his wife, and finally to his pursuit of the grail through his chivalry is a crucial one. Here the narrator lays out for us the whole movement of the story, that is, Parzival's growth as something more than just a warrior. The transition from the knight to the knight constantly considering his lady's honor is important since Parzival's lack of consideration has thus far been his major flaw.

Then the juxtaposition of that more worldly commitment to his spiritual commitment to pursuing the grail reveals the last step. He will learn to be the ideal knight. The narrator assures us here as well that achieving the grail is his right, if not his fate.

With this kind of prediction Wolfram's narrator prepares us for the rest of the story.[20] In many ways this passage is also a companion to the introductory prediction which sets up the birth of a wonderful knight. Now we know just what will make this knight so remarkable. We are reassured about Parzival's history just at the precise moment when we might have begun to doubt him. Seeing him degraded before the court, we might have begun to recall earlier deeds that were less than knightly. But the narrator will not allow any misconceptions. As if to tell us that this part of the story is simply one of the low points predicted at the beginning, the narrator's interruption here reaffirms the worth of this hero and encourages our further interests with the enticement of greater marvels and even the winning of the grail.

Chaucer's narrator also uses such internal proleptic intrusions to alter the audience's perception of certain scenes. At times such interruptions can create a very complex irony because of the difference in our awareness and the character's.[21] One especially important example of such careful revelation of future events comes just after Criseyde's speech made as she gazes back sadly on the walls of Troy. The speech occurs after we have heard her own description of her father's unwillingness to let her return to Troy and her fears of falling into the hand of some "wrecche" if she should try to escape. The narrator gives us three stanzas of description of her sorrow and then we hear her speech with this resolution to excape back to Troilus, under-cut immediately by the narrator's intrusion:

"But natheles, bityde what bityde,
I shal to-morwe at nyght, by est or west,
Out of this oost stele on som manere syde,
And gon with Troilus where as hym lest.
This purpos wol ich holde, and this is best.
No fors of wikked tonges janglerie,
For evere on love han wrecches had envye.

"For whoso wol of every word take hede,
Or reulen hym by every wightes wit,
Ne shal he nevere thryven, out of drede;
For that that som men blamen evere yit,
Lo, other manere folk comenden it.
And as for me, for al swich variaunce,
Felicite clepe I my suffisaunce.

"For which, withouten any wordes mo,
To Troie I wole, as for conclusioun."
But God it wot, er fully monthes two,
She was ful fer fro that entencioun!
For bothe Troilus and Troie town
Shal knotteles thorughout hire herte slide;
For she wol take a purpos for t'abyde.
(5, 750-70)

The effect here is a drastic reversal of sympathy for Criseyde. Her speech at this point is one of the most moving in the whole story. We see her at its beginning alone, forlorn, doubting even whether Troilus still thinks about her. The lamentation over lacking the third eye of time, the ability to foresee the future, immediately preceeds her resolution to slip away to rejoin Troilus. By the close of her speech we have been reassured. Criseyde seems once more a dynamic character capable of deciding her own fate. Then the narrator's concluding commentary on the speech suddenly obliterates all impressions the speech has created.[22]

We are pulled away from our involvement with Criseyde and forced to see her in an entirely different light. It is apparent that she still unfortunately lacks the third eye of time; even now she does not see what the immediate future will do to her resolve to steal away from the Greeks. The narrator's matter-of-fact statement that in two months she was far from this plan comes as a shock. The irony here is unmistakable. Not only does she slide in her resolve to leave the next night; she has not

even gone after several more weeks! As if this revelation were not dramatic enough, we are then told within six lines of her declaration that "felicite" with Troilus is enough for her that Troy and Troilus have slipped without a snag from her heart and that she will decide not to return.[23]

The contrast between Criseyde's resolution and the narrator's revelation of her later action is crucial for the way we interpret the poem and, in particular, the way we view Troilus and Criseyde. Already aware that Troilus is waiting anxiously on the walls of Troy for her return, her speech reaffirms our faith in their love. However, when we are told that she will never return, our sympathies shift to Troilus. The dramatic irony thus created makes the description of his vigil long into the evening of the tenth day even more poignant. We are encouraged to dislike Criseyde because we know long before she herself does that she is going to break her promise.[24] In her ensuing conversations with Diomede, we may have real trouble believing that she does not want simply to hold our for the best offer. Her early denial to Diomede that she had had any lover in Troy except her dead husband does not seem an attempt to conceal her relationship with Troilus to preserve her honor and his. Instead, because we already know she will decide not to return to him, it seems a careful lie, a calculating denial of all their love.

The alteration that the narrator's brief prediction gives to our perception of the story is extremely important. Without this knowledge our sympathy for Criseyde would last longer, even though we have been told at the outset that she will betray Troilus. With this knowledge even her tears over the separation from her lover seem less believeable. Technically, since Criseyde does not yet realize that she will not keep her promise and has not yet given her love to someone new, her sorrow should be judged as real. But the narrator's revelation causes us to see

even this speech as less than truthful. We are encouraged to doubt her sincerity even here as she gazes back on Troy. There seems something coldly judgmental in the simple explanation that her resolution is only momentary. Stepping back to view Criseyde from an enlarged perspective, we may decide that she protests too much, that she would do better to be less emotional and more consistent.[25]

Thus, in five lines Chaucer's narrator has reversed much of the impact of the first four books of the poem. During the earlier portions of the story we have seen as much of Criseyde's side of the action as we have Troilus'. Now suddenly we have seen too much. We are forced at this point to withdraw sympathy from her and to remember the narrator's opening prediction about the course of the love story. This intrusion, therefore, has a much more complicated effect than a simple prediction of eventual action. It serves to rearrange the audience's response to both characters and to prepare for the conclusion of the story. Rather than just connecting one speech to later actions, it alters both the impression that the speech creates and all subsequent speeches and actions.

The technique of introducting events in the story before their actual occurance in related time can, as we have seen, result in a number of effects. From the simple building of the audience's anticipation and the clarification of connections to the total restructuring of the characterization, each of these proleptic intrusions alters the flow of the narrative in subtle ways. Each influences the way we as the audience consider both the story and its characters. Yet with each intrusion we continue to base our trust in the narrator who allows us, however briefly, to share in his broader version of the story.

Reflexive Intrusions. Much the same kind of connection between in-

dividual scenes and the whole story is done with the reflexive intrusion. These intrusions remind the audience of earlier actions and at times even of action prior to the related time of the story. While they do not have the subtilety of the proleptic intrusions and obviously are not used for creating dramatic irony as the proleptic so often are, they, nevertheless, do provide an important connection for parts of the story.

Wolfram's narrator, for example, uses these kinds of references to earlier action as a sort of conclusion to long speeches so his audience will understand the import of the previous scene before he moves on to another. After the extended discussion of how Duke Lyppaunt is to defend his castle from two beseiging armies, for example, the narrator merely says: "ir habet ir râten wol vernomen: / der vürste tet als man im riet" (7. 356, 26-27: "You have heard their advice in full, advice which the Duke put into action," Hatto, p.184). In general the narrator uses these kinds of concluding references to tie previous scenes to upcoming ones.

In other places in the story, however, the narrator will employ reflexive intrusions to avoid restatement and yet to create the effect of restatement. For example, when Parzival finally attains the grail, the whole procession of attendants brings it once again before the knight. Since we have had an extended description of this display at its first appearance, however, it is unnecessary to repeat the complete details. Instead the narrator simply gives a few points and reminds us of the earlier description:

> ir habet gehôrt ê des genuoc,
> wie man in vür Anfortasen truoc:
> dem siht man nû gelîche tuon
> vür des werden Gahmuretes sun
> und ouch vür Tampenteires kint.
> juncvrouwen nû niht langer sint:
> ordenlîch si kômen über al,
> vünf und zweinzec an der zal. (16. 808, 23-30)

> (You heard enough before as to how they carried the Gral into the presence of Anfortas. They are now seen to do likewise before noble Gahmuret's son and Tampenteire's daughter. The maidens do not keep us waiting--for here they come in due order everywhere, to the number of five and twenty, Hatto, p.401).

We have enough details here to evoke the sense of the procession, and with the narrator's reminder we can recreate if not the specific details of the earlier description at least the impression of the elaborate ceremony of the occasion.

Such references to earlier incidents often emphasize Wolfram's narrator's casual relationship with his audience. At times he will even use a direct address to them in the manner of a quiz, asking if they remember a detail mentioned earlier. Such easy familiarity in the narrative recreates for us the sense of the oral presentation with the friendly storyteller turning aside from his narration for a moment to remind those gathered around him of a related incident.[26] We have the sense of the interaction between the narrator and his audience most clearly with the references used as questions. As if turning to see who is paying attention, the narrator asks: "waz wart geboten / dem küenen Razalîge, / dô er schiet von dem wîge?" (1.45,2-4: What was King Razalic ordered when he departed from the war?" translation mine). Then instead of telling us that the Moorish warrior had been ordered to bring his men and present himself in the city, the narrator simply tells us he did what he was told and, trusting that we remember, goes on with the description of Razalic's appearance before Gahmuret.

We are caught by such tricks. We must pay attention, or we must learn to piece together the narrator's promptings and his next descriptions. The technique operates, therefore, both to connect incidents in the story and to keep the audience's attention. Both these are essential to a long

narrative presented orally over a period of several nights. The audience will need reminders about earlier incidents. Also with a long loosely connected story like Parzival the audience will need such exchanges with the narrator to break up long stretches of dialogue and exposition and keep its interest in the story.

Chaucer's narrator uses this technique much more sparingly than Wolfram's and generally with much less emphasis on the chatty exchange between narrator and audience. Yet the use even here serves to connect the story or speed up the narration by concluding sections of dialogue. In only one place does the narrator's address to the audience resemble that of Wolfram's narrator in its familiarity with the audience and here it serves more to bring us into a sort of conspiratorial sense of the story than to quiz us or jog our attention.

When Troilus learns that Criseyde is to be sent to the Greeks, he is consoled and counselled by Pandarus as is typical in the poem. They decide that Pandarus should go to Criseyde to break the news to her. The narrator in his turn describes their meeting with a brief aside to the audience:

> Pandare, which that sent from Troilus
> Was to Criseyde--as ye han herd devyse
> That for the beste it was acorded thus,
> And he ful glad to doon hym that servyse--
> Unto Criseyde, in a ful secree wise,
> Ther as she lay in torment and in rage,
> Com hire to telle al hoolly his message, ...
> (4, 806-12)

The interruption here is hardly necessary; it has only yeen 150 lines since the plan was arranged. Nevertheless, the narrator insists on our recalling their devising the plan. This emphasis on the plan, in an address to an audience, underscores the fact that Criseyde is being left out of all planning while we, as the companions of the narrator, overhear it all. The shift from this reminder to Pandarus' willingness to serve

his friend should also recall to us that this is hardly the first time such a plan has been devised. The end result of this little reference, then, is a broader reference to the whole series of schemes which originally brought the two together, schemes to which everyone, including the audience, has been privy except Criseyde.

Reflexive intrusions may also refer us to events occuring before the opening of the story and even to peripheral stories that are not dealt with by the narrative. These allusions provide a sense of background and context for the story we hear related and reassure us about its validity in much the same way that the historian's reference to his sources does. The narrator's brief comment on action prior to the story or to other stories is generally done in familiar asides to the audience, implying that, as his companions, we must surely know the details and that a short reference is all that is necessary to remind us of them. Wolfram's narrator is particularly prone to this kind of reflexive intrusion, giving his story a much denser texture than the less episodic, more carefully structured story in the Troilus. The effect is to create an impression of a varied and brilliant courtly world of which Parzival's story is merely an interesting part.

In general, then, the reflexive intrusions give us a better sense of connections between incidents. They refresh our memories on earlier details and thus free the narrator from needless repetitions. While they do not have the versatility of the proleptic intrusions and are not used as often as either proleptic or transitional intrusions, they do allow the narrator to reaffirm certain portions of the story and focus the audience's attention. In narrative as loosely connected as the medieval romance frequently is, the reflexive intrusion serves as a sort of substitute

for a more obvious causal relationship. They are often, in fact, identified as causally related to the act of storytelling itself, offering as they do justifications for abbreviating description. Because they keep before us earlier incidents and even those events only peripherally related as a context to the story, they compell us, like all other intrusions of the self-conscious narrator, to stand back and consider the broader scope of the story as a whole rather than remaining closely involved with its action and characters.

Transitional Intrusions. The transitional intrusions may seem immediately obvious in their function, but their effects can be as subtle a manipulation of the audience's perception of the story as those of any of the other intrusions. The function is, of course, quite obvious. They connect different parts of the story. With a brief comment the narrator tells us that we are to move our attention to another location or another character as he changes directions in storytelling. Such an intrusion is easy to recognize and apparently straightforward in its direct address to the audience. But there are interesting variations on even this kind of simple transition which different authors may use to accent the storytelling and direct the audience's response to it, thus increasing the effect of what may at first seem an obvious technique. Similarly, such transitions themselves can significantly alter the impact of the story, depending upon the point in the narrative at which they occur.

The simplest kind of transitional intrusions is that which concludes one scene and shifts our attention to another. Like Chaucer's narrator's familiar "Now lat us stynte of Troilus a throwe" these generally make simple movements from one character in the story to another. Wolfram's narrator uses such brief transitions from one character to another much less frequently merely because his story divides several books between

Parzival and Gawan and, therefore, the shift from one to the other requires somewhat longer introduction.

One example from Troilus and Criseyde will show how the narrator's transition from one scene to another may effect the way the story is to be judged. When Criseyde nears the Greek camp with her escort Diomede, the narrator is careful to explain her feelings. Yet at the moment of her arrival there and her reunion with her father, we are suddenly pulled away from Criseyde's part of the story to look back at how Troilus reacts after their separation. The author has carefully placed this shift in scene and the narrator's commentary on the two characters so that the transition subtly alters the depiction of Criseyde. While the obvious function in the transition here is a change of scene, such a change at this point handled in such a way as to undercut Criseyde's action significantly colors the audience's perception and, therefore, its reaction to the character. Much more happens in this passage, then than just a change of scene:

> Hire fader hath hire in his armes nome,
> And twenty tyme he kiste his doughter sweete,
> And seyde, "O deere doughter myn, welcome!"
> She seyde ek, she was fayn with hym to mete,
> And stood forth muwet, milde, and mansuete.
> But here I leve hire with hire fader dwelle,
> And forth I wol of Troilus yow telle.
>
> To Troie is come this woful Troilus,
> In sorwe aboven alle sorwes smerte,
> With feloun look and face dispitous.
> Tho sodeynly doun from his hors he sterte,
> And thorugh his paleis, with a swollen herte,
> To chaumbre he wente; of nothying took he hede,
> Ne non to hym dar speke a word for drede.
> (5, 190-203)

The narrator's shift a few lines earlier from Criseyde's inner state to her outward one with the phrase "But natheless" is a direct signal to us that she will be able to play the role expected of her. Despite her pain and misgivings, she is still in control of herself and can act her

part well. Such control should seem admirable under these circumstances.[27] But any admiration we might begin to develop for Criseyde's self-possession is cut off by the narrator's sudden and emphatic shift to Troilus.

As a general rule, this narrator's transitions are no longer than a line, at times no more than a half line in length. But here we have a transition that takes two lines and gives us something more than a simple change of scene. When the narrator says "But here I leve hire with hire fader dwelle, / And forth I wol of Troilus yow telle," there is a note of finality that has not been prepared for in the scene itself. The lovers have promised to be reunited, with Criseyde vowing to return to Troy within ten days. Her sorrow tells us that she has not given up her love. When she greets her father and stands "muwet, milde, and mansuete," her demeanor should seem to us a facade because we know that she is at heart quite disturbed. Yet immediately following her calm appearance, there is the narrator's comment with its ring of conclusions. Her behavior begins to seem suddenly less admirable, perhaps more a result of self-interest than self-control.

The juxtaposition of Criseyde's controlled bearing and Troilus' complete surrender to his emotions also emphasizes the difference in the two characters and should begin to prepare us for the eventual outcome. As the narrator suggests, Criseyde is left to dwell in the Greek camp while the love story goes on with Troilus. After this separation there is, in fact, little story of love remaining. What follows is a study of the way two people, each with a different experience at love and so a different perspective on it, deal with separation from the lover and with the end of the love affair. The transition here uses such conclusive terms and emphasizes so dramatically the different reactions of the characters that an attentive audience should perceive the finality. We

are not to stay and admire Criseyde but go back to sympathize with Troilus' grief.

At times these simple transitions may also be used to bring us back to the story from one of the narrator's digressions rather than just to connect threads of the story. Such is the case after the narrator's long didactic intrusion on the futility of trying to avoid love after Troilus first sees Criseyde. He gives us a seven stanza digression; then, the organizational voice takes control and ushers us back into the story:

> But for to tellen forth in special
> As of this kynges sone of which I tolde,
> And leten other thing collateral,
> Of hym thenke I my tale forth to holde,
> Bothe of his joie and of his cares colde;
> And al his werk, as touching this matere,
> For I it gan, I wol therto refere. (1, 260-66)

Here we not only get a return to the story, but we also have added for us a short review of what we are going to hear. The narrator seems especially concerned here that we not become so involved in the philosophical implications which he has just laid out for us that we forget what he has predicted of the story. In other words, we must be returned to the story and reminded of its course so that the philosophical comments will have a logical application.[28]

One of the most important effects that transitional intrusions can have is to create a sense of fellowship between the narrator and his audience. When the narrator turns as if to put his arm around the listener and lead him into another part of the story, what he says takes on something of the appearance of a secret between him and the audience. This kind of conspiratorial tone in Troilus and Criseyde is an obvious echo of the plotting taking place in the story when Pandarus arranges for Criseyde to attend a party at Deiphebus' house where Troilus lies "sick" in bed upstairs. When Pandarus gives Deiphebus and Eleyne a letter to read to keep

them occupied during Criseyde's visit to Troilus, the narrator with something very like Pandarus' tone turns our attention away from the ruse to the reason for it:

> Now lat hem rede, and torne we anon
> To Pandarus, that gan ful faste prye
> That al was wel, and out he gan to gon
> Into the grete chaumbre, and that in hye,
> And seyde, "God save al this compaynye!
> (2, 1709-13)

The comment "lat hem rede" has the ring of someone present, an actor in the story and not someone as removed from it as a narrator. We seem to be present in the very midst of the action. These kinds of shifts can be very useful for creating this sense of immediacy.

Wolfram's narrator uses a form of these transitions specifically adapted to creating this kind of relationship between narrator, audience, and story. In a version of rhetorical question his narrator will turn to the audience to ask how much more it wishes to hear of the story.[29] At times he will even supply questions which seem to come from the audience itself.[30] He decides, of course, which of these questions to answer. Both techniques emphasize the already obvious exchange between narrator and audience in this story.

At the opening of Book Six, for example, the narrator turns to the audience immediately to ask if it cares to hear what comes next:

> Welt ir nû hoeren wie Artûs
> von Karidoel ûz sînem hûs
> und ouch von sînem lande schiet?
> (6. 280, 1-3)

> (Do you wish now to hear how Arthur departed from his castle at Karidoel and also from his country? translation mine)

We must assume that the audience agrees to hear the description, for the narrator goes on with it immediately. Then after quoting Arthur's instructions to the knights, he turns once again to the audience and asks:

welt ir nû hoeren war si komen
Parzivâl der Wâleis? (6. 281, 10-11)

(Would you now like to hear where Parzival the Waleis has got to? Hatto, p.147)

We have left Parzival several lines earlier in the previous book after he had helped to reconcile Prince Orilus and his wife Jeschute and had sent them both back to Arthur's court. At this point with the description of their appearance at court complete, the narrator logically turns back to the exploits of his hero. We agree without hesitation to his suggestion that it is time to get back to the main story.

An excellent example of Wolfram's manipulation of the narrator's questions so that they create a vivid exchange between storyteller and audience occurs in his description of the battle between Duke Lyppaut and Meljahkanz in Book Seven. The description here is full of rhetorical questions, some by the narrator, some seemingly by members of the audience themselves.

The battle has from the beginning a dramatic sense of immediacy with commands for us to look how one knight stands firmly (7. 381, 11-13) and isolated questions on how we expect a knight like Gawan to respond on recalling his cousin's death (7. 383, 5-8). Then as the battle picks up, the narrator's description becomes even more conversational. When Lyppaut and the defenders of his castle are pressed, the narrator breaks in with a comment on the behavior of Obie, Lyppaut's daughter. Then he turns to the audience:

wes engalt der vürste Lippaôt?
sîn herre der alde künec Schôt
hetes in erlâzen gar. (7. 386, 19-21)

(What had Duke Lyppaut done to deserve this?--His lord the old King Schaut would never have indicted this on him, Hatto, p. 199)

We are suddenly reminded that it was Obie's spiteful rejection of Meljanz's

love that caused the war between her father and the son of the old king for whom Lyppaut had even been appointed an advisor.

From this reminder we return quickly to the details of the battle with the narrator posing a rapid series of questions the audience should want to know:

> ob sîn schilt waere ganz?
> des enwas niht hende breit beliben:
> (7. 386, 22-25)
> . . . . . .
> dô punierte Lôtes sun
> waz mohte Meljacanz nû tuon,
> er entribe ouch daz ors mit sporn dar?
> vil liute nam der tjoste war.
> wer dâ hinderm orse laege?
> den der von Norwaege
> gevellet hete ûf die ouwe. (7. 387, 9-15)
> . . . . . .
> dô nam der herzoge Astor
> Meljacanzen den von Jámor:
> der was vil nâch gevangen.
> der turnei was ergangen.
> wer dâ nâch prîse wol rite
> und nâch der wîbe lône strite?
> ich enmöhte ir niht erkennen.
> solde ich si iu alle nennen,
> ich würde ein unmüezec man. (7. 387, 26-388,5)

(The squadrons were now growing weary, yet Meljahkanz was still hard at it. You ask if his shield was intact? Not a hand's breadth remained. . . . Lot's son wheeled into the What could Meljahkanz do but urge his mount on with spurs? Their joust was seen by many people. You ask 'Who was it lying there behind his horse?' It was he whom the man from Norway had lowered onto the meadows. . . . Finally, Duke Astor recovered Meljahkanz from the man of Jamor, and with that the game was done.

Who rode with the greatest distinction and deserved their ladies' favour with their prowess? I could not judge their claims. Were I to name them all for you I should be a very busy man, Hatto, p.199).

The exchange here is rapid, a total of five questions in forty-four lines. Besides creating a strong impression of the storyteller with his audience gathered attentively around him, these questions also shape our response to this battle.[31]

We have not heard of the characters involved in this feud before the opening of this book. They are hardly central to the story and are instead simply among the characters encountered by Gawan, himself also a secondary character in terms of the main story. There has been no carefully prepared introduction of Lyppaut's story. We are simply told it, as Gawan is, by an unknown but unusually talkative soldier in the attacking army. The result is, therefore, that we cannot be expected to have any particular interest in these characters or the outcome of their battle. Even Gawan is for a considerable time merely an observer.

Yet the emphasis put on the details of the action by the narrator's questions creates an interest and a sense of excited immediacy in this battle that are unequalled in any except those of the main hero Parzival. We have the eager questions of the "audience" and the rapid descriptions by the narrator developing a sort of medieval play-by-play announcement. At one point we even have the impression that the audience too is able to see the battle when we hear the question about the identity of the man lying behind his horse. Obviously, this cannot be one of the narrator's refresher questions, for only he could possibly know its answer since we have not even been told yet that either knight was knocked from his horse. The technique intensifies our suspense over whether it has been Gawan or Meljahkanz. Everyone seems to know someone is down, but the narrator carefully stretches the moment of suspense before telling us that it is the man Gawan has unhorsed. The concluding question about which side had shown the best skill at arms seems almost meaningless. The narrator carefully excuses himself from answering. All had performed well, but the attentive listener knows that Lyppaut's forces with Gawan as an ally have bravely withstood the assaults and so have won more glory.

The narrator's careful use of questions to and from his audience have, therefore, transformed what might easily have seemed just another in a long unconnected series of battles and have made it a vivid and immediately engrossing scene. With these rapid and dramatic intrusions the description of an ordinary battle scene becomes even more the exciting exchange between the narrator and an actively involved audience. Thus, the intrusions have manipulated the narrative altering both our response to this particular part of the story and, perhaps just as importantly, to the storyteller himself. We see him here as one absolutely in control, careful to answer all reasonable questions, and geniunely concerned that we know all the details of the story as he knows them and even that they retain the excitement characteristic of a battle. We cannot fault him on his handling of the details. When he comes to the last comment on his reluctance to list all who had fought well, we are ready to agree, realizing that he has already done much in describing the battle.

Chaucer's narrator in Troilus and Criseyde also uses his organizational intrusions to stimulate his audience's interest in the story. This narrator most frequently uses a sort of mock transition to create suspense. The narrator in these cases promises not to make a long story of the details, all the while drawing out the story and so increasing the tension even more.

The two places in which this technique is the most obvious are the two incidents of Pandarus' most elaborate scheming to bring Troilus and Criseyde together physically. In the first case, he must create an involved story about Criseyde's being threatened by Poliphete who, supposedly, would like to "don oppressioun / And wrongfully han hire possessioun" (2, 1418-19). He uses this story to encourage Deiphebus, Eleyne, and others to invite Criseyde to dinner and so more importantly provides a cover for introducing

her to Troilus. During the course of the description of the development of this plan from Pandarus' meeting with Criseyde (2, 1220) until the crowd gathers to denounce her foe (2,1622), the narrator repeatedly emphasizes his desire to speed up the story. In fact, in the 422 lines it takes to describe the events, the narrator says that he intends "to telle in short" nine times. The last five times are used in 132 lines, or twenty stanzas. No matter how often he claims to shorten his story, the fact remains that the narrator is not actually telling the details "in short." Despite his repeated protestations against dwelling on this incident, it becomes more and more obvious with each new claim to abbreviation that he is shortening nothing.

The same mock speed is used in the description of Pandarus' second plan to bring the lovers together (3, 470-609). Yet here the narrator varies his claim to tell the story briefly with comments that he is going to get to "this proces," "the grete effect," "the fyn," "the litel more for to doone," and finally "to the point," thus putting more emphasis on the anticipated conclusion. That point which takes the narrator 125 lines and six claims to brevity and directness to get to is that Criseyde comes to Pandarus' house with no one knowing, including Criseyde, that Troilus is secreted upstairs. With another hundred lines and one more insistence on being brief, we hear the last abbreviation

> And, shortly to the point right for to gon,
> Of al this werk he tolde hym word and ende,
> And seyde, "Make the redy right anon,
> For thow shalt into hevene blisse wende."
> (3, 701-4)

The narrator's emphasis on speed and getting to the point recalls Pandarus' own efforts to get Troilus and his niece to the point. We anticipate the ultimate end of his machinations, like Troilus, with tension and excitement.[33]

The narrator's constant promises that he will get to the end make the delays seem even longer than they might otherwise seem. The audience is not only made to await the conclusion while the narrator describes each detail with relish equal to Pandarus' enjoyment of his scheme; it is also made acutely aware of the delay by the intrusions constantly promising speed.

The narrator, therefore, presents himself as trying to go more rapidly through the incident and move on to something new while the audience comes to realize that he really has no such intention at all. The intrusions become a kind of tease. We hear that we are getting to the end so often that the end seems never to come. Again like Pandarus' schemes, the game seems almost as much the point as the real goal. The narrator is fully in control here, and though we are reassured that he will eventually come to the end of all these anticipatory comments, we must, nevertheless, follow the story at his mercy. By the time we do come to the conclusion when Pandarus pushes Troilus through the door into Criseyde's room and the narrator pushes us along with him, there is no question of our being disinterested or bored with the extended preparations. It is all an elaborate ploy to make "the point" seem something worth our anticipation.

While the transitional intrusions may be among the most obvious and apparently simplest of the connective intrusions, they do, nevertheless, often function in delightfully subtle ways. They allow both the smooth shift from one character or scene to another and the abrupt dislocation of our attention and sympathy. The guidance offered to help us to follow the narrator's frequent movements within the narrative itself and his withdrawals from that narrative to other poses may at times become essential for maintaining continuity. Such connections are essential between scenes in a generally episodic story as well as between those scenes and the narrator's

commentary on them. When an author develops modifications on the standard transitions, such as Wolfram's questions to the audience and Chaucer's mock abbreviations, the narrator's intrusions can be even more effective in subtly manipulating the narrative and the audience's response to it.

Synoptic Intrusions. Those synoptic passages in which the narrator presents greatly compressed stretches of time and carefully limited details may function in one of two ways. They may speed up the narrative blurring the details in the story. Or they may restate in a sort of summation the important points about an incident just described. In the one they provide distance from involvement in the action simply by not describing that action; in the other they create a sort of intellectualized distance by pulling away from the story to give a careful reiteration of the points important to remember. These intrusions come in various degrees of abstraction and suddenness. Some may appear at major divisions of the story; many appear between scenes or even at times unexpectedly in the middle of scenes.

A synopsis near the beginning of Book Nine of Parzival gives a clear example of the abstract quality of these passages which speed us into another section of the story. After an unusual exchange between the narrator and Lady Adventure (9. 433, 1-434.10), the narrator hurriedly summarizes Parzival's exploits since his last appearance at the end of Book Six when he left Arthur's court in search of the grail. In this passage the details given at first are the sketchiest. Gradually as the summary progresses they become more specific until the second reference to the way the story goes opens a very specific description and brings us back into the action of a new scene:

> Nû tuot uns diu âventiure bekant,
> er habe erstrichen manec lant
> zorse und in schiffen ûf dem wâc,

ez waere lantman oder mûc,
der tjoste poinder gein im maz,
daz der deheiner nie gesaz.
sus kan sîn wâge seigen,
sîn selbes prîs ûf steigen
und die andern lêren sîgen.
in manegen herten wîgen
hât er sich schumfentiure erwert,
den lîp gein strît alsô gezert,
swer prîs zim wolde borgen,
der müestez tuon mit sorgen.
sîn swert, daz im Anfortas
gap dô er bî dem grâle was,
brast sît dô er bestanden wart:
dô machtez ganz des brunnen art
bî Karnant, der dâ heizet Lac.
daz swert gehalf im prîses bejac:
swerz niht geloupt, der sündet.
diu âventiure uns kündet
daz Parzivâl der degen balt
kom geriten ûf einen walt, ... (9. 434, 11-435,4)

(Now the adventure tells us that Parzival has ranged through many lands on horseback and over the waves in ships. None who measured his charge against him kept his seat, unless he were compatriot or kinsman--in such fashion does he down the scales for his opponents and, whilst making others fall, raise his own renoun! He has defended himself from discomfiture in many fierse wars and so far spent himself in battle that any man who wished to lease fame from him had to do so in fear and trembling.

The sword which Anfortas gave Parzival when he was with the Gral was shattered in a duel. But the virtues of the well near Karnant and known by the name of Lac made it whole again. That sword helped him in winning fame. He sins who does not believe it.

The story makes it known to us that Parzival, brave knight, came riding to a forest . . ., Hatto, pp. 222-3).

The gap between the time when we see Parzival ride away determined to have a second chance at the grail and when we see him ride into the wood is, thus, filled in with very general details. The most specific part of the summary is, of course, the brief account of the breaking of the sword, but we actually know very little about even that incident or why, if the sword is made whole again, Parzival is not carrying it when he fights Feirefiz Angevin, his half-brother, in Book Fifteen.

All we in fact do know here is that Parzival has travelled far and won many battles. Interestingly, we know these things because the narrator

has heard them from Lady Adventure. The way that the narrator acts as a go-between for the story and the audience is especially evident here. He knows what the story tells. But we must hear the summary of it rather than the specifics. It is as if he were thumbing quickly through the various adventures not directly relating to the quest for the grail and returning us to the action only when the encounter with Sigune in the wood will set us again in that direction. The narrator, thus, edits the details, speeding us through the story when it is not necessary to his purpose that we delay. The story makes things known; the narrator makes them known to us in his own selective way.

Such summaries may be expected as part of the transition from one section of story to another. In other cases, however, the synopsis may be unexpected and so have a much more significant impact on the way the action of the story is presented. Chaucer's narrator in particular gives us these sudden alterations from specific detail to abstract synopsis.[34] One of the best examples of this kind of synopsis comes after Criseyde is exchanged for Antenor. When Troilus writes her begging that she return to Troy, we hear Troilus' letter in full with all its detailed description of the sorrow that is breaking his heart, destroying his health, and threatening to end his life if she does not return. With this kind of appeal we expect to hear an immediate response from Criseyde who, for all we have heard from her own words, still loves Troilus. Yet when Troilus' letter ends with the comment that it is in Criseyde's power alone to save his life, the narrator steps in not to introduce her letter in response but to summarize it in the most cursory manner:

> This lettre forth was sent unto Criseyde,
> Of which hire answere in effect was this:
> Ful pitously she wroot ayeyn, and seyde,
> That also sone as that she myghte, ywys,

She wolde come, and mende al that was mys,
And fynaly she wroot and seyde hym thenne,
She wolde come, ye, but she nyste whenne.

But in hire lettre made she swich festes
That wonder was, and swerth she loveth hym best;
Of which he fond but botmeles bihestes. (5, 1422-31)

There is almost nothing concrete in this synopsis except the emphasis on a promise to return and on her love for Troilus. Moreover, even those specifics are presented in such a way that they seem less than believable.[35] The line "she wolde come, ye, but she nyste whenne" gives us an interesting combination of direct and indirect quotation in a summary of her promise. The brief interjection of the "ye" has the appearance of a reiterated affirmation even in the midst of this second promise to return. The result of the narrator's summary of Criseyde's letter is to emphasize for us her repeated promise. The repetition of that promise is immediately obvious compressed as it is and repeated essentially three times in four lines. Such compression somehow encourages us to disbelieve her. Even had we not already heard from the narrator's predictions that Criseyde is in the process of deciding to remain in the Greek camp, we would doubt her sincerity because of the way her letter is presented.

The synopsis of her pledge of love sounds equally empty of meaning because of the summary. It is, in fact, not just a summary; it is a judgment. The comment that she made "swich festes/ That wonder was" may have double meanings. It may mean that she sounds merry in her response in which case her reaction is indeed a cause for wonder since she should be at least troubled by their separation. The second meaning for "make feste" is to "pay court." If we read this meaning, then her letter's love pledges seemed a wonder, another repetition of her suspiciously over-eager promises to return. We cannot be sure which meaning is intended here because we do not actually hear Criseyde's letter. In fact, we might safely assume

that we are expected to hear both meanings and so wonder even more at the emptiness of these comments from a woman who only a short time earlier was avowing undying love.

The last point summarized from her letter is the most damning of all. We are told she swore that she "loveth hym beste." If her letter framed the comment in this way it is indeed no wonder that Troilus found "botomeles bihestes," for when they separated, there was no question of best. She loved him alone. The narrator's phrasing thus once again reminds us that Criseyde is already turning her thoughts to a new suitor. Her comment here indicates that the new man already has a place in her heart second to Troilus and that while Troilus holds the first place he is hardly unchallenged now even in her heart.

How much of all that the narrator's synopsis makes so obvious to us might readily appear if her letter were given is useless to suppose. That is, however, hardly the question here. The significant point is that a brief summary like this one juxtaposed as it is to the long and intense letter from Troilus helps to underscore the shift in Criseyde's feelings. Because we do not hear her response but only a rapid and radically compressed synopsis of it, she seems even more vague, even more distant from Troilus and from our sympathies.[36] Because we do not hear her promises to return and her avowals of love, they too seem vague and without actual substance. This effect is an important one, for it is at this point in the narrative that we are being drawn away from our involvement with Criseyde's story to examine instead the betrayal and its effect on Troilus. Without the subtle manipulation of this synoptic intrusion, this effect could not be so easily achieved.

The synoptic intrusion is also often used to hurry us through por-

tions of the story so that we do not become involved in unnecessary action and so that we maintain the correct perspective, that is, the correct distance on incidents summarized. Two examples from Troilus and Criseyde will illustrate the way these intrusions force us to step back from the action.

The first example is, in fact, the narrator's statement of purpose in skimming over details, in this case the complete details of the courtship letters sent by Troilus. In justifying his omission of the precise details of how Troilus wooed his love, the narrator pauses in his description of the effect the letters produced to declare:

> But now, paraunter, som man wayten wolde
> That every word, or soonde, or look, or cheere
> Of Troilus that I rehercen sholde,
> In al this while unto his lady deere.
> I trowe it were a long thyng for to here;
> Or of what wight that stant in swich disjoynte,
> His wordes alle, or every look, to poynte.
> (3, 491-7)

Obviously the narrator does not intend for us to dwell too long on the particulars of the courtship. After all, at this point in the narrative the couple have already met and pledged their love to each other with less than subtle suggestions on the full implication of that pledge. By the time the narrator explains his reasons for not giving us extended details, the main direction of the narrative is not the description of the courtship but of the arrangements for their first night together. Again, like Pandarus, the narrator here is not concerned with the process but only the conclusion. The way that this intrusion is inserted just as Pandarus begins, as the narrator says, "to quike alwey the fyr" encourages us to agree with his narrative theory. It would delay description of the consumation of their love to hear all the preparatory details. We know how they feel already. The narrator's judgment here seems absolutely logical. What we need is to get to the point--as the narrator so frequently promises

in this section of the narrative.

Later in the story the narrator again rapidly summarizes a courtship to speed us to its conclusion. The second time is Diomede's courtship of Criseyde. We have seen from the beginning of Book Five how the Greek warrior pays suite to Criseyde and how she has resisted without actually denying him and, more importantly, without revealing her love for Troilus. Finally, Criseyde promises to continue to see him but asks him not to speak of love again, ending her speech avoiding both a commitment and a refusal. At this point the narrator steps in to summarize Diomede's continued pleading for her love or a token and his eventually taking her glove. Then after two stanzas describing Criseyde's reaction, stanzas which may incidentally recall her similar contemplation of Troilus' love earlier, the narrator dramatically speeds up the description with this one-stanza conclusion:

> The morwen com, and gostly for to speke,
> This Diomede is come unto Criseyde;
> And shortly, lest that ye my tale breke,
> So wel he for hymselven spak and seyde,
> That alle hire sikes soore adown he leyde.
> And finaly, the sothe for to seyne,
> He refte hire of the grete of al hire peyne.
> (5, 1030-36)

With two attestations of the truth, two direct abbreviations and one quick explanation for his abbreviation, the narrator rushes us to the resolution of the courtship. He presents it in almost startlingly understated generality. Yet when we arrive at that line on how Diomede took away her pain, there is a dramatic sense of a sudden climax.

Even after all the narrator's earlier preparation for Criseyde's betrayal, this action is, nevertheless, further emphasized by the narrator's telling of it. The vague description of the way that Diomede pleads his case and the equally ambigous relief of her pain is further heightened by those attestations of truth and declarations on the need for brevity.

The narrator's fear that we will break off our attention to his story at this point is ironic. In many ways these lines are some of the most important in the story. No matter that we know from the outset that Criseyde will betray Troilus, no matter that we have been told she will decide to stay, letting Troy and all in it slip "knotteles" from her heart--her final submission to Diomede is still a significant moment.

The way that the narrator rushes through the description of that moment when it seems to warrant a final scene makes the conclusion seem all the more preordained. We hardly even see Criseyde here. She seems no longer a personality, merely a pawn to be manipulated at will by the man nearest her. We do not even have a clear sense of her choosing Diomede, only of his making her give up her grief, grief that we know is over the separation from Troilus. The rapid description here takes us farther from Criseyde than perhaps any other passage in the text. The whole thing seems too quick, too easy. We are given the sense of it as an essentially self-serving action. Because of the rapid summary the character seems to disappear except as a shadowy figure around whom other events are acted out. Criseyde is lost here, and not just to Troilus but to the audience as well.[37]

The synopsis can, therefore, be a particularly subtle technique for altering the audience's reaction to the story. When the narrator gives us only the barest outline of incidents, we lose the sense of the story and follow only the direction the summary points out for us. We are not allowed to become involved with what may be secondary material. More importantly, we are hurried on toward certain conclusions in such a way that we are given no time to formulate our own judgments on the action. We become totally dependent on the narrator's guidance.

The narrator's summaries may also function as a sort of restatement

of the action. In cases where the narrator concludes a long and detailed scene with a synopsis of what has happened the effect is rather like a review. He reminds us of major points so that we do not forget them when they become important later. Summations of this kind are generally somewhat more specific than those used to speed up the narrative. In fact, these often delay the story, holding our attention on a scene longer than normal.

These reviews may be extended restatements or short direct references. Some simply emphasize a single incident while others connect individual incidents to the whole narrative. When, for example, Parzival meets Ither the Red Knight, there is an extended scene detailing their quarrel, their fight, Ither's death, and Parzival's confiscation of his armor. Despite the lamentation of the court at his death, we might be mislead into rejoiceing over this victory since we had seen Ither's proud behavior earlier and especially since we had heard Parzival ridiculed for his lack of proper armor. But the narrator's summary of the incident prevents these misinterpretations by connecting it to Parzival's later career:

> Îthêr der lobes rîche
> wart bestatet künecliche.
> des tôt schoup siufzen in diu wîp,
> sîn harnas im verlôs den lîp:
> dar umbe was sîn endes wer
> des tumben Parzivâles ger.
> sît dô er sich baz versan,
> ungerne hete erz dô getân. (3.161, 1-8)

(Illustrious Ither was laid to rest with royal pomp. His death pierced womankind with sighs. His armour had proved his ruin. Simple Parzival's wish to have it had been the end of him. Later, on reaching the years of discretion, Parzival wished he had not done it, Hatto, p. 91).

Here the combination of summary and prediction reveal Parzival's rashness. The unknightly act of killing a warrior with a javelin may be somewhat lessened because Ither had beaten Parzival severely. But the killing of

another for the sake of his armor is hardly acceptable for a would-be knight. The narrator's reminder of how and why the Red Knight is killed, therefore, emphasizes for us the drastic contrast between him and Parzival. The young man is ignorant of all the ways of knighthood. Here in his first victory, the narrator's intrusion makes us aware of just how much he has to learn before he can claim rightly the title of knight.

Chaucer's narrator also uses such reviews for individual scenes, but perhaps the most interesting of them is the single stanza at the end which summarizes the entire action of the story for us. Here we also have one of the most abstract of this kind of review. After the narrative has been finished, in fact in the middle of the long didactic conclusion, we suddenly hear this summary of the poem:

> Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for love!
> Swich fyn hath al his grete worthynesse!
> Swich fyn hath his estat real above,
> Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath his noblesse!
> Swych fyn hath false worldes brotelnesse!
> And thus bigan his lovyng of Criseyde,
> As I have told, and in this wise he deyde.
> (5, 1828-34).

The repetition of the phrase "swych fyn" is crucial to this passage. The narrator is not merely drawing our attention to the fact that Troilus' love, worthiness, status, lust, nobility, and participation in the "false worldes brotelnesse" have ended. He is emphasizing exactly what kind of an end they have come to, an end in which those things that had seemed so vitally important finally appear laughably unimportant. It is essential to the unity of the conclusion that this objective, perhaps even disinterested, perspective be obvious to the end of the poem. The last couplet in the stanza gives us such an abstract comment on the whole process of love that even Troilus' love and death seems rather matter-of-fact and less than crucial.

The most important point of this rapid reminder is that we have no

description or even mention of any joy Troilus has had from loving Criseyde. We see only that all his worthiness and nobility are sacrificed to it. They are sacrificed for an ideal which, when lost, does not send him to eternal mourning in the underworld as he has anticipated. Instead, it is an ideal which, like the rest of those things deemed so important by the living, seem inconsequential to the dead lover's spirit. In other words, the summary reminds us that Troilus has given up his world over something essentially transient in nature. His realization about that transience parallels the knowledge of experienced lovers in the audience at the opening of the story, lovers who have not had to lose so much to gain the knowledge.

Conclusions

The intrusive organizational narrator becomes a significant influence on the effects the story produces. Whether he simply gives us quick transitions from one scene to another, more elaborate connections between single incidents and the pattern of the whole story, or rapid summaries of action, he provides us with the most important guidance through the action of the story. While he does not preach to us on the lessons to be learned from the story, he often supports the didactic voice as if with examples and at times even eliminates the need for such didactic glosses by making the significance of action obvious through the subtle use of his organizing intrusions.

This narrator more than any other is the companion for the audience. His sole concern seems to be that we understand exactly what happens in the story, that we not be misled or confused by a complicated plot. Because he seems so much the friendly guide, this narrator's commentary does not appear calculating or heavy-handed as that of other narrative

voices may seem. We are not encouraged to doubt or to question his intrusions. Rather we are led to trust that this simply is the way the story goes. Such a trustworthy appearance allows this narrator's intrusions a degree of subtle camouflage that no other voice may claim.

Yet the intrusions of this apparently innocent and straight-forward storyteller must be carefully examined for the ways that they manipulate both the story and our reactions to it, for it is just their apparently straightforward nature which makes us overlook the carefully planned alterations in the text. In these intrusions perhaps more than any other we can discover the author's manipulation of his story as his narrator so thoughtfully leads us to the story's conclusion. Here we find the editorial process most clearly. Yet the major point to remember here is that we should not concentrate merely on the way the author chooses to arrange and present the story but also on the way that he uses his narrator's intrusions to emphasize those editorial decisions. That added attention to the structuring of the plot is perhaps the most important function of the organizational narrator.

Notes for Chapter Four

[1]Morton Donner emphasizes that the narrator in Troilus, for example, is to be responded to personally, to be taken seriously as one of us: "Chaucer and His Narrators: The Poet's Place in His Poems," Western Humanities Rev., 27(1973), 192-3.

[2]In discussing Troilus Frost maintains that the narrator is equivalent to the Greek Chorus ("Narrative Devices in Chaicer's Troilus and Criseyde," p. 31). The same comment may ust as easily be applied to the works by Wolfram or Dante.

[3]Marianne Wynne says of Wolfram's Willehalm, for example, "Whenever there is a sudden redirection of the audience's interest, then it is invariably for maximum poetic effect." See "Book I of Wolfram von Eschenbach's Willehalm and Its Conclusions," Medium Aevum, 49 (1), 60.

[4]"From 'Listen Lordyngs' to 'Dear Reader,'" p. 119.

[5]See the earlier quotation from Jordan (ch. I, n. 30).

[6]The Shape of Creation, pp. 94-5. It is important to note that when Jordan refers to the Gothic, even if he applies the term to the narrative, he does not mean by it what we commonly associate with the term, for example, in discussing Gothic novels. Rather he is using the term applied to the architecture of the Middle Ages as a metaphor for explaining the medieval attitude toward all creations.

[7]See also Henry John Chaytor, From Script to Print(1944; rpt. New York: October House, 1967), p. 61.

[8]"Situation of the Writer in 1947," in What Is Literature? (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949), p. 229.

[9]The Rhetoric of Fiction, p. 19.

[10]Leonard Lutwack, "Mixed and Uniform Prose Styles in the Novel," in The Theory of the Novel, ed. Philip Stevick (New York: The Free Press, 1968), p. 209.

[11]For a more complete explanation of these characteristics of exposition, see: Meir Sternberg, "What is Exposition? An Essay in Temporal Delineation," in The Theory of the Novel: New Essays, ed. John Halperin (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1974), pp. 25-40. This essay is reprinted in Sternberg's later and more thorough study of exposition and the rhetorical control it suggests, an important consideration of the complex effect of exposition as it appears throughout a narrative: Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1978).

[12]In just this way Wynne labels these kinds of repetitions in Wolfram's Willehalm for being "dispiritingly pedestrian" rather than observing the ways they add emphasis ("Book I of Wolfram von Eschenbach's Willehalm and Its Conclusions," p. 60).

[13]"What is Exposition?" p. 55.

[14]"What is Exposition?" p. 61.

[15]Mehl makes similar comments on Chaucer's use of narrator's games. He maintains that the differences in the addresses--which might be taken a step further to apply also to the differences in the obviousness of the narrator's control--force "a sharpening of our awareness of the poem's levels of meaning and our active response" ("The Audience of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," p. 177).

[16]Bede, "De Schematibus et Tropis," in Readings in Medieval Rhetoric, p. 96.

[17]The Poetics of Prose, pp. 64-5

[18]Michael R. Peed discusses the distance in the opening stanzas of the poem--distance which this matter-of-fact prediction helps to increase: "Troilus and Criseyde: The Narrator and the 'Olde Bookes,'" American Notes and Queries, 12 (1974), 144.

[19]See Poag's discussion of the Gawan/Parzival chapters as a Doppelroman (Wolfram von Eschanbach, pp. 69-70).

[20]It has been widely speculated that Wolfram broke off the narrative at the end of this book and only returned to it some years later and at a different court. See the justifications for this conclusion in Kratz, Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, p. 168, and Poag, Wolfram von Eschenbach, p. 141. The narrator's intrusion here itself would seem to substantiate such a conclusion in the way it gives us absolute reassurance that everything will eventually work out well for Parzival. Thus, it prevents this book from having the feeling that it suddenly dropped off into nothingness, an impression that would be one to avoid if it were in fact to be presented as an independent whole without its conclusion for some time. Interestingly, this same wrap up prediction for Parzival allows the poet to begin Book Seven with Gawan's exploits and yet still have the groundwork laid for an eventual return to the central character of Parzival.

[21]Scholes and Kellogg equate such an irony to the development of "self-conscious tellers in non-traditional, written narratives" (The Nature of Narrative, p. 52). They suggest that these ironies are potential in any written narrative and particularly in the non-traditional narratives which imitate, as Chaucer's of course does, the situation of the oral narrative.

[22]Donaldson finds this sudden undercutting particularly striking, commenting--not entirely objectively himself--that here "the narrator gives her the lie, the only time in the entire course of the poem that he shows ill temper" (Speaking of Chaucer, p. 76).

[23]Donaldson't comment that the narrator's reassurance that she will come back (5, 1415) is the first emphasis on dramatic irony in the poem is obviously incorrect (Speaking of Chaucer, p. 73). Indeed the narrator has the remarkable facility for making every comment on her betrayal carry the shock of the first revelation, but it cannot be denied that the audience has been warned about it since the opening of Book One and so dramatic irony has been at work all along.

[24]See Donaldson's discussion of how the narrator enforces and maintains the distance from Criseyde in Books Four and Five, commentary whose emphasis on the almost ruthless distancing seems to contradict his own earlier statement that the narrator is in love with Criseyde (Speaking of Chaucer, pp. 71ff).

[25]Mehl maintains that such intrusions force our attention on gaps in the storyline, as in this case jumping to the betrayal without first giving the details of Diomede's courtship or Criseyde's changing of affections ("The Audience of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, p. 183).

[26]Curschmann believes that we lose much of the sense of what the asides to the audience were all about unless we imagine the actual group gathered to hear the story in "a performance including the use of stage requisites, certain expectations on the part of a particular audience, or external circumstances created by one such audience to which the author/narrator has to react" ("The French, The Audience and the Narrator in Wolfram's Willehalm," p. 549).

[27]See Donaldson't commentary on this passage (Speaking of Chaucer, p. 75).

[28]This kind of reminder about the eventual pain of his love may be one of the reasons that Gordon finds such ambiguity in this passage immediately following the description of Bayard and the "lawe of kynde."

[29]See Curschmann's description of the question as a topos in Middle High German narrative ("The French, The Audience and the Narrator," p. 553). He maintains, wrongly I believe, that Wolfram's use of them is imaginative but routine on the whole" (p. 554).

[30]Curschmann speculates that these "planted" questions could be the poet's response to similar questions posed by an audience on an earlier occasion. Avoiding the misconstruction that might interpret these questions as evidence of actual interaction in the scene, he points out that: "Oral composers just do not respond to questions from the audience, at least not during the performance" ("The French, The Audience and the Narrator," p. 550).

[31]As Curschmann says we have in these passages "a thumb-nail sketch of the situation of the German court poet, presented in a spirit of light banter" ("The French, The Audience and the Narrator," p. 557)

[32]See also Wynne's discussion of questions and comments to examine certain scenes in Willehalm ("Book I of Wolfram von Eschanbach's Willehalm and Its Conclusions," pp. 61-2).

[33]Similarly, Petrus W. Tax emphasizes the way that Wolfram's narrative method makes the audience share Parzival's position and be _traeliche wîs_: "Wolfram von Eschenbach's _Parzival_ in the Light of Biblical Typology," _Seminar_, 9 (1973), 5-6.

[34]Ironically, these passages suggest to us the fewest doubts about the story and offer the least hint of manipulation because the "I" narrator is less obviously present here than in other intrusions and, as Donner explains, the narrator's respectability increases as he disappears from center stage ("Chaucer and His Narrator: The Poet's Place in His Poems," p. 190).

[35]Hussey believes that this synopsis gives the "right blend of vague encouragement and 'botomles bihestes'" and speeds up the story because Chaucer realized that the story would go on too long if he continued adding to the characters' lines as he had done so often to Troilus': "The Difficult Fifth Book of _Troilus and Criseyde_," _Modern Language Rev._, 67 (1972), 728. This comment, however, seems another version of the intentional fallacy. What is clear from the passage is what Mehl points out about the way that the narrator calls attention to what he has left out ("The Audience of Chaucer's _Troilus and Criseyde_," p. 184).

[36]Donaldson makes the point that because of the narrator's shifting attentions to the story and distancing we are unable to form a precise or even consistent image of Criseyde here (_Speaking of Chaucer_, p. 82).

[37]Contrary to Donaldson's comment that the scene has dragged on too long and that we are impatient to get on with the painful part (_Speaking of Chaucer_, p. 79), it seems that here again we are _given_ the suggestion that we are impatient. Donaldson has responded to the way the story is told and not to what is told because the scene is actually not a protracted one at all, a strong comment on the subtle effiency of such summaries.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE VOICE OF THE POET

In each of the other three major categories of intrusions, the speaker styles himself as something other than an artist. In fact, he may deny his own artistry by claiming a meticulous fidelity to his sources. Even when we find the narrator as the guide directing us through the complexities of the story's plot, he merely appears as the story's teller, not the story's creator. The last major type of intrusion, however, presents us with the voice of the poet. In these intrusions the character of the story's creator steps forward to introduce himself and to discuss both his artistry and the composition of his story.

Before any extended discussion of this kind of intrusion, it is necessary to make the distinction between what will be called the poet's voice and the actual poet.[1] Following the practice of the other chapters, I will continue to treat the intrusive voice strictly as an invention and not as the commentary of the actual poet in spite of direct identification of that voice with the poet. In the medieval romance there may indeed be instances in which the intrusive voice identifies himself with the name of the poet or otherwise gives us details of the poet's own history as his own. Nevertheless, this study will not be significantly influenced by these few instances and so will not make such an association a general practice. It is illogical to suppose that poets adept enough to assume the masks of historian, teacher, and kindly guide in order to achieve

certain effects could not just as easily use the mask of the poet himself for equally calculated effects. Therefore, regardless of any statements in the texts introducing the speaker with the poet's name, all references to the poet in this discussion should be considered references to the persona of the poet and not the actual poet.

These intrusions by the poem's creator offer some of the most significant parallels between the medieval romance and modern narrative. Here we find the speaker characterized more carefully than in any other kind of intrusion. We hear brief--and sometimes not so brief--revelations about a personal life. The intruding voice suddenly becomes a person with a recognizable personality, as we see him struggling with his major concern, the creation of the poem. His intrusions may be as traditional and stylized as invocations to a muse calling for aid in writing the poem, or they may be as apparently personal as his confession of his own feeling of inadequacy before his subject. In each kind of intrusion there is the sense of the great work the poet has in hand.

Often these intrusions give a distinct impression of the poet's own times as well as his personality. The poet may interrupt his own work to address another poet or to give tribute or criticism to his contemporaries. These references further increase the attention on artistry and at the same time create a stronger sense of the world shamed by the poet and his audience. When he ranks himself as a peer to the best of the contemporary poets, this speaker finally reveals himself to his listeners as much more than a simple historian or storyteller. Yet in these intrusions the poet may also appear in the humblest pose of all, entreating his audience's understanding for his difficulties in writing just as he expects its appreciation of his successes. Here the intruding voice is perhaps more than anything else the performer, as obvious as any character he creates.

Process Literature and the Middle Ages

One of the most exciting connections that may be made between the literature of the Middle Ages and modern narrative centers on this figure of the poet in the poem. For the past few decades both critics and writers themselves have been exploring the possibilities of the literature of process. Yet few of the discussions of process literature have made any references to medieval literature.[2] Although there are some obvious differences in the literature of process and medieval narrative, there are, nevertheless, several similarities which must be examined. These similarities develop out of the constant attention to that process of storytelling and so may help to explain the origins of some of the techniques now commonly associated with process and generally considered modern innovations in narrative form.

The most important characteristic of process literature is its attention to its own creation. This trait has been most often associated with the poetry following the romantic period which began to turn its focus inward. Eventually the poet's own responses to being a poet became a recurrent main theme. Frye describes this tendency toward an inward perspective on creation as one of the major shifts in what he calls the age of sensibility in the last half of the eighteenth century.[3] He attributes the change in attitude toward creation to that essential difference between the Aristotelian and the Longinian views of literature. The fact that the literature of the Middle Ages does not follow the Aristotelian principles of unity and form may help to explain why it incorporates some of the characteristics of process literature while it fails to show others. For example, though the literature of the Middle Ages does not quite present that quality of unstructured spontaneity so characteristic of modern process literature, it does give us at least a portion of the dramatization of

the process of creation in its poetic intrusions.[4]

The attention to the poet is one of the major connections with modern process literature. In discussing process literature, for example, Donald Kartiganer describes the focus on the creator in terms that may also apply to the medieval poet with only slight modification. He characterizes the work as both a definition of itself and its creator:

> The primary response to the new condition following the romantic movement was a literature moving in the direction of process, in which the subject becomes the poet's own efforts to create poetry, his poems no more--and no less--than the record of the process in which the work and the poet are themselves being created. The artist here is not the detached artificer, the objective maker clearly distinct from his artifact, but a kind of creator-actor describing his own self-formation out of the sometimes violent exposure to unstructured reality.[5]

Although the medieval narrative is not pulled from the experience of a chaotic world as the modern counterpart is, its concentration on the poet and his process of creation does capture the same sense of the instability of his situation. The most notable of the influences on the poet in this period are those social pressures that require ~~the~~ dependence on the pleasure of a noble patron. The emphasis here, then, is not so much on capturing the impressions of the unstable world as it is on capturing the fancy of the patron and the rest of the noble audience. The poet who fails to do this quickly loses his support and so the reason for his work. Rather than being the description of how the poet pulls his identity from a chaotic world, the intrusions show the poet chronically concerned with his identity in the world of the court where his poem will be aired. Such a situation is less a difference than may first appear.

The medieval narrative, concentrating as it does on the process of telling the story, also presents us with that character of the actor-creator. He is often the humble clerk who reminds us so frequently of his difficul-

ties in telling this story. We hear him call on the muses for assistance in the most difficult passages and may consider it simply a tradition. Yet this is the same image as that of the modern poet struggling to create. In this sense the intrusive poet gives us a more or less consistent subplot. It is, as Kartiganer says of the modern process poem, "the poet in search of his poem, the hero in quest of a style, the literature in pursuit of itself."[6]

The second point, then, about the process poem's attention to the act of creation is the constant focus on the piece itself. As Sharon R. Wilson says of the self-conscious genre, the creator's voice must dwell on its work "to the extent that the literary work we are reading becomes its own subject . . . ."[7] Though none of the narratives of the Middle Ages will be found to make the story's creation the only topic, as may happen in contemporary literature, this process may, nonetheless be a continuous theme of the intrusions of the poet's voice. This phenomenon of literature talking about itself is again hardly an innovation of the post-romantic times. As with many other of the characteristics of the self-conscious narrative, Todorov traces this self-reflexive strain to the Odyssey, in particular to the Siren's song:

> Speech as narrative finds its sublimation in the song of the Sirens, which at the same time transcends the basic dichotomy. . . . The Sirens are like a bird who never stops singing. The song of the Sirens, then, is a higher degree of poetry, of the poet's art. Here we must note especially Odysseus' description of it. What is this irrestible song about, which unfailingly makes those who hear it die, so great is its allure? It is a song about itself. The Sirens say only one thing: that they are singing! . . .The loveliest speech is the one which speaks of itself.[8]

Such a speech about speech itself is essentially what we have in the numerous invocations to the muses in medieval literature. Ostensibly the poet is calling for aid, but at the same time he discusses primarily

language and the art of poetry. Similar commentary may occur within the story when the poet interrupts to apologize for his inadequacy or to call attention to the need for extra craft. In other words, at these places the poem begins to talk about itself as a poem. The story line is temporarily dropped while we are forced to consider that what we are hearing is something more than just a story; it is a poem, a work of conscious art. Such attention to the poem as an artifact causes language and poetry itself to become two of the themes of the poet's intrusions.[9]

The last important connection between the literature of process and the medieval romance is the inclusion of the audience in the act of creation. In the attempt to recreate that experience of capturing the poem, the poet of process may present the work as if it were actually being written with the reader participating in the spontaneous experience. He may go so far as to equate his experience in writing with the reader's, sharing the creation as a kind of mutual discovery.[10] In the medieval romance there will, of course, be no structural reflection of the spontaneous creation that appears in contemporary literature; nevertheless, there is still considerable emphasis on the immediacy of the experience of creating the poem. As we have seen, all the major kinds of intrusions depend upon the audience's presence and often on its interaction. The poetic intrusions are no different. The audience, too, is involved in the often difficult birth of the poem. In the medieval narrative it shares the responsibility of imagining the details of the story as well as actually sharing the experience of it in that oral presentation. This interaction is a dynamic one. As Bradley points out about Wolfram's narrator's exchanges with his audience, this technique is a sign of process literature:

> Narrator and audience are as much textually documented products of the author's art as they are historical and sociological conditions of his creativity. His techniques are subject to

> literary interpretation. . . . Hence I characterize Wolfram's narrative as process."

When the poet turns to the audience to ask its help in difficult passages, asking that those there try to imagine how things should go, he is using the same technique that a modern poet might use in a similar situation.

This inclusion of the audience in the process of creation also offers an unexpected kind of verification of the work. As Rubin explains, in acknowledging the invention and in drawing the audience into participation, the storyteller achieves an alternate reality for the story.[12] The audience, thus, shares the production and verifies the reality of the story as an artifact. Rather than verifying the truth of the storyline, as the other forms of attestations do, this inclusion of the audience verifies the story itself.

Robert O. Payne discusses just this sort of double verification in Chaucer's combination of the auctores and the audience as authentication for the story of Troilus (3, 1342-36).[13] Payne observes that this attention to the story is, in fact, similar to the modern problem. Whose story is it? Does it belong strictly to the auctour, or is it the present poet's story? If it is his, what share does the audience that participated so often in the process of narration have? The rhetorical problem here is a complicated one, similar in many ways to the questions posed in modern process literature. Thus, in examinging the relationship between the audience, the story, and the story's creator, these medieval process intrusions raise some of the most basic questions of the rhetorical situation.

The qualities that best typify the literature of process, then, may also be found in medieval romance, often with only slight variations.[14] The persona of the creator as a lyric voice with epic proportions so central

to the twentieth-century process poem has its counterpart in the medieval romance. His self-doubt, his concern over the language and technique of storytelling, and his inclusion of the audience in the immediate experience of creation, all are distinct characteristics of modern process literature. Each of these concerns becomes one of the intrusions of the poet's voice. Each one emphasizes the poem in a special kind of self-consciousness, a self-consciousness of the story as an artifact and the intruding voice as that of an artist.

Kinds of Process Intrusions

The types of process intrusions basically follow the lines of those features of process literature discussed earlier. Some give a distinct characterization of the poet and his reasons for those feelings of inadequacy in the face of his task. Others present various justifications or excuses for the work, offering general discussions of the nature of creating poetry and its particular difficulties. In this type of intrusion come those comments by the poet calling special attention to places in which he has succeeded in matching his art to his subject. Still other kinds of intrusions bring the audience into the act of creation. Any of these may appear alone, or, as in the case of other kinds of intrusions, they may appear together, thus further emphasizing both the process of writing the poem and the poem as art. Often these intrusions are ironic in their effects, for while protesting the difficulty of writing certain passages and depreciating the quality of the work, the poet calls our attention to just how well he has actually done. Thus, he assumes the pose of the modest poet, and we are compelled to praise his work--all as a result of his discussion of the process of creation.

The Person of the Poet. Some of the most striking of the process

intrusions are those passages which give us a clear characterization of the speaker as a personality. In the other kinds of intrusions discussed in previous chapters, the narrator may have varying degrees of personal appeal, but in general he is limited in the depiction of his own character by the purposes for the intrusion. He is historian or teacher or guide; he does not appear as a character with a life and experience beyond the realm of the story. In the process intrusions, however, this is not the case, for here he is the poet. He can step forth as the creator and logically give that creator a distinct and rounded character.

In these kinds of process intrusions, then, we find the development of the character of the poet. Rubin stresses the growth of the first-person narrator as an integral part of the story he tells.[15] For narratives with an intrusive voice styling itself as the poet, this transformation is also standard. Even that third-person narrator in these works becomes a sort of first-person speaker in the process intrusions. Here he steps forth to discuss the business of writing the poem in much the same way that a first-person narrator tells of his life. His art becomes the matter of his quest, his character developing during the search for it just as the character of any actor-narrator does or any other agent in the story. The intrusive poet, thus, becomes one of the main characters of his story. In fact, he is often a much more rounded character than some of the minor characters he describes for us.

The intrusions developing the character of the poet range from simple revelations about the poet's background to extended descriptions of his career and his relationship to other poets. These intrusions of course will vary in the presentation of the poet from one work to another and even within a single work, depending upon the context. Dante's narrator naturally styles himself as the Florentine exile using the poet's

name and personal history. Chaucer's intruding voice seems hardly a poet at all; he seems more the humble clerk than the poet, even while emphasizing his own work.[16] The intrusive poet in Parzival is one of the most varied of the personalities. Here we find the knight who is familiar with the court and its standards who, nonetheless, makes much of his own poverty. We find the lover who does not appreciate Frowe Minne or her effects. Perhaps most interesting of all, we discover the poet extremely concerned with his own work and with the work of his contemporaries who claims he cannot even read and write! Each of the works incorporates that characterization of the poet best suiting the particular needs of the poem at the point where the intrusion occurs. As a general practice, the intrusions developing the character of the poet support the thematic concerns of the story while directing the audience into specific responses to the creator and his tale.

Wolfram's poet intrudes so often and with so many variations of the personality that it would be impossible to discuss each of the characterizations in this study. The two most striking kinds of characterizations are those that define the speaker as a somewhat bumbling courtly knight and those which rank him with his contemporary poets. Each of these kinds of intrusions accentuates the section of the story in which it appears and at the same time, encourages the audience to disbelieve what the description says and to rally in strong support and sympathy for him despite all his self-denigration.

In those sections of the narrative where love plays a vital part in the plot, Wolfram's poet will, for example, break into the story to give us his own experience with love as a sort of support for criticism of love so often made by his didactic narrator. In these cases, however,

there is a much stronger and much more easily observable reason for the poetic tirades against Frowe Minne. For we discover that these criticisms are not made on the basis of some theoretical objection but are based on the personal experience of the poet. This difference perhaps makes his condemnation less than unbiased, yet it also makes it somehow more understandable that the poet has such strong sympathies for his character's plight if he has himself had the same kind of experience.

One of the most pointed of the brief comments on love comes at the point when Parzival is enthralled by the blood drops on the snow which remind him of his wife because of the sharp contrast of red and white. Here the narrative progresses from the straight description of Segramors riding out to challenge the strange silent knight to the explanation of Parzival's pain and finally to a very personal criticism of love and a particular lady who is causing the poet himself pain:

> sus vuor der unbescheiden helt
> zuo dem der minne was verselt.
> weder er ensluoc dô noch enstach,
> ê er widersagen hin zim sprach.
> unversunnen hielt dâ Parzivâl.
> daz vuocten im diu bluotes mâl
> und ouch diu strenge minne,
> diu mir dicke nimt die sinne
> und mir daz herzę unsanfte reget.
> ach nôt ein wîp an mich leget:
> wil si mich alsus twingen
> und selten helfe bringen,
> ich sol sis underziehen
> und von ir trôste vliehen. (6. 287, 5-18)

> (And so the rash warrior rode out to meet him who had been sold into Love's bondage. Segramors challenged him before dealng any blow, whether with sword or lance. But Parzival sat there lost to the world, thanks to those spots of blood and imperious Love, who also robs me of my senses and sets my heart in turmoil. (Alas, a lady is doing me violence! And if she continues to oppress me thus and never comes to my aid, I shall hold her responsible and abandon the hopes I placed in her), Hatto, p. 150)

In just these few lines the narrative goes from the essentially objective perspective of the third-person narrator to the highly personalized point of view of the frustrated lover-poet.[17] The intrusion is carefully slipped

into the commentary so that we make the transition from Parzival's transfixed daydreaming to the domination of love and then at last to the poet's own experience with love. By the time that we have heard the threat that he will abandon his attentions to this lady who is doing him such harm if she does not soon take pity on him, there has been another in the continuing series of examples of the contrast between a good love and a bad one. Parzival is enrapt because he is dreaming of his wife, who throughout the story is styled as a good woman with a true and responsive heart, a direct contrast to the courtly lady tormenting the poet.

Thus, even for these few lines the poet's own experience becomes the basis for our response, and although we know that Parzival's love is true, we find something less than admirable at this point about the subjugation that love causes. The knight is about to be attacked and does not even perceive it, certainly not a position favorable to his nobility. The poet's intercession and sympathy for the situation is in drastic contrast to what we might expect from a courtly narrative. The poet registers the complaint about love that Parzival himself could not and, no doubt, would not make about the power of love.

The inclusion of the poet's own life at this point, therefore, provides a completely altered perspective from which to approach this scene. It sets the stage for the ensuing comedy as the three different knights ride forth to challenge the insensate Red Knight. Without the intercession of the poet at this point, our response would be much less directed, and we would have lost completely that contrast between the reactions of knights loved by two ladies who respond in two entirely different ways to the responsibilities of love. With the short glimpse into the poet's life, we, thus, have a dramatically expanded presentation of the effects and the correct ways of love.

Only a few lines further on the poet's own complaints against love once more take precedence over the plot of the story itself. This time, following the didactic passage on the harm that love so often does, the poet gives us a very personalized explanation for his attack on love:

> disiu redę enzaeme keinem man,
> wan der nie trôst von iu gewan.
> hetet ir mir geholfen baz,
> mîn lop waere gein iu niht so laz:
> ir habet mir mangel vor gezilt
> und mîner ougen eckę alsô verspilt,
> daz ich iu niht getrûwen mac.
> mîn nôt iuch ie vil ringe wac.
> doch sît ir mir ze wol geborn,
> daz gein iu mîn kranker zorn
> immer solde bringen wort.
> iuwer druc hât sô strengen ort,
> ir ladet ûf herze swaeren soum. (6. 292, 5-17)

(This discourse would ill beseem any other than one who had never known your solace. Had you helped me more I should not be so laggard in your praises. You have marked me up short and diced my enamoured glances away, so that I have lost my trust in you. My sufferings have meant very little to you. But you are too well-born for me to ever indict you in my puny anger. The goad you apply is so sharp, the burden you lay upon my heart so heavy, Hatto, pp. 152-3)

Following a didactic discourse on love that has already gone on for thirty-five lines, this explanation of the poet's personal failures takes us almost completely away from the action of the story. No longer is the subject what happens to Parzival when he sees the blood drops in the snow; instead, the subject now has become the effects of love and whether they are even desirable.

The poet at this point does not sound at all convinced that love is worth the effort. He himself has, it seems, never known the reward that he feels his attention to the rules of love should offer him. He sounds like one who is about to give up trying since every story he sees, including the one he is telling now himself, contains only the evidence of how love poorly treats those who serve her best. After another twenty-nine more lines on the devastating effects of love in his own and other

stories, he concludes his digression with this blanket statement: "ich han geredet unser aller wort" (I have spoken all our words, my translation). Then he returns us to the story and the result of love's treatment of Parzival.

After the extended digression and the personal complaints about love, the audience is prepared to be somewhat displeased with the action in the next section. In fact, this section of the narrative shows Parzival almost totally out of touch with his world. He is not even aware that he is being attacked until he is struck. The effect is hardly what we would expect as knightly behavior at its peak. Finally, Gawan is forced to cover the blood spots in order to return the knight to his senses. Thus, the action of the story itself carries on what the poet has said about love. It steals a man's control of his own life and often gives very little in return but humiliation. The audience is compelled to agree with the poet because he goes so far as to say that he has spoken for all of us in his tirade. Therefore, we must see the experience of the knight as something less than a noble one, as something that takes away his strength and hardly gives him any return. Without the poet's intrusion and the insistence that the audience agrees with him, it would be much more likely that the scene could be interpreted as a tribute to the way that love can rule a knight's heart. With it the scene may be taken as comic and the poet's commentary as the more objective, though somewhat bitter, interjection of one who can see that there is little nobility here.

In those cases in which the poet intrudes to make a point about his own knighthood, the personal details again accentuate the action of the story where they appear. For the most part these intrusions characterize the poet as a knight of poorer rank and at times even of poorer courage. For example the poet may explain that if there has been grass trampled down

in a certain tournament, he is not to be held responsible (7. 379, 16-17), implying not only that he was not present at the fight, but also that he would not have enjoyed being involved in such a wide-spread battle. The poet repeatedly refers to his status as a knight, only to undercut it somehow with such commentary as those that style him as glad to have avoided a conflict.[18] Yet in some places the knight-poet breaks in eagerly to praise the characters in the story and assure us that he would gladly serve them. Almost without exception these cases correspond to those in which the speaker goes on to make a major point about his own poverty. He claims, for example, that he would gladly serve as a mercenary for the people at Condwiramurs' castle after the supply ships have come in because now they drink spiced wine instead of beer (4. 201, 5-6). The comment emphasizes the wonderful change in the fortune of the people of the castle who only a short time before had been starving. That this comment is also a direct reference to his status as a mercenary at a place where he does <u>not</u> drink spiced wine is supported by this earlier remark made when the starvation of the people under siege is first mentioned and a remark often used by commentators to sketch a biography of the poet:

> woldę ich nû daz wîsen in,
> sô hetę ich harte kranken sin.
> wan dâ ich dicke bin erbeizet
> und dâ man mich herre heizet,
> dâ heimę in mîn selbes hûs,
> dâ wirt gevreut vil selten mûs,
> wan diu müestę ir spîse steln.
> die dörfte niemen vor mir heln:
> ich envindę ir offenlîche niht.
> alze dicke daz geschiht
> mir Wolfram von Eschenbach,
> daz ich doldę alsolh gemach. (4. 184, 27-185, 8)

> (I should be a stupid man if I were to blame them for that. For where I have often dismounted and am called 'Master', at home in my own house, no mouse is ever cheered. It would have to steal its food, food which by rights none might hide from me, but of which I find not a scrap above board. All too often do I, Wolfram von Eschenbach, have to make do with such comfort, Hatto, p. 102)

Here for one of the few times in the poem we hear the name of the poet, and at this point in a context that we hardly expect. He too is suffering from severe times; he too knows what his characters experience from their hunger. This image is not at all typical of the medieval characterization of the knight or of the poet. We discover it here as something rather unexpected and so dramatic.

The poet's interruptions in these cases emphasize the minor details of the story by making them the major details of self-characterization. Whether the details of Wolfram's poverty were true or not is not the question at this point. What is important is the way that the voice of the poet breaks in here to make his own life part of the story. In some very subtle way he vivifies the plight of the people in the castle by his own very human responses to them. We are drawn into sympathy for our narrator quite logically, and thus in sympathy with him are also encouraged to sympathize even more with those characters which he describes himself as being like. Perhaps the asides on the poverty he must endure are specially designed to encourage the noble audience's sympathy enough to help insure some form of patronage so necessary to the medieval poet. Perhaps they are simply narrative techniques used to divert and at the same time dramatize a situation within the story by the association. Whatever the actual reason behind the use of the technique, the effect is to give us a sense of the poet as an actual person, very close to us and to the characters in his tale. This immediacy is one of the most remarkable achievements of Wolfram's narrative for many of the medieval romances with such a wide scope as this one lose the effect of having been told orally by a poet reading, or reciting, to his audience. With intrusions of this kind, such is never the case with Parzival.

Wolfram's intrusive voice uses other techniques than these almost lyric inclusions of details from his own life to give us the impression of himself as the creator of the poem. Among the most obvious of these techniques are the addresses to other poets and the direct references to his own craft as it ranks with that of his contemporaries. Two of the most notable examples will illustrate the way the poet thus represents himself as a member, if not always a recognized member, of the community of poets.

At one point Wolfram interrupts the description of Parzival's first visit to Arthur's court to address Hartmann von Aue in a prime example of the egotism of the poet. Here we find an apparent tribute to the established and renowned poet of the Arthurian cycles as they were translated into German. Yet there is also an obvious challenge to the senior poet:

> mîn her Hartman von Ouwe,
> vrou Ginôvêr, iuwer vrouwe,
> und iuwer herre, der künec Artûs,
> den kumt ein mîn gast ze hûs.
> bitet hüeten sîn vor spotte.
> er enist gîge noch diu rotte:
> si suln ein ander gampel nemen.
> des lâzen sich durch zuht gezemen:
> anders iuwer vrouwe Ênîte
> und ir muoter Karsnafîte
> werdent durch die mül gezucket
> und ir lop gebucket.
> sol ich den munt mit spotte zern,
> ich wil mînen vriunt mit spotte wern.
> (3. 143, 21-144, 4)

> (Sir Hartmann of Aue, I am sending a stranger to the Palace to visit your lord and lady, King Arthur and Queen Ginover. Kindly shield him from mockery. He is no fiddle or rote. In the name of all that is seemly let people find something else to strum on! -- otherwise your Lady Enite and her mother Karsnafite will be dragged through the mill and their reputations lowered! If I am to twist my mouth to jibes, with jibes I will defend my friend! Hatto, p. 83)

The opening of the address is obviously a tribute. Hartmann had been the first to translate the Arthurian stories of Chrétien de Troyes into the German, so his versions of Erec and Enite and Iwein would have been well-known by the courtly audience. The introduction of the character Parzival to

the poet, and not simply to Arthur's court, is, then, a major compliment. Yet as the passage progresses, the tenor changes. Rather than continuing with the complimentary address, the poet gradually shifts into something very like a threat, and a barely veiled one at that. While he introduces his character to the master, he asks that Hartmann help to protect the honor of the character--as if the other poet controls those voices at Arthur's court that might ridicule the untutored youth. The underlying meaning, of course, is a request to preserve from ridicule in other works not just the hero but Wolfram's own work. Such ridicule was not at all uncommon among the poets of the period.[19] But the humble request does not end there; instead the poet goes on to explain what will happen if his character is ridiculed by any of the characters created by Hartmann, or, in other words, if Hartmann ridicules the work himself in any way. Such an act will be immediately followed by an equal attack on the characters created by Hartmann.

The immediacy of the contact between poets is effectively dramatized here.[20] We get a strong sense also of this work as one that is in progress and could, if necessary, incorporate an attack on Hartmann or his work at some later point if he were in any way to be responsible for defaming this story or its characters or its creator. What we hear, then, with this kind of address to a contemporary is not only the voice of the poet defending his work and his own worth as a poet, but also the poet in the act of creating. At places like this the poor knight and the frustrated lover have disappeared, and the poet steps forth as the proud creator, ready to ask for the attention that his work deserves and equally ready to fight for it using the weapons of his art.

This kind of reference to other poets sets up the creator of Parzival's story as one with as much capability as any of the contemporary poets and

with as much intention to defend himself and his work. One other reference to the poetic ability sets up another kind of characterization entirely, this time an ironic one. At the end of the second book of the poem the voice of the poet breaks in to defend himself first of all against the criticism of the ladies at the court. At the end of this apology, however, the poet draws a portrait of himself that hardly fits with the passages of poetic and narrative theory that appear later. This comment styles him as a storyteller and not exactly a poet, or even in the normal sense of the term a writer. For here the speaker denies his own ability to read and write and, therefore, the ability to create a book as other poets do. At this point the speaker emphasizes his rank of knight as a position more to be admired than that of a singer alone. With the knighthood as his major profession, the role of poet is thus reduced to something very like a hobby:

schildes ambet ist mîn art.
swâ mîn ellen sî gespart,
swelhiu mich minnet umbe sanc,
sô dunket mich ir witze kranc.
ob ich guotes wîbes minne ger,
mac ich mit schildę und ouch mit sper
verdienen niht ir minne solt,
al dar nâch sî si mir holt.
vil hôhes topels er doch spilt,
der an ritterschaft nâch minnen zilt.
hetenz wîp niht vür ein smeichen,
ich soldę iu vürbaz reichen
an disem maerę unkundiu wort,
ich spraechę iu die âventiure vort.
swer des von mir geruoche,
der enzel sį ze keinem buoche:
ich enkan deheinen buochstap.
dâ nement genuogę ir urhap:
disiu âventiure
vert âne der buoche stiure.
ê man si hete vür ein buoch,
ich waerę ê nacket âne tuoch,
sô ich in dem bade saeze,
ob ich squesten niht vergaeze. (2. 115, 11-116, 4)

(My hereditary office is the Shield! I should think any lady weak of understanding who loved me for mere songs unbacked by manly deeds. If I desire a good woman's love and fail to win love's reward from her with shield and lance, let her favour me accord-

> ingly. A man who aims at love through chivalric exploit gambles for high stakes.
>
> Unless the ladies thought it flattery, I should go on offering you things as yet unheard of in this story, I would continue this tale of adventure for you. But let whoever wishes me to do so, not take it as a book. I haven't a letter to my name! No few poets make their start from them: but this story goes its way without the guidance of books. Rather than that it be taken for a book, I should prefer to sit naked in my tub without a towel--provided I had my scrubber! Hatto, pp. 68-9)

The image here is hardly in keeping with any sort of poetic dignity. In fact, the whole passage is almost arrogant in its tone as well as its point.

Whether Wolfram did or did not know how to read and write is not the question here. What is of concern is the way that this passage combines all three kinds of characterizations of the poet. First we have the man who is not always lucky with women, indeed in this case has won the resentment of the ladies at court for an apparent disrespect to one of their number. But the speaker is not content to let that pass without comment. Instead, he makes a special point to denigrate the poetic praises of a lady if they are to be the only tribute to her. At this point, we find the speaker making much of his knighthood and the particular service that he as a knight can do for a lady who will be willing to reward him. Finally, the intruding voice turns again to the process of telling the story, but not without a last comment on the essential difference between himself and other poets. They, who do nothing but write poetry, can no doubt read and write and so get their poems from other books, as Gottfried does with Tristan and Hartmann does with Erec and Iwein. But he, Wolfram, cannot get his stories in this way, for he cannot read the other books. This is a claim for the authorship that completely denies the tradition of the old authorities and later in the story creates the need for a living source to tell this poet the story of the grail. But the most interesting impression created by the denial of literacy is that this poet seems somehow

more naturally gifted than his contemporaries who get their stories from other sources. At this point we see the creator of this story styled not as a poet who knows nothing about knights and ladies except what he reads in books, an allusion perhaps to Gottfried who was a clerk and not a knight; rather, he steps forth as a knight who understands the courtly world because of his own association with it.

In this passage, then, by denying his own craft, claiming that he cannot read and write and so explaining that he is not just a poet, the speaker develops a much more complex character for himself. He seems almost proud to claim his illiteracy, glad not to be associated with the clerks who know nothing about the chivalric world they depict. Therefore, while styling himself as less than the average poet, the speaker manages to create the impression of a poet who knows more than others about the subject that he is telling. No books or ancient sources have taught this poet the nature of chivalry; experience has been the teacher. After this kind of self-justifying apology, it is difficult to imagine the audience agreeing with any woman who dared to find fault with this poet. In fact, it is just this evasion of criticism that passages like this one seem designed to perform.

Unlike Wolfram's social and poetic stance, Chaucer's third-person narrator in Troilus and Criseyde does not have nearly this range of complication to the personality he presents. Instead he appears as the clerk that Wolfram's narrator so often shows such contempt for. Repeatedly Chaucer's narrator denies any firsthand knowledge of the subject of love. He has acquired his information for the story from other sources and begs the audience to be lenient in its judgment of it for that very reason. The humility of this creator is perhaps his most obvious trait. It is the dominant characteristic in most of those intrusions that depict the poet.

The most interesting and one of the most typical of the depictions of the character of the poet occurs just in the middle of the love scene between Troilus and Criseyde. We would hardly expect the poet to step forth at such a critical moment to tell us about himself, yet that is just what happens here. In the midst of his describing the lovers' joy and reporting their conversation, he breaks in to give us this explanation about his life and its relationship to his story:

> Of hire delit, or joies oon the leeste,
> Were impossible to my wit to seye;
> But juggeth ye that han ben at the feste
> Of swich gladnesse, if that hem liste pleye! (3, 1310-13)
> . . . . . .
> O blisful nyght, of hem so longe isought,
> How blithe unto hem bothe two thow weere!
> Why nad I swich oon with my soule ybought,
> Ye, or the leeste joie that was theere?
> Awey, thow foule daunger and thow feere,
> And lat hem in this hevene blisse dwelle,
> That is so heigh that al ne kan I telle. (3, 1317-23)

Here in the middle of the love scene, the poet steps forth suddenly to reveal that he cannot tell us the whole story of the lover's joy because he himself has never known such a night. This is something of a startling confession at this point in the story since we are hardly prepared to be taken away from our involvement in the love scene just to hear about the poet's own less than satisfactory love life. Yet this is exactly what happens here. The interruption goes on for several more lines, drawing the audience even more into participation in the scene and depending even more on its members to imagine the scene for themselves since the inexperienced poet cannot give it to them in its clearest form.

The irony here, of course, stands out clearly. What we have just heard in the lines preceeding this intrusion is a carefully presented and detailed love scene. We hardly need further description to get the point that the lovers are now quite satisfied with their commitment to each other

as well as with the whole scheme to bring them together. The poet's interruption at this stage in the story is unnecessary. It emphasizes something that has already received a remarkable build up and that is obviously one of the most important moments in the entire poem.

What we see in his explanation and somewhat embittered reference to his own life is the fastidiously careful clerk who wants to take no chances that we miss the important point and so calls on us to fill in portions that because of his own inadequate experience he cannot make clear. The creator here seems, as Payne says about Chaucer's other narrators, "the doubtfully hopeful minor academic writer trying his best to recover from his most recent disaster because he really does have something to say to us, even though neither his love life nor his bibliography would make that seem very probable."[21] The figure is almost a pathetic one. Most important is that he is not the character we expect to be telling us a love story. In fact, his almost naïve explanation that he has never known such a night gives the passage a distinctly seedy twist to it. What might have seemed a beautiful and perhaps spiritual culmination to the lovers' pledges suddenly becomes something much more human, almost in fact vulgar, because of the poet's reference to his own less than satisfactory experience in love.

What the real poet achieves, then, with this interruption by the voice of the creator is a complex manipulation of the point of view from which the audience is allowed to approach the love scene. That the intrusion comes just at the love scene is also a major point since, of course, the description of a love story is after all the whole point of the poem. If the intrusion of the poet's own experience alters the effect of one of the most significant scenes in the poem, it is not to be glossed over or treated as a simple characterization. It becomes instead another of the

conscious games played by the real poet in the invention of his intrusive voice.[22]

Unlike Wolfram and Chaucer, Dante's speaker must, of course, present as his own experiences known to be those of the actual poet because he offers the description of the Comedy as the journey of a first-person narrator. The trip through the afterlife, thus, in many minor details essentially recreates the poet's life, for along the way he encounters many of those he has known and those who have been responsible for making him a political exile. For the effect to be achieved the outlines of the other characters' lives and the life of the poet-pilgrim must follow in some way those of the actual people and the poet. The result is on the whole what Miller calls a fictive autobiography in which much of the plot is the story of the growth of the creator.[23] Yet despite the focus on the person of the creator, for much of the poem the narration loses the obvious first-person quality and begins to sound more like a third-person narrative. The poet is the actor in truth; nevertheless, we do not have much direct description of the poet's own life separate from the story of the journey.

For the most part the character of the poet is drawn by his responses to the various stages of the pilgrimage and to those spirits he meets along the way. The outright detail of his life is kept at a minimum. Even when the poem opens and the speaker describes himself in "una selva oscura/ che la diritta via era smarrita" (Inferno, 1, 2-3; "a dark wood where the straight way was lost," p. 23), we are not given any specific details for the crisis. The whole experience is given in metaphorical terms, as best suits the rest of the narrative. When we are allowed glimpses of the poet's life outside the realm of the story, they are brief comments and never the extended explanations found in the third-

person narrative. We may hear for example a description of one of the holes in which the simonists are confined and hear them compared to the baptismal fonts in Saint John's and then suddenly have the poet break in with this short reference to his own experience with those fonts:

> l'un delli quali, ancor non è molt'anni,
> rupp'io per un che dentro v'annegava:
> e questo sia suggel ch'ogn' uomo sganni. (Inferno, 19, 19-21)
>
> (one of which, not many years ago, I broke for one that was drowning in it--and to this I set my seal to clear the mind of everyone, p. 237)

But even this piece of history hardly gives us a clear sense of the poet's life outside the story. Instead the effect is to further accentuate the pilgrim's growning desire to right those things in his life which either are wrong or seem so to others. In fact, the poet seems reluctant to make himself, as opposed to his story, the central concern. He even goes so far as to apologize for using his own name at one point in the narrative, explaining that he uses it there only because one of the spirits had called him by it and thus caused him to turn back to see who it was who recognized him and could call him by name (Purgatorio, 30, 62-3). Indeed, it is not until this point when the pilgrim is accosted by Beatrice, the personal model of goodness and the final guide, that the poet even mentions his name at all, an altogether different approach from Wolfram's frequent references to himself and his careers as knight, lover, and poet.

The character of the poet, then, as distinguish-d from the intrusions revealing the life of the poet are more difficult to make in the first-person narrative. Głowiński explains the essential problem of differentiating the character from the speaker in this way:

> . . . there simultaneously enter into play the qualities of the narrating "I" as a character appearing on the novelistic scene, which of necessity must become conspicuous because of its individualized features, as well as the conditions and

> and arrangements under which narration is realized. In various types of the first-person tale, different elements are accentuated: at times it is the personality of the speaker, at times his position at the moment of utterance. Yet whenever the accents occur, they always constitute the essential distinction. Their effacement causes the first-person narration to lose its distinctive features and begin, necessarily, to resemble the third-person story. Thus, we can say that, entangled in this of dependence, a first-person narration becomes somewhat similar to a dialogue in the presence of the reader. He is in possession not only of the narrated text, but also, so to speak, involved in the very act of creating and transmitting the story.[24]

Because the narrator is actually depicted as the poet in another stage of life and the poem is set up as an effort of the poet to define and to record that experience, the poet as a character with a life apart from the text of the poem itself does not develop as strongly as it does in the third-person narrative when the speaker suddenly steps in to make himself one of the central characters. Instead we see the character of the poet in the first-person narrative most clearly when he steps forth to discuss the act of creation. It is for the most part at these points that we have a distinct impression of the poet at the time of the creation and not simply a depiction of the poet's experience as it had been in the story that he is recounting.

The character of the poet, then, may become one of the central characters through any of these kinds of intrusions. Even though the lyric strain is usually in a subordinate position in the romance and is generally used to further the plot and not to characterize the intrusive voice, there is much the same effect of the lyric in the poet's intrusions. The poet's descriptions of his own life may be used to offset the events in the narrative or to justify other comments on the meaning of certain actions by the example of the poet's own experience. They may enhance the story in this way, or they may take the audience away from the story by creating more interest in the poet's own world than in the action of

the poem at a given point. They may also call attention to the poem as a creation by referring to contemporary poets and this poet's connection to them. In each of these effects the intrusions of the speaker which turn the audience's attention to himself underscore general points of the narrative and the narrative process itself. In each case, we are compelled to turn our awareness of the narrative away from the characters within it toward that character on the outside who sets himself up as the one responsible for the creation.

The Process of Creation. The single most consistent theme of the intrusions by the voice of the poet is the complexity of the act of creation itself. Unlike many of the other kinds of intrusions which may comment on various points about the story, the poet's intrusive commentary will always turn on one concern--the expression of the poem in the most effective way. No matter whether the intrusion calls for assistance from a muse, begs understanding from the audience, or points out passages of greater artistry, the consistent theme is the difficulty of creating, and the predominant effect is the accentuation of the poet's success.

Many of the comments that the poet makes about the poem center on his doubt about his ability to write it. In particular the opening invocations to the Muses set up this pose of insecurity with their pleas for assistance. Much of the invocation is, of course, a traditional pattern for the opening of a long poem, as Ong says it is a signal for the audience that the poet has put on the epic mask and that it should in turn assume the appropriate point of view.[25] In asking for assistance and inspiration, the poet establishes the correct stance of humility before the grand subject he proposes to write about. But the invocation also offers the perfect place for the poet to flaunt his ability. There

is nothing so common as the humble insecure poet presenting the invocation with the greatest examples of conscious artistry.

Dante's invocations of the Muses and others might almost document the progression of the poem itself. From the first plea for assistance from the Muses for his memory (Inferno, 2, 7-9) to the last call on God himself (Paradiso, 30, 97-9), each invocation mirrors the portion of the poem in which it appears. Through the description of Purgatory, Calliope, the epic muse, is the one to guide the poet-pilgrir. But when he begins the last stage of the poem with the opening of the Paradiso, the poet turns to another than the muses for aid. The subject of the poem has by this point become even larger than the epic muse's province. It is at last reaching the divine and so must have the aid of divine inspiration.

Yet with all the prayers for assistance, the poet's introduction does not ignore his own role and the possibilities for his own fame. The invocation to the Paradiso offers a clear example of the combination of the humility of the poet and the flaunting of his skill:

> O buono Apollo, all'ultimo lavoro
> fammi del tuo valor sì fatto vaso,
> come dimandi a dar l'amato alloro.
> Infino a qui l'un giogo di Parnaso
> assai mi fu; ma or con amendue
> m'è uopo intrar nell'aringo rimaso.
> Entra nel petto mio, e spira tue
> sì come quando Marsïa traesti
> della vagina delle membra sue.
> O divina virtù, se mi ti presti
> tanto che l'ombra del beato regno
> segnata nel mio capo io manifesti,
> venir vedra' mi al tuo diletto legno,
> e coronarmi allor di quelle foglie
> che la matera e tu mi farai degno.
> Si rade volte, padre, se ne coglie
> per triunfare o cesare o poeta,
> colpa e vergogna dell'umane voglie,
> che parturir letizia in su la lieta
> delfica deità dovrìa la fronda
> peneia, quando alcun di sè asseta.
> Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda:
> forse di retro a me con miglior voci
> si pregherà perchè Cirra risponda. (Paradiso, 1, 13-36)

> (O good Apollo, for the last labour make me such a vessel of thy power as thou requirest for the gift of thy loved laurel. Thus far the one peak of Parnassus has sufficed me, but now I have need of both, entering on the arena that remains. Come into my breast and breathe there as when thou drewest Marsyas from the scabbard of his limbs. O power divine, if thou grant me so much of thyself that I may show forth the shadow of the blessed kingdom imprinted in my brain thou shalt see me come to thy chosen tree and crown myself then with those leaves which the theme and thou will make me worthy. So seldom, father, are they gathered for triumph of Caesar or poet--fault and shame of human wills--that the Peneian bough must beget gladness in the glad Delphic god when it makes any long for it. A great flame follows a little spark. Perhaps after me prayer will be made with better words so that Cyrrha may respond, p. 21, p. 23)

This passage itself is rich in poetic display. The tone and the poetic devices are used to accent the high theme of this last part of the pilgrim's experience. That the poet desires in this section to win the lasting praises of others is more than obvious. This is not just a humble request for the aid of the god; rather, it is a plea for the strength and skill to become one of the few who can rightly claim the laurel. The wish that after this work language will frame better prayers is in no way a humble hope. It is the desire for the immortalization through verse to match that immortalization which he has witnessed in the vision of paradise.

That the poet calls on Apollo, the god of the sun and light, is significant here. Much of this passage and indeed most of this book turn on the image of light. In his humility the poet claims that he will be proud if he can show a shadow of what he beheld in the experience of paradise. Yet just a few lines farther he equates his work with the little flame which will spark a great fire, thus obviously sending forth much more light than his shadow can itself. He, therefore, styles himself as a sort of prime mover, much in the way that Apollo is to be a prime mover in his own effort at describing the vision.

The metaphors also present the difficulty of both the original experience and the retelling of it. The poet describing himself as in an arena shows us that he is facing a difficult trial, a poetic challenge that may be as painful as it is difficult. The allusion to Marsyas who was flayed by the god emphasizes the double nature of the poet's request. He wants the god to take him out of himself so that he may describe that earlier transcendence, yet that sort of separation is nonetheless a serious and perhaps frightening one. None of this next stage of the passage through the other world will be easy to describe, either in terms of poetics or in terms of psychology, though Dante's poet would have hardly used this last term. Even though this last stage in the vision is the greatest one, it is still painful to try to capture it in words and language that are not made for subjects of such magnitude. For this reason the poet can rightly say that if he is able to record this last part of his experience, he will have earned the laurel and the honor of later peoples.

Chaucer's invocations also provide similar insight into the particular sections of the poem which they preface. The painful first book of the Troilus is dedicated to Tesiphone, one of the furies and so a logical choice for a poet who has to describe Troilus' torment in the first stages of his love for Criseyde. The second book is introduced by invoking Clio, the muse of history. In this book the poet is simply setting up the major schemes for bringing the lovers together. When the poet comes to Book Three, however, there is a sort of double invocation. First the poet spends six stanzas in an apostrophe to Venus, the logical choice for the opening of the book in which the two lovers are finally brought together. But then at the end of the prohemium, he also invokes Calliope, the epic muse. The combination of the two may seem some-

what inconsistent at this point. The story so far has hardly achieved epic dimensions. Yet if we consider the way in which this narrator claims to have no personal experience with love and to be getting his story from the old sources, we may have some explanation for the invocation of a muse who is not actually a logical patroness for a love poem. The story is an old one and, therefore, attains something of the rank of dignity that an epic has. There is another undertone here, but one that is not observable at this point and depends on the knowledge of the conclusion that we are given at the opening of the poem. That is the fact that the story is the old one of betrayal. This subject is often characteristic of the epic and has its own kind of epic proportions. It is not just the story of how Troilus falls in love, wins his lady, and then loses her; it is the story of how love fades. In this sense the story is the same sort of tale of the passage of great things typical of the epic.

With the opening of Book Four, the poet once again has turned to the invocation of those responsible for torment. Venus is no longer the center of attention; instead Fortune is the dominant figure at the opening of the prohemuim. Now that times are going to change for Troilus and Criseyde, there is no place for apostrophes to the goddess of love. The poet condemns Fortune for her twist of the lovers' lives, but then goes on himself to follow that direction by invoking once more the furies. In fact, this time the poet does not limit himself to one fury as in the first book but calls the three daughters of Night by name--Megera, Alete, and Thesiphone (4, 21-4). It becomes immediately obvious that the poet is no longer interested in avoiding the point of this book. He seems more objective in this prohemium than in any other. By the time we hear the invocation of those forces of torment and of Mars, the god of war and destruction, there is little doubt how the course of this book's action will go. Yet,

despite the gloom here the poet does not invoke any force which would temper the tone of destruction. Even his own words at this point are direct and almost uninvolved for this narrator. All he asks is that he be helped "So that the losse of lyf and love yfeere/ Of Troilus be fully shewed heere" (4, 27-8).

The impression here is dramatically different from the opening of Book Three with its rich prosody and the elaborate apostrophes to Venus. Here the poet seems only anxious to go on as quickly as possible with what he must tell. Indeed, there is hardly a sense of the poet here at all. It is instead the matter-of-fact tone of the historian that speeds us again into the story and the tragic end. By the beginning of Book Five this speed is such that there is no prohemium or invocation. The poet simply continues with the story without breaking into the action in any way.[26]

Thus, the poet uses the invocation to underscore the direction that the poem will take as well as the process of his creating it. The result is a double effect. We have the description of the poet's own attitude toward the process of creation and so have that emphasis turned toward the poem in a very analytical way, distancing us from involvement in the action. Then when the poet withdraws even his own concern about the process of creation and speeds us through the invocation with an objective, almost detached and perfunctory listing of the powers which should rightly guide him in the narration of this book, that analytical stance becomes even more important. Not only are we forced to step back and examine even that action as a creation, analyzing even the fortunes of those characters we may have responded to earlier now as <u>creations</u> and their actions as part of the whole <u>artifact</u>. In this way even those brief and for the most part simple invocations while speeding us through

the story may, in fact, draw us away from the action to a more objective point of view.

While the poet in Parzival does not invoke the muses or other powers as such in the same way the poets in the Commedia and Troilus do, there is, nevertheless, the invention of the remarkable character of Frowe Aventiure, Lady Aventure, who guides the poet through the windings of the tale. Rather than the poet's invoking her inspiration and aid, however, we find most often that he refers to her as if she were the spirit of the story itself. In one of the most unusual interruptions in the whole poem, this lady actually comes to the poet to talk with him about what has been happening to the characters in the tale. Not only is the poet clearly characterized here, as might be expected if the passage were presented as one of straight inspiration, but the lady herself suddenly becomes a character in her own right. The dramatized introduction of Frowe Aventiure comes at the opening of Book Nine in a remarkable representation of the act of poetic inspiration:

'Tuot ûf.' 'wem? wer sît ir?'
'ich wil inz herze dîn ze dir.'
'sô gert ir zengem rûme.'
'waz denne? belîbe ich kûme,
mîn dringen soltû selten klagen:
ich wil dir nû von wunder sagen.'
'jâ sît irz, vrou Âventiure?
wie vert der gehiure?
ich meine den werden Parzivâl.
den Cundrîe nâch dem grâl
mit unsüezen worten jagete,
dâ manec vrouwe klagete
daz niht wendec wart sîn reise,
von Artûse dem Berteneise
huop er sich dô: wie vert er nuo? (9, 433, 1-15)

('Open!'
'To whom? Who is there?'
'I wish to enter your heart.'
'Then you want too narrow a space.'
'How is that? Can't I just squeeze in? I promise not to jostle you. I want to tell you marvels.'
'Can it be you, Lady Adventure? How do matters stand with that fine fellow? --I mean with noble Parzival, whom with harsh words Cundrie drove out to seek the Gral, a

> quest from which there was no deterring him, despite the weeping of many ladies. He left Arthur the Briton then: but how is he faring now?' Hatto, p.222)

The poet hardly follows the standard tradition for the invocation of the muse with this unusual conversation between himself and the spirit of adventure. The introduction of Frowe Aventiure as a character who can suddenly appear in the story and tell the poet marvels as if she were knocking on his door and we were there to hear their whole conversation is a very dramatic variation on the tradition.

When the lady first appears, the imporession that the poet seems to have and the one which the audience must necessarily pick up from him is that this is just another lady. The poet, who has all through the course of the poem styled himself as something of a misogynist, addresses her abruptly, trying to turn her away from her plan of making a place for herself in his heart. Then when she reveals her intention to tell him marvels, the poet changes his attitude completely. He is more than eager for her to tell him the rest of the story. In fact, his questions about the actions of Parzival continue for another twenty-five lines beyond the passage quoted. He is bubbling with interest and excitement at the prospect of discovering what is happening to his hero.

The irony here is, of course, quite obvious. The poet narually knows what is going to come; earlier in the story he has repeatedly hinted at the details that he knows about the conclusion and all the adventures that preceed it. He assures us from the opening that he will tell us the tale all in good time. Indeed only six hundred lines farther into this book, the narrator explains that his authority Kyot had asked that he withhold the details about the nature of the gral until the point in the story when Parzival himself learns about it. Yet here at the opening of the book we see the poet acting as if he knows nothing at all of the de-

tails of the story he is telling. The impression is that he has been waiting for the right way of continuing the narration to come to him, and, suddenly, it actually does, in a most extraordinary way. The literal way that the poet is visited by his muse is a prime example of the games that Wolfram plays with the traditions of narration. Instead of the stiff and highly formalized invocation of a muse, he gives us the dramatization of the encounter between the poet and his inspiration in much the same way that Boethius gives us the dialogue between the writer and Lady Philosophy. The break in the narrative makes the story itself seem to be continually growing since even the poet himself at this point half way through it does not appear to know what is to come next, or even what has happened since the last time the hero was described. This exchange between the poet and Frouwe Aventiure gives us the sense that the poet knows no more than the audience about the development of the poem, and so he and his listeners become companions in the discovery of what the story holds for the hero. The effect is light, humorous, and above all an entertaining break in the narrative. Once more we sit back to hear about the story and how it is to be developed, but this time, surprisingly, we find the poet sitting with us. We are all of us attendent on the revelations of the Lady Adventure who promises to tell us marvels.

Each of these poets also calls attention to the process of creating the story in other ways besides the standard invocation of the guiding spirits. In many instances there is similarity to the invocation because these references to the process of telling the story focus on the difficulty of creation. Others, however, display the craft being used and so the poet's expertise. At times a poet will even be so bold as to claim special recognition for having treated a character well.

Dante's reference to the process of writing the poem generally deal

with the difficulty of describing the vision and the kind of verse he must use to coordinate the form to the subject. As the poet draws nearer the conclusion of the vision, the act of creation becomes more and more difficult. Repeatedly he laments his inability to describe what he saw in the experience of Paradise. Most often the failure of his language is also accompanied by the failure of memory (Paradiso, 14, 103-8 and 28, 7-18). Eventually, however, the experience simply becomes too much for the poet to contain in words. Finally turning to look once more at Beatrice, his guide through the final stages of his pilgrimage, he confesses his failure and surrenders to it:

Se quanto infino a qui di lei si dice
fosse conchiuso tutto in una loda,
poco sarebbe a fornir questa vice.
La bellezza ch' io vidi si trasmoda
non pur di là da noi, ma certo io credo
che solo il suo fattor tutta la goda.
Da questo passo vinto mi concedo
più che già mai da punto di suo tema
soprato fosse comico o tragedo;
chè, come sole in viso che più trema,
così lo rimembrar del dolce riso
la mente mia di sè medesmo scema.
Dal primo giorno ch' i' vidi il suo viso
in questa vita, infino a questa vista,
non m' e il seguire al mio cantar preciso;
ma or convien che mio seguir desista
più dietro a sua bellezza, poetando,
come all' ultimo suo ciascuno artista.
Cotal qual io la lascio a maggior bando
che quel della mia tuba, che deduce
l'ardüa sua matera terminando, . . .
(Paradiso, 30, 16-36)

(If all that is said of her up to this were gathered in one meed of praise, it would be little to serve this turn; the beauty I saw not only surpasses our measures, but I surely believe that only its Maker has all the joy of it. I own myself beaten at this pass more than ever comic or tragic poet was baffled by a point in his theme; for, like the sun in the most wavering sight, the remembrance of the sweet smile deprives my mind of its very self. From the first day I saw her face in this life until this sight the pursuit in my song has not been cut off; but now must my pursuit cease from the following longer after her beauty in my verse, as with every artist at his limit.

> Such that I leave her to a greater heralding than that of my trumpet which approaches the end of its hard theme, p. 432 and p. 433)

In this passage there occurs an interesting combination of the poet's life and his art. We find the reference to his first vision of Beatrice in this life, that is while she remained in this life. Then there is the reference to his other writings in which she is the center, a direct allusion to the Vita Nuova. But over all this the major point of the passage is a renunciation of further attempts to describe her. Having finally looked into her eyes and beheld the beatific vision there, the poet has realized that there are some things that may never be captured in any art no matter how great the artist. This is, of course, an allusion to the role of God as the supreme artist. At this final stage of the pilgrimage, the poet-pilgrim comes to understand that no matter how much he may desire to recreate the experience in his art, no matter how high the poetry in his comedy may be, he will never be capable of capturing the whole experience.

The effect here is to prepare the audience for the ultimate vision which, logically, is not detailed in any way like th earlier descriptions of the passage through the levels of the afterlife. If the poet is unable to describe the beauty and heavenly rapture in the eyes of one he had known in this world, his later unwillingness even to try to contain the experience of the highest circle of heaven is more than understandable. It is a carefully presented testimony of the overwhelming nature of the experience of paradise.

In other levels of the poem and the poet-pilgrim's journey through the afterlife, the poet has been careful to point out his adjustment of his verse to the subject. In the introduction of the ninth bolgia of the Inferno, for example, he has explained that if he had rhymes that were

harsh and grating, he would be better able to describe this lowest prison of sinners (Inferno, 32, 1-15). In this way he prepares us for those lines which do actually sound harsher. In the experience of the mountain of Purgatory, the poet interrupts to call the reader's attention to the elevation of the subject and, correspondingly, the verse (Purgatorio, 9, 70-72). When, therefore, the poet breaks in to tell us that he can no longer match his art to the subject, the effect is very dramatic. The poet who throughout the whole poem has been conscious and confident of his art is suddenly deprived of both the craft and the confidence to describe the vision of Paradise. The result is an even stronger emphasis on the overwhelming glory of the vision.

The poet's discussion of his difficulties in describing the total experience, thus, become an integral part of that experience for the reader. When the poet who has taken us so skillfully from the first dark beginning in the wood to the blinding spheres beyond the sun and moon suddenly is speechless, there can be no doubt about the grandeur of the experience. Even the process of creating the poem, reflects the ineffable glory in that greater creation recorded in the poem.

While the intrusions of the poet in Troilus and Criseyde do not function so much as a second theme of the poem as they do in the Commedia, there are similar sections in which the poet falters in describing scenes and turns our attention away from the action of the story at crucial points, focusing instead on the process of creation. Just as the poet steps forth to tell us that his own poor fortune in matters of love interferes with his ability to relate the more intense love scenes in the first half of the poem, the poet-as-creator breaks off in the middle of those scenes in which he must describe the sadness of the characters. These brief discussions of the difficulty in describing such moments of high emotion

give us the sharp image of the poet as a man involved in the affairs of his created characters and so reluctant to give us his own "poor" description of their pains. Yet the underlying effect is something quite different from the emphasis on the lovers that the poet's comments imply.

The first of this kind of interruption comes in the fourth book when Criseyde has just learned that the leaders of Troy have agreed to exchange her for the captured Antenor. Earlier in this book, the poet has reported Troilus' soliloquy in total, a speech of eighty-five lines, and then has gone on to include another speech made to Pandarus lamenting the passing of the days of joy that he and Criseyde have spent together. When the poet comes to the description of Criseyde's reaction to the news of her exchange, however, the emphasis is abbreviated by the poet's claim that he cannot accurately describe her pain. After reporting only forty-two lines of Criseyde's soliloquy, the poet interrupts:

> How myght it evere yred ben or ysonge,
> The pleynte that she made in hire destresse?
> I not; but, as for me, my litel tonge
> If I discryven wolde hire hevynesse,
> It sholde make hire sorwe seme lesse
> Than that it was, and childisshly deface
> Hire heigh compleynte, and therfore ich it pace.
> (4, 798-805)

Here the poet's doubt of his own, or anyone's, ability to fully describe Criseyde's pain cuts his own attempt to do so short. The reference to his "litel tonge" turns us quickly away from our concern with Criseyde's misfortune to consider with the poet whether he or any poet could accurately convey her sorrow.

This short section of doubt and confessed poetic failure thus turns us away from the character's distress. Instead we pull completely out of the action for a brief consideration of the power of the word, the capabilities of poetry. In essence, the poet's comment states that poetry cannot actually capture the great pains of the human spirit and heart.

Because of the manner in which the point is made, our sympathy is moved for the poet who is humble enough to confess his own inability to do justice to the scene and who is objective enough about the nature of poetry to doubt that any poet could accurately sing such sorrow. We do not pause to ask why he has been capable of describing Troilus' lamentations for more than four times the length he gives Criseyde.

So the poet's doubts and humility turn our attention to him and the problem of composition, and we do not notice that what he has also accomplished here is a rapid transition from the sorrow that Criseyde feels to the action that moves us ever more rapidly toward the conclusion predicted at the outset of the poem. While the poet takes the stage, Criseyde begins to fade as a viable character.

In the last book of the poem when the end is even nearer, the poet again finds himself unable to describe the character's pain. This time it is Troilus' pain that claims the attention of the poet and his audience. But rather than give us the extended speeches that Troilus may have made as he began to realize that Criseyde would not return, the poet again steps out to discuss the difficulty of conveying such moments of intense emotion. This interruption is almost identical in content and effect to that during Criseyde's lamentation:

> Who koude telle aright or ful discryve
> His wo, his pleynt, his langour, and his pyne?
> Naught alle the men that han or ben on lyve.
> Thow, redere, maist thiself ful wel devyne
> That swich a wo my wit kan nat diffyne.
> On ydel for to write it sholde I swynke,
> Whan that my wit is wery it to thynke. (5, 267-73)

Again we turn willingly from the pain of Troilus and contemplate the impossibility of accurately describing such heartbreak. Again we do not notice that the poet while enlisting our sympathy for his own trials is moving us gradually away from our concern for Troilus. The conclusion

is now even nearer. The last stage of the story has already come. Criseyde has not returned. All that remains is to describe the end of Troilus' life and his altered vision of this world and his own little concerns. There is no longer any need for us to delay in contemplation of his sorrows. The story has come to the point where speed is the main concern. Therefore, just at this point the poet again pulls us away from the action to consider the process of writing about it and the poet's trials in doing so. Instead of the pains of the main character we focus for a time on the weariness of the creator. The story has become such a painful one that even to think of it is a major effort and writing about it too much to ask. So we do not ask. Given the chance to consider it for ourselves, we naturally weigh it in the same way that our poet has set it up for us.

When the poet steps forward to talk to us about the process of creation, he underscores those portions of the story which he is relating at the moment. Because of this added emphasis on the story, the medieval poet's doubt about his ability to express himself cannot be considered simply an early example of the highly personal doubt in the lyric process poetry of the twentieth century. Yet its introduction is without question a conscious technique designed to manipulate the way in which the audience responds to the poem. It manages, above all, to draw us into the very act of creating the poem in a much more personal way than any of the other comments on the process. This doubt, even expressed by the poet who has so long maintained the most precise control over his subject and his verse, is a highly compelling expression, drawing us into a sense of closeness with the poet that no other intrusion of this kind, including the details of his own life, can equal.

Unlike Chaucer and Dante, Wolfram's poetic voice is one that seldom uses this kind of doubtful pose. For most of the poem, he is in complete

control, his commentary on the process of creation accenting that control.[27] In brief interjections he will emphasize his power over the story. At one point he may tell us in straight description that King Utherpendragon was thrown from his horse onto a bed of flowers, and then he will suddenly break into the narrative to compliment himself on having allowed the old king such a spot to land (2. 74, 10-15). At another after digressing for several lines on the responsibilities of a wife both while her husband is living and after his death, the poet will chastize himself for his comments on joy when his narrative is at the point to describe sadness (9. 436, 23-5). Repeatedly the poet insinuates himself into the story with these kinds of commentaries. The references to his process of telling the story almost without exception style him as ever in control, ever capable of directing us to just the point that he wishes us to understand.

The poet's control over the poem often leads into a general discussion of poetic theory typical of process poetry. The poet is quick to state his own conception of what poets should and should not do to make the best poems. For example, when he turns the story from Parzival to Gawan, the poet explains that such a transfer is part of his poetic theory and goes on to contrast himself to the other poets who approach storytelling in other ways:

> diu prüevet manegen âne haz
> dar neben oder vür in baz
> den des maere herren Parzivâl.
> swer sînen vriunt alle mâl
> mit worten an daz hoeste jaget,
> derst prîses anderhalp verzaget.
> nû waere der liute volge guot,
> swer dicke lop mit wârheit tuot:
> wan, swaz er sprichet oder sprach,
> diu rede belîbet âne dach.
> wer sol sinnes wort behalden,
> es enwillen die wîsen walden?
> valsch lügelîch ein maere,
> daz, waene ich, baz noch waere
> âne wirt ûf einem snê,
> sô daz dem munde würde wê,
> als guoter liute wünschen stêt,

den ir triuwe zarbeite ergêt.
swem ist ze solhen werken gâch,
dâ missewende hoeret nâch,
phliht werder lîp an den gewin,
daz muoz in lêren kranker sin.
er mîdetz ê, kan er sich schemen:
den site sol er ze vogete nemen. (7. 338, 5-30)

(. . .this tale takes friendly note of many beside or beyond its hero Parzival. Those who laud their darling to the skies all the time lack words to praise another. A poet who commends his hero with an eye for truth needs approval to encourage him, otherwise, whatever he said, it would be as a house without a roof. Who will retain a sensible utterance if not men of judgment? If you ask me, lying tales would be better left out in the snow with no host to care for them, so that those who spread them as truth would hurt their mouths--then God would have dealt with them to the liking of worthy poets whose honesty makes them take pains. When a noble patron allies himself to those who crave such corrupt works he must do so from lack of discernment. Had he a sense of shame he would desist, that is the course he should follow, Hatto, p. 176)

This comment is one worthy of a literary critic. The explanation of the theory that the story does not present the best art if it only deals with one character is an interesting point considering that the romances current in this period did, in fact, deal primarily with only one character, a knight and, incidentally, his lady. Yet with this comment, the poet classes his own tale above those of his contemporaries. Then he goes on to discuss the concept of the lying tale. It might be concluded that the poet refers to those tales that do not tell true stories, ones that are invented by the poets. However, coming as it does just after the criticism of stories that only deal with one hero and do not describe the exploits of others, this comment may be assumed to refer to just these kinds of stories as the ones that lie. If the poet only tells the exploits of one hero, he is denying the existence of the others as equally noble, or as appropriate foils for his main hero, and so is writing a lying tale.

When the commentary shifts to the subject of patronage, it takes on an immediate quality that gives the impression that this passage is far more than a simple statement of poetic theory. It seems, in fact, an

attack on a specific contemporary who may have attacked the story of Parzival and its often erratic narrative structure. The implication here is that such remarks have been supported if only indirectly by the patronage of a noble who should know better.

The effect of this passage is then to call our attention to the principles of composition behind the story the poet is presenting. We are not intended to make the false assumption that because the poet has included another hero in the middle of his description of Parzival's quest he is doing so without consideration of the poetic effect. We are intended to accept the poet's judgment on those other works and agree with him that those which do not tell stories in a truthful manner do not deserve our attention. Thus, with this digression on poetic theory, the poet has established his story as a reliable one done by a poet conscious of the demands of his craft. He encourages us to expect him to exhibit just the poetic skill that he describes as the best. Once again the poet's intrusion draws our sympathy for his version of the story and for his craft.

The intrusions by the poet that discuss the process of creating the story, therefore, manipulate the audience's response both to the story itself and to the poet's own craft. The commentary is obvious in its statements on poetic theory and on the difficulty of writing some of the passages of the poem. It is less obvious in its manipulation of our response to the story. Nevertheless, this last point is one of the most important to recognize, for no matter how close the resemblance may be between the process intrusions of the medieval poet and his modern counterpart, the medieval poet's intrusions do not come from the same sources. While he may have been familiar with a long tradition of rhetorical principles which encourage the embellishment of the poem with numerous rhetorical techniques, the medieval poet did not write with the sense of the

poem as a personal expression that the modern process poet has. When he uses these techniques, therefore, he does so for particularly rhetorical reasons. He may set up the experience of the poem as an immediate one; nevertheless, its creation was not a spontaneous one, as the complicated verse patterns themselves show.

What we have, then, in these intrusions seeming to catch the poet in the very act of composing the poem are the carefully considered tactics of a conscious poet. They draw us into the immediacy of the poetic experience, mirroring in the text the experience of the oral presentation. The audience hearing these passages would have the impression of hearing the story composed before it, no matter whether that story were being read by its creator or by another. More importantly, the intrusions camouflage various manipulations by the creator or accentuate themes in ways that other techniques could hardly equal. So just as with the other major kinds of intrusions, we must examine these discussions of the process of creating for a complex variety of effects.

For a period that had as one of its main concerns the historicity of the story, the intrusion by a speaker styling himself as the creator is a remarkable occurance in itself. If that speaker breaks off the narrative to discuss the way that he is telling the story and the way he believes that poetry in general should be done, it is even more striking. These kinds of process intrusions, although almost always put to other uses than the mere flaunting of the poet's art, are one of the best examples of the continuing tendency of poets to call attention to their art.

The Audience as Co-Creator. While all the intrusions of the self-conscious narrator and poet include the audience in some measure because of the direct address, none pull the audience into participation in quite

the same way that the process intrusions do. Both the intrusions which characterize the poet, giving details of a life beyond the situation of storytelling, and the intrusions discussing the process of creation involve the sympathy of the audience. But even these intrusions encourage the audience's response in many of the same ways that the others intrusions do. With the process intrusion that turns the creation of the poem into a mutual experience and joint creation, however, the audience suddenly assumes an even more prominent role in the narrative situation. In these intrusions the audience not only becomes the companion and sympathetic listener, but it also becomes a sort of co-creator, filling in for itself those portions of the poem that give the poet the most difficulty in describing.

While the poet in Parzival frequently interrupts to discuss the way that he is telling his story and to give his poetic theory, he seldom includes his audience in the process of creation. His storyteller's pose is the predominant one for addressing the audience and enlisting its participation in the story. For this kind of intrusion the audience is more the companion than the participant in the creation. Even when the poet steps in to tell the audience how it should approach a certain passage, like Gawan's approach to Schanpfanzan and to ask its sympathy (9. 399, 1-10), there is still little sense of the audience being anything more than the companion in the experience of the poem.

For the poets' voices in the Commedia and Troilus, however, there is a distinct pose requesting the audience's participation in setting up both simple details or whole scenes. In passages where the poet calls for the audience's assistance or participation, the effect of the passage is greatly expanded. The limits that the poet has set up for the passage are suddenly removed by the audience itself being asked to imagine the

story and so bring into its response to it a whole range of perceptions beyond the realm of what the poet actually writes.

For the most part the poet's inclusions of the audience in the Commedia are brief references to the perception of the more unusual sights in the journey through the afterlife. He will refer directly to the incredulity of the audience at descriptions like the transmutations of form of the thieves in the seventh bolgia of hell. This comment is meant to make the audience understand more clearly how increduluous he had felt during the actual experience of it (Inferno, 15, 46-8). Or he will call on the reader to think of the way he felt in looking into the eyes of Beatrice and seeing the two natures of the Griffin reflected there (Purgatorio, 31, 124-6). When the poet comes to describe the experience of paradise, however, he must call on the reader for more involved participation than simply imaginging how he himself had felt in the situation. At this point in the poem, the description of the experience has become such a difficult task that the poet must ask the reader to imagine for himself the details as he tries to depict the vision for him. As he struggles to describe the experience of the circling lights of the souls, the poet tells the reader who would understand the impression of the experience to imagine the details as he describes them. The reader is in this way the immediate participant in the relation of the experience as he follows the poet in recreating the image:

IMAGINI chi bene intender cupe
  quel ch' i' or vidi--e ritegna l' image,
  mentre ch' io dico, come ferma rupe--
quindici stelle che'n diverse plage
  lo cielo avvivan di tanto sereno,
  che soperchia dell'aere ogne compage;
imagini quel carro a cu' il seno
  basta del nostro cielo e notte e giorno,
  sì ch'al volger del temo non vien meno;
imagini la bocca di quel corno
  che si comincia in punta dello stelo
  a cui la prima rota va dintorno,

aver fatto di sè due segni in cielo,
qual fece la figliuola di Minoi
allora che sentì di morte il gelo;
e l'un nell'altro aver li raggi suoi,
e amendue girarsi per maniera,
che l'uno andasse al prima e l'altro al poi;
e avrà quasi l'ombra della vera
costellazione e della doppia danza
che circulava il punto dov' io era;
poi ch'è tanto di là da nostra usanza,
quanto di là dal mover della Chiana
si move il ciel che tutti li altri avanza. (Paradiso, 13, 1-24)

(Let him imagine, who would rightly understand what I saw now--and let him hold the image, while I speak, firm as a rock--, fifteen stars that quicken various regions of the sky with such brightness as overcomes every obstruction in the air; let him imagine that Wain for which the bosom of our sky suffices night and day so that in the turning of its pole it is not diminished; let him imagine the mouth of the Horn that begins at the end of the axle on which the first wheel revolves, --and all these to have made of themselves two constellations in heaven such as the daughter of Minos made when she felt the chill of death, and the one to have its beams within the other, and both to revolve in such a manner that the one goes first and the other after. Then he will have as it were a shadow of the real constellation and of the double dance that cirlced around the point where I was; for it is as far beyond our experience as the motion of the heaven that outstrips all the rest is beyond the motion of the Chiana, p. 189)

Although the vision of the circling spirts presents a most difficult image to convey, the poet does not fail to use all his craft in conveying the description. He uses allusion, metaphor, and simile in abundance here. Yet the inclusion of the audience at this point adds even more to the description, for without it the sense of immediacy is lost and we have only the exhibition of the poet's talent. When the poet asks that those who would see the image clearly participate in imagining the unusual combination of details he is going to present, he draws the audience into direct response to the experience. Instead of the image being the depiction of what he experienced, then, it becomes a mutual experience. The audience joins the poet in recreating the fantastic sight.

When the poet pulls us into the process of envisioning the circling lights, he insures that the audience will follow what he says, for no

one would refuse to imagine such descriptions with the preface that the poet gives. This in itself is an important point because the details here are indeed complex and hard to visualize. The references to the stars, although part of common knowledge about the heavens, become almost abstraction when the constellations are combined in patterns no eye ever saw. But with the poet's encouragement, we try to conceive the picture no matter how abstract it may be and so experience it in a much more dramatic and immediate way than we would otherwise. What might have been a confusing and abstract depiction, thus, becomes a sort of spontaneous interaction. When the poet brings us back into this world with the last comparison between the river Chiana and the primum mobile, we realize just how far from our actual experience this description has taken us. In a sense, this kind of inclusion of the audience creates the impression that we are actually accompanying the pilgrim through the experience of Paradise, an effect that is necessary for the point of the poem to come across clearly.

When Chaucer's poet intrudes to invite the participation of the audience, the effect is a completely different one, however. Rather than encouraging a sense of shared experience in asking the audience to imagine for itself certain portions of the action, such passages in Troilus set up a sharp division between the audience and the poet. The predominant reason for this is that the poet uses such audience participation to accent his own inability to express details about things like love with which he has no experience.

The most obvious example of this kind of audience participation comes in Book Three following the poet's intrusion on the love scene to comment on his own inexperience with love. Here the poet turns to those experi-

enced lovers in the audience that he so often addresses and asks their critical involvement in the recreation of the love scene:

> But soth is, though I kan nat tellen al,
> As kan myn auctour, of his excellence,
> Yet have I seyd, and God toforn, and shal
> In every thyng, al holy his sentence;
> And if that ich, at Loves reverence,
> Have any word in eched for the beste,
> Doth therwithal right as youreselven leste.
>
> For myne wordes, heere and every part,
> I speke hem alle under correccioun
> Of yow that felyng han in loves art,
> And putte it al in youre discrecioun
> To encresse or maken dymynucioun
> Of my langage, and that I yow biseche. (3, 1324-36)

In these two stanzas the poet defends any flaws in his presentation of the love scene with two transfers of responsibility. First he puts the responsibility on his auctour whom he has followed carefully in the description, even though he may lack the art to do the scene as well as the source has done. Then, as if this reference were not enough, he turns to the lovers in the audience to make them responsible for helping him to correct any flaws in his presentation.

Again in this intrusion the poet's humility alters the commentary on the poem. Instead of creating a sense of shared experience, the poet is isolated here from the audience by his own doubt of his capability. This separation of the poet and audience is an important variation on the effect of the process intrusion's use of audience participation. What happens is that the audience is encouraged by the humility to accept the way in which the poet has presented the love scene, and yet there is also the allowance for possible criticism of it. The poet in this way covers all the possible comments. If there is praise for his handling of the scene, it is magnified by the fact, as he claims, that he knows nothing at all about love. If we accept this pose and are still impressed with the love scene, we must admit a remarkable success on the poet's part.

If, however, we find the sudden intrusion discussing the poet's own failures at love somehow out of place and disruptive in the middle of the love scene, the excuse for it is built into the way the poet addresses us. As the audience we are characterized from the very opening of the poem as knowing more than he does about the subject of love. Here in the crucial love scene, we may readily believe it. The poet comes across at this point not only as naïve, but as almost embarrassingly juvenile in his elaborate apologies that if he has not given a detailed account of the scene it is because he has followed what was in his source. Not being at all familiar with the specific details of a love scene himself, he could not give us more of the story. We, as the experienced and understanding audience, are to imagine the details for ourselves and to correct him on them.

The result of this commentary is that the love scene between Troilus and Criseyde is lost at this point. Instead of turning our attention to the scene as the poet's encouragement to fill out the action for ourselves seems to do, the commentary turns our attention to the critical problem of a poet's attempting to write on a subject he knows nothing about and to our own knowledge of what love scenes are, or should be, like. We do at this point, then, exactly what the poet has encouraged; we "encresse or maken dymynucioun" of his language. Rather than being pulled into a closer association with the story, as we are by the verifying encouragement to participate in the Commedia, we are pulled back from the poem, no matter whether we choose to praise the poet's uninitiated skill or perhaps suspect these pleas as irony.

The poet's plea that the audience assist in the process of the poem's creation, thus, can have a number of different effects, depending on the location of the intrusion and on the manner in which it is

presented. It can create a sense of immediate participation in the act of composition or in the experience of the story's action, or it can force a distanced examination of the manner in which the poet has presented the poem on his own. While with this kind of intrusion there is once again the impression of the spontaneous act of creation, we may be called on to respond to that act in a whole range of different ways. In general, our response to such an invitation will not result in a direct criticism of the poet even if the distance caused by the intrusion does show the poet lacking in certain skills. Because he has taken pains to include the audience's judgment and participation, no matter what that judgment may ultimately be, it will hardly be direct criticism of one who styles himself as continuously concerned to meet our approval, even to the point of asking our involvement in the act of creating the full details of the poem. Indeed the pleas of this sort can even be quite effective in disguising the poet's irony in his self-denigration.

Conclusions

The intrusions of the poet's voice into the medieval narrative have many similarities with those of the process persona of modern poetry. They call the reader's attention to the artistry of the poem, its successes above all. They establish a strong sense of spontaneity even within poems of such rigidly controlled verse patterns as rhyme royale and terza rhyma. Because of the sense of spontaneity, these intrusions encourage us to feel that we have become a part of the act of creation as well as the act of storytelling which many of the other kinds of narratorial intrusions create. When the poet turns to the audience to share the details of his life outside the realm of the poem, he gives us an immediacy that not even the friendly guide can equal. If, to top off the

effect, he also asks our participation in imagining the details of the poem itself, the impression of spontaneous composition with the poet just before us is complete. No matter whether the poet himself presents the poem or not, the sense of the poet is so strong in the text of the poem itself that the audience will respond as if the poet is speaking directly to it in intimate conversation about the poetic experience.

Despite the undeniable presence of the poet's voice in the medival narrative, we should not, however, fail to remember that these intrusions are simply one in a number of the rhetorical techniques that the actual poet uses to develop the story. Few of these intrusions of the poet's voice will be done strictly to emphasize the act of creation or the poet's life. They function, instead, most often to accent certain portions of the narrative itself or to move us through the description of certain actions with the smoothest or greatest effect. None of the intrusions should in the last analysis be judged in quite the way that we might judge similar intrusions from a modern or contemporary poet. Instead, they should be taken as the same kind of narrative manipulation that may be found in the modern self-conscious novel in which the narrator discusses the act of creation at length and encourages, if not requires, the immediate and active participation of the reader.

In the last analysis, these intrusions while obviously the voice of the poet are, nevertheless, the voice of a poet composing a poem that is a story. They are not the lyric expressions of the artist's own doubts and hopes for his work, no matter how closely they may resemble them. They are just one more of the ways that a self-conscious artist, even a medieval one, may control his story and his audience's response to it.

Notes for Chapter Five

[1]This distinction would seem a ridiculous one to anyone dealing primarily with modern poetry; however, in medieval studies the point is still debatable. See, for example, Curschmann's suggestion that we put biographical considerations of Wolfram aside since the relationship between actual poet and fictional poet is unclear and that we concentrate instead on "this phenomenon of audience-conscious narrator in terms both of social reality and narrative technique" ("The French, The Audience and the Narrator in Wolfram's Willehalm," p. 549); Gilbert's discussion of the problems created by the actual biographical references in the Commedia and the risks of wrong readings "unless Dantists beware" of the character of Dante acquiring "too much of the dignity belonging to Dante the author" (Dante and His Comedy, pp. 1-3): but compare Howard's argument in 1965 that it is now time to stop making such a sharp distinction between Chaucer the poet and his intrusive voice because Chaucer cannot completely disappear, the voice is not a puppet, and we are interested in the voices "not because they are devices, but because everywhere in and behind them lies Chaucer the man" ("Chaucer the Man,"PMLA, 80(1965), 337). These are only three of the more rational approaches to the continuing problem of distinguishing between actual poet, implied poet, and intrusive voice in the medieval narrative.

[2]One important exception to this is the number of recent dissertations treating just this kind of similarity. Bradley, Knopp, and Indictor all stress the connections between medieval and modern narrative.

[3]Northrope Frye, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility, in Fables of Identity (New York: Harcourt, Brace, World, 1963), p. 130.

[4]Elizabeth Salter implies that Chaucer's discussion of the process of creation is either his own invention or, more likely, a fluke, claiming that "direct discussion of artistic motive and predicament is rare in Chaucer's period: there was no real precedent for him" (Troilus and Criseyde: A Reconsideration, p. 93). However, this comment is generally unsubstantiated and the less than serious consideration of this technique as a careful and conscious manipulation is, it seems to me, easily refuted upon close examination of this kind of intrusion.

[5]Donald Kartiganer, "Process and Product: A Study in Literary Form," Massachusetts Review, 12 (Spring, 1971), 303.

[6]"Process and Product," p. 301. Kartiganer goes on to explain that such a literature is always a kind of "notes toward" with no real sense of an end, a point that Todorov also makes about that literature concerned with its own creation (Poetics of Prose, pp. 61-2). In many ways the long loose structure of the medieval romance may also reflect this fascination with the never-ending story.

[7]Sharon R. Wilson, "The Self-Conscious Narrator and His Twentieth-Century Faces," p. 14.

[8]Todorov, The Poetics of Prose, p. 58.

[9]Sharon R. Wilson, "The Self-Conscious Narrator and His Twentieth-Century Faces," p. 3.

[10]See for example the discussion of the process poetry of William Carlos Williams by J. Hillis Miller in Poets of Reality (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1965), p. 291. Miller emphasizes the fact that this identification of experience lessens the chance for criticism from the reader, a point that might also be made about such a close association in medieval romance.

[11]Robert Lee Bradley, "Narrator and Audience Roles in Wolfram's Parzival," Diss. University of California Santa Barbara, 1978, p. 4.

[12]See Louis D. Rubin, The Teller in the Tale (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967), pp. 6-7.

[13]Robert O. Payne, "Chaucer's Realization of Himself as Rhetor," in Medieval Eloquence, pp. 285-6.

[14]There may be other similarities between the literature of process and medieval romance such as its attention to the "two poles of process, creation and decay" (Frye, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility," pp. 135-6). But for the purposes of this study, the shared emphasis on the persona and the process of creation is the main point of interest.

[15]The Teller in the Tale, p. 111.

[16]See Garbaty's discussion of the types of narrators Chaucer presents us with other than the poet, those who stand as "the omnipresent faceless individual, the dull standard of common sense" ("The Degredation of Chaucer's 'Geffrey,'" PMLA, 89 (Jan. 1974), 98).

[17]See Bradley's discussion of the narrator's withdrawal from the story to make another such personal and limited comment in 290,22-291,3 ("Narrator and Audience Roles," pp. 42-3). Later discussion also connects these comments on ein wîp to the generally consistent parody of the courtly love song that Wolfram maintains throughout much of the story and which may well be part of this criticism here (p. 176-7).

[18]See Nellmann's discussion of Wolfram's willingness to try to win love in contrast to his unwillingness to fight, and the confusion between the knight-poet and the persona among critics (Wolframs Erzähltechnik, pp. 18-19).

[19]For example, recall Gottfried von Strassburg's literary criticism in Tristan und Isolt in which he satirizes the most important of his contemporaries, including Wolfram (11. 4619-4818).

[20]See Green's discussion of literary polemics and the parody that often resulted during the Middle Ages (Irony in Medieval Romance, p. 382).

[21]"Chaucer's Realization of Himself as Rhetor," in Medieval Eloquence, p. 278.

[22]Green emphasizes the ironic effects of this "outsider role" in the poem (Irony in Medieval Romance, p. 364). He discusses the way Chaucer uses the image of clerk to create both the sense of separation from his audience and a strange sort of solidarity through the bookish sources. As he says, "The narrator's stance is a delicate one, poised between detachment and sympathy, but the point for us is that Chaucer is again exploiting his social status, on one side of this delicate balance, to express a detachment from the courtly ideal of love which he is at pains to bring home to his aristocratic listeners."

[23]Thomas C. Miller, "The Self-Conscious First-Person Narrator," p. 9.

[24]Michal Głowiński, "On the First-Person Novel," p. 110.

[25]"The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction," pp. 15-16.

[26]See Stephanie Yearwood's discussion of the way the opening of Books Two and Four are "maximally de-emphasized" and the way that the omission of the opening of Book Five, present in Boccacio's version, alters the effect of these passages, in the article "The Rhetoric of Narrative Rendering in Chaucer's Troilus," Chaucer Rev., 12 (1977), 29-30.

[27]See Sharon R. Wilson's discussion of the self-conscious narrator's carefully controlled ordering of his story ("The Self-Conscious Narrator and His Twentieth-Century Faces," p. 19).

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

After such a systematic analysis of the narrator's poses in the medieval romance, certain conclusions should be obvious. The first is the firm acceptance of the suggestion that the medieval romancier used the rhetorical traditions of his time for many effects and not simply the ones originally intended. The figure of the storyteller appears in the medieval romance as the textual recreation of the reciting poet, yet his introduction is not just the sign of an inept creator who did not know how to distinguish between the oral presentation and the written work. Instead the intrusive narrator of the Middle Ages offers as complex a narrative pose and as varied a range of effects as any of his modern counterparts. The last point is the single most important conclusion that a study of this sort can suggest. The intrusive self-conscious narrator appearing in the medieval romance should be considered the carefully calculated rhetorical strategy of a sophisticated artist drawing upon the range of rhetorical tradition and oral presentation to create a complicated and rich narrative. It should in no way be judged the result of an imperfect understanding of the nature of storytelling or the techniques for unifying a narrative.

Once the self-conscious narrator has been analyzed systematically, the next step is the examination of the way the types of intrusions affect an individual narrative. This study has only been able to define the various kinds of intrusions and has necessarily left such a synthesis

to a later work. The essential point to be made here about the function of the four major kinds of intrusions is that they do not operate in isolation. Critical scenes within the narrative will, almost without exception, disclose the whole range of narratorial intrusions. Indeed the dominance of such intrusions may almost be set as a guideline for identifying the important scenes.

Close study of the combinations of the four major kinds of intrusions within critical scenes, identification of a predominance of one type of intrusion, and examination of the ratio of reportorial narrative to the narratorial intrusions will clarify the effects of these passages and will also help to indicate the concerns of the manipulative author behind the narrator's voice. Through careful study of the patterns of narratorial intrusions within a work, we may come to a clearer understanding of heretofore seemingly incongruous points in the romance. In this way, analysis of the intrusive narrator in the romance may help to solve questions of meaning and intention that have been debated for generations.

The examination of the self-conscious narrator in the medieval romance should not, however, be limited to application in individual works. In the final analysis the most significant study may be done in showing the development of the figure of the intrusive narrator from the earliest romances, through the Middle Ages, into the Renaissance, and even into the eighteenth century and the rise of the novel as the dominant narrative form. Thus far no such comprehensive study of this technique in western literature has been done. The fact that most of the medieval romances were in verse does not negate the fact that they were also stories with much the same approach to the re-creation of the narrative situation as that in more modern, indeed even contemporary,

narratives. Such a study of the development of the self-conscious narrator as a technique would erase the all-too-frequent misconception that the great romances of the Middle Ages have no real connection to the rest of narrative history and are completely ungoverned by any of those principles now considered basic to narrative.

Future study of the self-conscious narrator, then, should examine individual works and then examine the development of this narrative technique. Such a study would help to answer questions of unity and intent within individual works and would also show how those works assume a significant place in the history of narrative techniques. The intrusive self-conscious narrator in medieval romance must be recognized as a carefully applied rhetorical technique. But even more importantly the self-conscious narrator and the conscious creator behind him must be seen as an integral part of the history of western narrative and must finally come to be considered alongside their counterparts in the sophisticated narratives of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aligheri, Dante. The Divine Comedy. Ed. and Trans. John D. Sinclair. 1939; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Alter, Robert. Partial Magic: The Novel as Self-Conscious Genre. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.

Altieri, Charles. "The Poem as Act: A Way to Reconcile Presentational and Mimetic Theories." Iowa Rev., 6, nos. 3,4 (1974), 103-24.

-----. "Wittgenstein on Consciousness and Language: A Challenge to Derridean Literary Theory." Modern Language Notes, 91 (1976), 1397-1423.

Aquinas, St. Thomas. Summa Theologiae. 1. 101, 2(2); 1. 1, 8(2); 1. 1, 9(1).

Augustine. "Against Lying." In The Fathers of the Church. Vol. 14. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1952.

Baldwin, Charles Sears. Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic (to 1400) Interpreted from Representative Works. New York: Macmillan, 1928.

Barney, Stephen A. Chaucer's Troilus: Essays in Criticism. Hamden: Archon, 1980.

Barthes, Roland. "An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative." Trans. Lionel Duisit. New Literary History, 6 (1974-75), 237-752.

Bayley, John. The Uses of Division: Unity and Disharmony in Literature. New York: Viking Press, 1976.

Barthoff, Warner. "Fiction, History, Myth: Notes Toward the Discrimination of Narrative Form." In The Interpretation of Narrative Theory and Practice. Ed. Morton W. Bloomfield. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970, pp. 263-87.

Bloomfield, Morton W. "Stylistics and the Theory of Literature." New Literary History, 7 (1975-76), 271-311.

Booth, Wayne. The Rhetoric of Fiction. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.

-----. "The Self-Conscious Narrator in Comic Fiction before Tristram Shandy." PMLA, 67 (1952), 163-85.

Bradley, Robert Lee. "Narrator and Audience Roles in Wolfram's Parzival." Diss. University of California Santa Barbara, 1978.

Brandeis, Irma. The Ladder of Vision: A Study of Dante's Comedy. Garden City, New Jersey: Doubleday, 1960.

Cambon, Glauco. Dante's Craft: Studies in Language and Style. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969.

Cawley, Arthur C. Chaucer's Mind and Art. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1969.

Chatman, Seymour. "Towards a Theory of Narrative." New Literary History, 6 (1974-75), 295-318.

Chaucer, Geoffrey. The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer. Ed. F. N. Robinson. New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1961.

Chaytor, Henry John. From Script to Print. 1944: rpt., New York: October House, 1967.

Croce, Benedetto. The Poetry of Dante Trans. Douglas Ainslie. Marmoneck, New York: P. P. Appel, 1971.

Crosby, Ruth. "Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages." Speculum, 11 (1936), 88-110.

Crutwell, Patrick. "Makers and Persons." Hudson Review, 12 (1959-60), 487-5-7.

Curtius, Ernst Robert. European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages. Trans. Willard T. R. Trask. Bollingen Series, No. 36. New York: Pantheon Books, 1953.

Curschmann, Michael. "The French, The Audience, and the Narrator in Wolfram's Willehalm." Neophilologia, 59 (1975), 548-62.

David, Alfred. The Strumpet Muse: Art and Morals in Chaucer's Poetry. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1975.

Dolozel, Lubomir. "The Typology of the Narrator." In To Honor Roman Jakobson: Essays on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday. Vol 1. The Hague: Mouton, 1967.

Donaldson, E. Talbot. "Chaucer's Three P's: Pandarus, Pardoner and Poet." Michigan Quarterly Review, 14 (1975), 282-301.

-----. "Criseyde and Her Narrator." In Speaking of Chaucer. New York: W. W. Norton, 1970.

Donner, Morton. "Chaucer and His Narrators: The Poet's Place in His Poems." Western Humanities Review, 27 (1973), 189-95.

Friedman, Norman. "Point of View." PMLA, 70 (1955), 1160-84.

Frost, Michael H. "Narrative Devices in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde." Thoth, 14 (1974), 29-38.

Frye, Northrop. Fables of Identity: Studies in Poetic Mythology, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963.

Gallagher, Joseph E. "Theology and Intention in Chaucer's Troilus." Chaucer Review, 7 (1971), 44-66.

Gallo, Ernest. The Poetria Nova and Its Sources in Early Rhetorical Doctrine. The Hague: Mouton, 1971.

Garbáty, Thomas J. "The Degredation of Chaucer's 'Geffrey.'" PMLA, 89 (1974), 97-104.

-----. "Troilus V. 1786-92 and V. 1807-27: An Example of Poetic Process." Chaucer Review, 11 (1977), 299-305.

Gardner, Edmund G. Dante's Ten Heavens: A Study of the Paradiso. 1900; rpt. Freeport: Books for Libraries, 1972.

Gaylord, Alan T. "Chaucer's Tender Trap: The Troilus and 'Yonge Fresshe Folkes.'" English Miscellanies, 15 (1964), 25-45.

Genette, Gerard. "Boundaries of Narrative." New Literary History, 8 (1976-77), 1-13.

Gilbert, Allan. Dante and His Comedy. New York: New York University Press, 1963.

Głowiński, Michał. "On the First-Person Novel." Trans. Rochelle Stone. New Literary History, 9 (1977), 102-15.

Gordon, Ida L. The Double Sorrow of Troilus: A Study of Ambiguities in Troilus and Criseyde. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.

Green, Dennis H. Irony in Medieval Romance. New York: Cambridge, 1979.

Haidu, Peter, Ed. "Approaches to Medieval Romance." Yale French Studies 51 (1974).

-----. "Narrativity and Language in Some Twelfth-Century Romances." Yale French Studies, 51 (1974), 133-46.

Hollander, Robert. "Dante's Poetics." Sewanee Review, 85 (1977), 392-410.

Howard, Donald R. "Chaucer the Man." PMLA, 80 (1965), 337-43.

Hussey, S. S. "The Difficult Fifth Book of Troilus and Criseyde." Modern Language Review, 67 (1972), 721-29.

Indictor, Rina M. "Fictionalization: The Poetics of Literary Self-Consciousness." Diss. New York University, 1976.

Iser. Wolfgang. "In Defense of Authors and Readers." Novel, 11, No. i (1977), 5-26.

Jameson, Fredric. "Magical Narratives: The Romance as Genre." New Literary History, 7 (1975-76), 135-63.

Jordan, Robert M. Chaucer and the Shape of Creation: The Aesthetic Possibilities of Inorganic Structure. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 9167.

Kahane, Henry and Renee. "Wolfram's gekriutze ritter (Parzival 72, 13) --A Provencalism?" Romance Philology, 24 (1970), 84-6.

Kahler, Erich. The Inward Turn of Narrative. Trans. Richard and Clara Winston. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973.

Kartiganer, Donald. "Process and Product: A Study of Literary Form." Massachusetts Review, 12 (1971), 297-328.

Kellogg, Robert. "Oral Narrative, Written Books." Genre, 10 (1977), 655-65.

Kincaid, James R. "Coherent Readers, Incoherent Texts." Critical Inquiries, 3 (1976), 781-802.

Kirkpatrick, Robin. Dante's Paradiso and the Limitations of Modern Criticism: A Study of Style and Poetic Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Knopp, Sherron Elizabeth. "The Figure of the Narrator in Medieval Romance and Dream Vision." DA (1975) 74471A (UCLA).

Koretsky, Allen C. "Chaucer's Use of the Apostrophe in Troilus and Criseyde." Chaucer Review, 4 (1970), 242-66.

Kratz, Henry. Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival: An Attempt at a Total Evaluation. Bern: Francke, 1973.

Lewis, C. S. The Discarded Image. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964.

Lipton, Wallace S. "Clues for Readers of Wolfram von Eschenbach's Willehalm," Modern Language Notes, 87 (1971), 753-8.

Lofmark, Carl. "Some Source References in 'Parzival.'" Modern Language Review, 67 (1971), 820-44.

Lotman, J. M. "Point of View in Fiction." Trans. L. M. O'Toole. New Literary History, 6 (1974-75), 339-48.

Lubbock, Percy. Craft of Fiction. London: J. Cape, 1928.

Lutwack, Leonard. "Mixed and Uniform Prose Styles in the Novel." In The Theory of the Novel. Ed. Philip Stevick. New York: The Free Press, 1968.

Mailloux, Steven. "Reader-Response Criticism?" Genre, 10 (1976), 413-31.

Manley, John M. "Chaucer and the Rhetoricians." Publiciations of the British Academy, 12 (1926), 95-113.

Meech, Sanford. Design in Chaucer's Troilus. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1959.

Mehl, Dieter. "The Audience of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde." In Chaucer and Middle English Studies in Honor of Rossell Hope Robbins. Ed. Beryl Rowland. London: Allen and Unwin, 1974.

Middleton, Anne. "The Idea of Public Poetry in the Reign of Richard II." Speculum, 53 (1978), 94-114.

Miller, J. Hillis. "Ariadne's Thread: Repetition and the Narrative Line." Critical Inquiries, 3 (1976), 57-77.

-----. Poets of Reality: Six Twentieth-Century Writers. Cambridge: Belknap, 1965.

-----. "The Critic as Host." Critical Inquiries, 3 (1976), 439-47.

Miller, Joseph M., Prosser, Michael H., and Benson, Thomas W., Eds. Readings in Medieval Rhetoric. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1973.

Miller, Thomas Claibourne. "The Self-Conscious First-Person Narrator: Some Aspects of Illusion and Self-Reference in Fiction." Diss. Madison-Wisconsin, 1976.

Murphy, James J. "A New Look at Chaucer and the Rhetoricians." Review of English Studies, 15 (1964), 1-20.

-----. Medieval Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Medieval Rhetoric. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

-----. Medieval Rhetoric: A Select Bibliography. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.

-----. Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from St. Augustine to the Renaissance. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

Nellmann, Eberhard. Wolframs Erzähltechnik: Untersuchungen zur Funktion des Erzählers. Wiesbaden: Stiener, 1973.

Nelson, William. "From 'Listen, Lordyngs' to 'Dear Reader.'" University of Toronto Quarterley, 46 (1976-77), 110-24.

Norman, Frederic. "The Enmity of Wolfram and Gottfried." German Life and Letters, 15 (1961), 53-67.

O'Keefe, Katherine O'Brien. "Exeter Riddle 40 and the English Mss. of Aldhelm's Aenigmata: Two Arts of Reading an Anglo-Saxon Poem." MLA Convention. Houston. 27 December 1980.

Ong, Walter J., S. J. "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction." PMLA, 90 (1974), 9-21.

Peed, Michael R. "Troilus and Criseyde: The Narrator and the 'Olde Bookes.'" American Notes and Queries, 12 (1974), 143-46.

Perry, Ben Edwin. The Ancient Romances: A Literary-Historical Account of their Origins. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.

Poag, James F. Wolfram von Eschenbach. New York: Twayne, 1972.

-----. "Wolfram von Eschenbach's Metamorphosis of the Ovidian Tradition." Montashefte, 57 (1965), 69-76.

Prince, Gerald. "Notes Toward a Categorization of Fictional 'Narratees.'" Genre, 4 (1971), 100-106.

Robertson, D. W. A Preface to Chaucer. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962.

Rubin, Louis D. The Teller in the Tale, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962.

Ryding, William. Structure in Medieval Narrative. The Hague: Mouton, 1971.

Salter, Elizabeth. "Troilus and Criseyde: A Reconsideration." In Patterns of Love and Courtesy. London: Edward Arnold, 1966.

Salu, Mary. Essays on Troilus and Criseyde. Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1979.

Sartre, Jean Paul. What Is Literature? New York: Philosophical Library, 1949.

Scholes, Robert. Structuralism in Literature. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

----- and Kellogg, Robert. The Nature of Narrative. New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.

Schorer, Mark. "Technique as Discovery." In Essays in Modern Literary Criticism. Ed. Ray B. West. New York: 1952.

Spearing, A. C. Medieval Dream Poetry. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Stanzel, Franz. Narrative Situations in the Novel. Trans. James P. Pusack. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1971.

Steadman, John. Disembodied Laughter: Troilus and the Apotheosis Tradition, A Reexamination of Narrative and Thematic Contexts. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.

Sternberg, Meir. Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.

-----. "What Is Exposition? An Essay in Temporal Delineation." In The Theory of the Novel. Ed. John Halperin. New York: Oxford University Press, 1974.

Stevick, Philip. "Lies, Fictions, and Mock Facts." Western Humanities Review, 30 (1976), 1-12.

Symonds, John A. Introduction on the Study of Dante. 4th Ed. 1875; rpt. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906.

Tatlock, John. "The Epilog of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde." Modern Philogy, 18 (1921), 625-30.

Tax, Petrus W. "Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival in the Light of Biblical Typology." Seminar, 9 (1973), 1-14.

Todorov, Tzvetan. The Poetics of Prose. Trans. Richard Howard. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977.

Toynbee, Arnold. "Narrative History: The Narrator's Problems." Clio Wisconsin, 4 (1974), 299-316.

Vinaver, Eugene. The Rise of Romance. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

Williams, Charles. The Figure of Beatrice: A Study in Dante. London, Faber and Faber, 1950.

Willson, H. B. "Literacy and Wolfram von Eschenbach." Nottingham Medieval Studies, 14, (1970), 27-40.

Wilson, Sharon Rose. "The Self-Conscious Narrator and His Twentieth-Century Faces." Diss University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1976.

Wolfram von Eschenbach. Parzival. Ed. Albert Leitzmann. Tubingen: Niemeyer, 1961.

-----. Parzival. Trans. A. T. Hatto. New York: Penguin, 1980.

Wynne, Marianne. "Book I of Wolfram von Eschenbach's Willehalm and Its Conclusions." Medium Aevum, 49, No. 1 (1980), 57-65.

Yearwood, Stephanie. "The Rhetoric of Chaucer's Troilus." Chaucer Review, 2 (1977-78), 27-37.

Young, Karl. The Origin and Development of Troilus and Criseyde. Oxford: University Press, 1908.

Zimbardo, Rose A. "Creator and Created: The Generic Perspective of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde." Chaucer Review," (1977), 283-98.