The Afterlives of Nicholas Love

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, historical pragmatics has extended its range to engage not only with lexical and grammatical features but also with other aspects of written text not generally considered 'linguistic'. One such area is punctuation. This article investigates punctuation-practices in copies, both manuscript and in print, of an important late medieval English text, Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, one of the most widely-circulated English texts of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. It shows how changes in punctuation mirror wider social changes in a crucial period of cultural formation.

Key words: textual afterlives; punctuation; literacy; script to print

1.   On textual afterlives

1.0   The starting-point for the current article is the observation that every aspect of the physical manifestation of a text is a vector of meaning for contemporary readers, and thus crucial for our understanding of the socio-cultural functioning of that text. As suggested by Malcolm Parkes, the 'image of handwriting on the page could … embody a message of its own' (Parkes 2008: 127). The use of particular scripts or fonts; how marks of punctuation are deployed; the adoption of particular spellings; the arrangement of decoration or practices of annotation in a manuscript or printed book: all such formal features have been shown to be hugely informative as to how that text functioned in its time (see e.g. Moore 2014; Smith 2013a, 2013b; and, most approachably, de Hamel 2016).

1.1   And, as texts move through time – as they are transmitted from generation to generation and from medium to medium and change in form as they do so – these functions evolve. Comparisons of different versions of the 'same' text are particularly fruitful for pragmatic research, since the texts studied can be used as mutual controls. Such studies have already demonstrated how refashionings of the past through reinventions and reworkings of medieval and early modern texts reflect and transmit interacting yet conflicting national and/or religious identities, showing how the past is deployed for different audiences; sociocultural changes affect their reception and presentation (see e.g. Echard 2008, Smith and Kay 2011, Smith 2013b, Smith 2014, Thompson forthcoming). This paper, part of a much larger long-term team-project on textual evolution, is offered as a demonstration of the ways in which textual form and textual function are intimately linked, and flags how such research might align with the increasingly capacious discipline of historical pragmatics.

2.   Nicholas Love and his reception

2.0   In or around 1410, Nicholas Love, prior of the Charterhouse of Mount Grace in Yorkshire, submitted for institutional approval his translation into English of Johannes de Caulibus's *Meditationes Vita Christi*, a meditative rendering of the Gospel accounts of the life of Christ. Love's translation is now known as *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*. The translation was already in circulation, it seems, but its matter, however orthodox, was as a vernacular version of Biblical matter potentially troubling to the authorities. The Middle English Wycliffite Bible had by the first decade of the fifteenth century emerged as

both theologically and politically threatening to the established order, and Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, had tightened the institutional Church's grip on vernacular versions of the Bible, by means of the Lambeth Constitutions of 1409:

> .. no one from now on should translate any text of holy scripture on his own authority into the English language or any other, by way of book, pamphlet or tract, nor should anyone read such a book, pamphlet or tract newly composed since the time of John Wyclif, or in the future to be composed, in part or in whole, publicly or privately, under pain of excommunication, until that translation be approved by the local diocesan, or, if need be, by provincial council (cited Sargent 2004: xviii).

The production of other vernacular Bible-based narratives, however hedged about (as was the *Mirror*) by orthodox interpretation, was therefore naturally concerning, and Love wisely sought approval from Arundel. The *Mirror*, as flagged by the so-called 'Memorandum of Approbation' that is found in some (not all) of the surviving manuscripts of the text, was to become the authorised vernacular response to the Wycliffite translations of the Bible. It became one of the most circulated texts in late medieval England, surviving in some 61 manuscripts and nine early printed editions, including four incunabula. In sum, the *Mirror*, along with other vernacular monuments such as John Mirk's sermon-cycle the *Festial* and Walter Hilton's work of spiritual guidance *The Scale of Perfection*, represents a key text in the flowering of orthodox late Catholic religious expression celebrated so eloquently by Eamon Duffy in *The Stripping of the Altars* (1992).

2.1   Some twenty years ago the editor of Love's *Mirror*, Michael G. Sargent, established authoritatively the complex textual relationships between the manuscripts and early editions of the work, identifying three major 'branches' within its 'family tree' of textual descent, its *stemma codicum*: an original authorial text, an authorial revision, and a scribal version (see Sargent 1997; see also Sargent 2004, 2005). Sargent flagged that there was remarkably little textual variation in substantive terms between these branches, suggesting that scribes took considerable care in the copying process. Indeed, the *Mirror* even came to sustain in its copying tradition an interesting retention of Yorkshire dialect forms that may be plausibly presumed to derive from the authorial archetype, which places it alongside Gower's *Confessio Amantis* as a work where the 'accidental' features of the text were felt to be vectors of textual authority, worthy of reproduction even when the scribes themselves clearly had a distinct dialectal formation (see Smith 1997; see also Smith 1988: *passim*). Such features were sustained as the work made the transition from script to print, as meticulously demonstrated by Lotte Hellinga (Hellinga 1997, revised and updated as Hellinga 2014). Hellinga draws attention to such Northern features in Caxton's editions as **myke(l)** 'much', by the end of the fifteenth century a recessive form even in Northern England, and she suggests inter alia that such usage possibly represented 'a conscious wish to preserve the character of the author's language, his "voice", which gives such outstanding individuality to Nicholas Love's translation' (2014: 383).

2.2   The development of 'authoritative' spellings in the Love tradition was probably a gradual process. MS Cambridge, University Library, Additional 6578, the earliest and arguably most authoritative manuscript of the *Mirror*, contains a small note to the copyist on fol 2v, flagging that certain forms are to be avoided in favour of others: **caue de istis verbis gude pro gode / Item hir pro heere in plurali** 'The words "gude" [good] and "hir" [their] are not to be used, with the forms "gode" and "heere" instead'. Although the manuscript belonged to Mount Grace Charterhouse itself, the language of the main hand was localised by

the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* to Northamptonshire (LP 9340); possibly the scribe had moved to Yorkshire and took his usage with him, although it seems unlikely that a Yorkshire reader would have found spellings such as **gude** objectionable in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, before the impact of southern-based tendencies to orthographic standardisation. One of the forms objected to, **hir**, it may be noted, is not distinctively northern, so 'northernness' per se does not seem to have been problematic for the fussy annotator on fol 2v; something like **þair** or **yair**, the latter with <y> for thorn, would be much more characteristic of northern usage. Later scribes do not seem to have paid attention to this advice, and *echt*-northernisms such as **gude** were regularly deployed as part of the Love tradition. The hand of this manuscript was also hand A in another early Love manuscript, MS Cambridge, University Library, Additional 6686. (1)

2.3   Hellinga also noted some interesting linguistic changes as the printing tradition developed. The English language during the end of the fifteenth/beginning of the sixteenth century was increasingly undergoing standardisation in the written mode, on a south-east Midland (specifically London-focused) basis, and the authoritative spelling-traditions associated with particular texts began to be overtaken by a broader concern with communicative accessibility. The old spellings of the Gower tradition, which were sustained in Caxton's editions as in his printing of Love, were largely replaced in the early sixteenth-century editions produced by Thomas Berthelette (see Smith 1985), and something similar happened in the Love tradition; the editions published by Wynkyn de Worde and Richard Pynson both replace **myke(l)** with the much more commonplace **moch(e)**, to a lesser or greater extent (Hellinga 2014: 382). De Worde's first edition is particularly interesting, showing that whereas **mykel** was sustained in the early part of the print, it wholly disappears later, demonstrating a transition from a faithful reproduction of delicate textual detail in favour of forms, such as **moche**, with wider currency (Hellinga 2014: 381). Such changes demonstrate what Hellinga describes as 'a process of adaptation' (2014: 367).

2.4   It is perhaps worth asking further questions about the social drivers behind this 'process of adaptation'. Part of the reason must have been a response to later emerging linguistic norms, themselves reflecting wider cultural attitudes to the vernacular. As is increasingly being noted, linguistic standardisation in the written mode is a complex business. The traditional view is that standardisation emerged as a result of the increasing 'top-down' prestige of a particular model usage, viz. that found in late medieval/early modern London, and such prestige must be part of the story. But there were also 'bottom-up' pressures to do with communicative function: as literacy in English became more widespread, with readers likely to encounter a wider range of new texts, so what used to be termed 'grosser provincialisms' such as **mykel** became more communicatively inconvenient, and were replaced by forms with wider currency at the time when the text was being reproduced (see Smith 2000: 136 and references there cited). Such linguistic choices of less dialectally distinctive forms, which must have been deliberate editorial acts given that they were significant departures from what were almost certainly in the printers' exemplars, represent decisions made on pragmatic grounds, with a view to improving the legibility of the text for the intended – presumably wider, and almost certainly lay – readership for whom the printing trade catered.

2.5   Muting of dialectal variation, therefore, can be related to shifts in the reception of the text during the transition from script to print, and it is possible that other features in the textual evolution of Love's *Mirror* can be accounted for in similar ways. The purpose of the

remainder of this paper is to supplement the account offered by Hellinga with regard to an issue she did not explore: the deployment of punctuation.

3.   Punctuating Nicholas Love: The manuscript tradition

3.0   Hellinga's thorough and delicate discussion of the replacements carried out within the printed tradition of Love's *Mirror* has opened up several possibilities for further research into the reception of this important work. One area, however, that she did not pursue in her study was the deployment of punctuation. Recent work on another key text from the period already cited, viz. Mirk's *Festial*, has shown how the repurposing of this sermon cycle as a work of private devotion seemed to correspond with the evolution of a more sophisticated repertoire of punctuation-practices (Smith 2013a), and something similar can be distinguished in editions of the vernacular Bible (Smith forthcoming (a)). And practices of punctuation, studied from the viewpoint of historical pragmatics (to which we shall return at the end of the article), are of increasing interest to students of textual cultures.

3.1   The punctuation of Love's *Mirror* has attracted attention ever since Elizabeth Salter's pioneering article some sixty years ago (Salter 1956). Salter examined the punctuation of the earliest manuscript of what has subsequently been identified by Sargent as the most authoritative alpha-branch of the *stemma codicum*: MS Cambridge, University Library, Additional 6578 (= Sargent's A1), already referred to in 2.2 above. The manuscript was owned by the Charterhouse at Mount Grace from an early date. How Love originally intended to present his text is, in the absence of an authorial holograph, impossible to determine with certainty, but as Salter argued the text as presented in A1 probably gives us a good idea of the starting-point for the tradition. Here is a transcription of a small passage from the manuscript, originally transcribed by Parkes (1997: 48) but checked against the manuscript to reproduce the lineation of the original:

[fol 84v]

And þan seide þe au*n*gele to hi*m* . Beþ þen now of
gude cou*n*forte my lorde & worcheþ manfully . ffor it is seme
ly to hi*m* þat is in hye degre ; to do grete þinges & worþi . & to hi*m*
þat is a manful man ; to suff*ir* harde þinges . ffor þoo þinges þ*at*
bene harde & peynful shole sone passe . & þoo þinges þat bene
ioyful & gloriose shole come aft*er* . Þe fader*e* seiþ þat he is &
shale be euer*e* wt ȝowe . & þat he sal kepe ȝo*ur* dere modere &
ȝo*ur* disciples . at ȝo*ur* wille . and shale ȝiue hem safe aȝeyne to ȝowe .

3.2   In the above passage, which is typical of the manuscript's general usage, three marks of punctuation are deployed: the *punctus* or point, the *punctus elevatus* – a point with a distinct superscript flourish – and *litterae notabiliores*, i.e. 'more notable letters', the paleographers' term for what are generally now termed 'capitals' (paleographers typically adopt the terminology of *litterae notabiliores* to avoid confusion with the Roman script known as *capitalis*). Parkes, in the most thorough discussion of punctuation practices in the Love tradition to date, offers a careful interpretation of the passage above in line with the marks of punctuation, noting that it was 'divided into five *sententiae*, each of which begins with a littera notabilior' (1997: 48), with each *sententia* – the ancestor of the modern notion 'sentence' – representing a stage in the argument. Subdivisions within the *sententiae* are marked by *punctus* and *punctus elevatus*. Thus, for instance,

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Within the third *sententia* the *punctus elevatus* … has been applied … to introduce the two complements of 'it is semely' ('to do grete þinges', and 'to suffir harde þinges'), and hence to emphasize the importance of propriety in the moral interpretation (Parkes 1997: 49).

As Salter points out, the punctuation in this manuscript represents 'an intelligent commentary on the sense, grammatical structure, and rhythm of the prose' (1956: 18).

3.3   Something similar may be noted in another early copy of the text whose language is much nearer in character to Northern usage, although not necessarily from Yorkshire: MS London, British Library, Additional 19901 (= Sargent's Ad1).

[fol 58r]

<div align="center">

And ya*n* said
</div>

þe au*n*gel to hi*m* . Bese þen now of gude comforth my lord . & worches
manfully ffor it is semely to hi*m* yt is in hie degre to do gret things
& worþi & to hi*m* yt is a manful man ; to suffer hard thinges . ffor yo
thinges yt bene harde & payneful sal sone passe & yo thinges yat
bene ioyful & glorious sal come aft*er* . ye fader sais yt he is & sal be
eu*er* wt ʒow . & yat he sal kepe ʒo*ur* dere moder & ʒo*ur* disciples at ʒo*ur* will .
& sal ʒife yai*m* safe aʒeyne to ʒowe .

The punctuation in Ad1, which according to Sargent is the earliest surviving manuscript from the alpha-tradition, is fairly simple, with *punctus* and *litterae notabiliores* used to flag most units, and a *punctus elevatus* to mark an emphasised complement, viz. **to suffer hard thinges**. (2)

3.4   Parkes went on to show that, although textual variation in the manuscript tradition was – in Sargent's words just cited – 'on the whole remarkably little', by contrast 'punctuation in the surviving witnesses presents a variety of different interpretations of the text' (1997: 47–48). One such early interpretation, contrasting markedly with that offered in the punctuation of A1, is in MS Tokyo, Waseda University Library NE 3691 (= Sargent's Wa), where punctuation was extremely sparse, and sometimes non-existent. Unfortunately, Wa is defective for the passage analysed by Parkes, but here is a passage from later in the manuscript (for an image, see the frontispiece to Oguro et al 1997). The underlined words are in red ink; the *littera notabilior* 'E' in the first line immediately after the red section occupies four lines of the text.

[fol 124v, col a]

¶ Than john p*re*ied
hir*e* to stint of suche
[col b]
soriful wordes and to ce
se of wepinge and con
forted hire in the best ma
nere that he myghte ¶ And
thou also be deuote yma-
ginacion as thou were
there bodily p*re*sent confort

our lady and that felaw
ship preiyng hem to ete
somwhat for yit theye
bene fastinge . And after
slepe But that I trowe
was ful litell And so ta
kinge hir*e* blesseng gou*n*
her way as at this tyme
<u>**what our lady and o**þ***er***</u>
<u>**with her did on the Sat*er***</u>
<u>**day Capitulum xlixm ¶ + die sa**</u>
E   rly on the mo <u>**bate**</u>
**   row vppon**
**   the Saterday**
**   stoden in þe**
foreside hous the gates
spered Our lady John
and other women be
fore ne*m*pned in gret mo*ur*
nynge and sorowe / ha
uynge in mynde the gret
tribulacion and Anguissh
of the daye before not
speking but be tyme lo
kinge ou*er* vpon a nother

3.5   It will immediately be observed that in Wa, by contrast with A1, hardly any punctuation at all has been deployed other than *litterae notabiliores* and paraph marks (= ¶), with only sporadic examples of the slash or *virgula* ('virgule') and *punctus*. Paraphs and *litterae notabiliores* mark *sententiae* and larger units; the single example of the virgule in the above passage, rare in the manuscript, marks off a non-finite subordinate clause. Parkes offered several reasons why scribes could omit punctuation, but the most plausible suggestion is that Love regularly deployed 'easily recognizable lexical syntax markers: conjunctions and adverbs' (1997: 55), and this characteristic is exemplified in the transcription offered, where forms such as **and** and **but** are commonplace. It is noticeable that the rare virgule in the passage above precedes not an adverb or a conjunction but a non-finite verb leading a subordinate clause, viz. **hauynge**.

3.6   Such sparing deployment of punctuation seems to have been characteristic of this scribe, whose hand has been detected by Linne Mooney and her research-team in some ten manuscripts, including not only two texts of the *Mirror* (Wa, and MS Edinburgh, NLS, Advocates' 18.1.7 = Sargent's Sc), but an important manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, MS Petworth House, Kent, 7, and an early copy of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, MS Cambridge, Pembroke College 307. The 'Petworth', or 'high "g"' scribe as he has been called, was, it is clear, a highly practised copyist who seems like several of his contemporaries to have combined the production of literary texts with clerkly service to one of the London guilds, in his case the Skinners' Company (see Mooney and Stubbs 2013: 120-121). (3)

3.7   In none of the manuscripts ascribed to him does the 'high "g"' scribe deploy punctuation marks more than very sparingly, and in verse he hardly uses punctuation at all. To illustrate this point, below is his text of the opening of the *Canterbury Tales* as it appears in the Petworth manuscript, with certain words/phrases underlined: conjunctions (both subordinating and coordinating), relative pronouns, and adverbs functioning at clause-level. Such words/phrases are, as noted by Parkes in his discussion of Wa, discourse-markers, flagging the structure of the verse, and it is worth noting how very frequently such forms appear at the beginning of every verse-line (although it is worth noting that each verse-line, of course, starts anew). Thus, in order to address ambiguities, the structure of the verse does not demand any punctuation at all; the grammatical cues – some of them emphasised by 'extended' or emphatic subordinating constructions, such as *whan that* for *whan*, or *for to* for *to* – ensure that the overall meaning of the passage is clear (see further Smith forthcoming (a) for discussion of punctuation in this and other texts of the *Tales*).

<u>Whan that</u> Aprille with his shoures soote
The droght of marche hath perced to þe roote
And bathes euery veyne in swich licoure
<u>Of which</u> virtue engendred is þe floure
<u>Whan</u> zephirus ek with his swete breth
Inspired hath in euery holt <u>and</u> heth
The tendre croppes *<u>and</u>* þe yonge sonne
Hath in the ram his half*e* cours yronne
<u>And</u> smale foules make melodye
<u>That</u> slepen al nyght with open eyghe
<u>So</u> prikeþ hem nature in here corages
<u>Than</u> longen folk <u>to</u> gon on pilgrymages
<u>And</u> palmers <u>for to</u> seke straunge strondes
To ferne halowes couthe in sondry londes
<u>And</u> specially fram euery shires ende
Of engelond to Caunterbury they wende
The holy blisseful martir <u>for to</u> seke
<u>That</u> hem hath holpen <u>when that</u> þey were seke

3.8   In this context, it is worth remembering what punctuation is primarily for:

> to resolve structural uncertainties in a text, and to signal nuances of semantic significance which might otherwise not be conveyed at all, or would at best be much more difficult for a reader to figure out (Parkes 1992: 1).

In the case of Wa and the poetic texts he copied it would seem that the 'high "g"' scribe felt that such 'figuring out' was something that could be safely left to the reader, rather in the manner that in antiquity the scribes – probably slaves – who produced texts in *scriptio continua* left it to their readers – probably their masters – to introduce their own interpretative punctuation. Parkes has elsewhere drawn attention to how such omission of punctuation in devotional texts can be paralleled in French and Latin texts (Parkes 1998); such 'neutral' presentations, argued Parkes, offered 'devout readers the opportunity to figure out for themselves subjective readings to apply to their own spiritual needs' (1997: 58–59). Some readers would have been ready to undertake such tasks; as John Thompson flags (forthcoming), there is 'convincing evidence' of a readership that was ready to undertake such activity as part of 'a disciplined private inner life of meditation'. And as Thompson and

others have shown, there was a tradition of 'active', engaged reading of manuscripts of Love's text that continued well into the period of the reformation, as witnessed inter alia by marginal annotations undertaken by identifiable pious individuals and families.

3.9   Such variation in interpretation was potentially, of course, increasingly a risky business at a time when the authorities were keen to distinguish between inappropriate (i.e. Wycliffite) and appropriate uses of the vernacular for religious expression. MS Oxford, Brasenose College 9, copied by a scribe who was also active in producing other major literary texts such as Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and Trevisa's *Polychronicon* (see inter alia Doyle and Parkes 1978: *passim*), is in this context an interesting example. Originally a witness for the beta-branch of the textual tradition of the *Mirror*, which contained some unauthorised materials, the Brasenose manuscript was very carefully corrected to bring its content into line with that found in the more 'authoritative' alpha-witnesses (Parkes 1997: 57); along with numerous erasures and removal of leaves, a corrector also carefully went through the punctuation of the text. Parkes argues that the modifications found in the Brasenose manuscript could be related to the text's emerging authorised status during the first quarter of the fifteenth century; assertive punctuation imposed on what had originally been a more neutral text was one means of controlling the way the work was subsequently received. Such control fits well with what was evidently Love's purpose: that reading would be 'valued as a repetitive and ruminative controlled learning opportunity and a practice-based private exercise in self-discipline' (Thompson 2014: 6).

4.   Punctuating Nicholas Love: The printing tradition

4.0   Such various practices continued until the end of the fifteenth century. The latest witness for the alpha-tradition in Sargent's classification is MS New Haven, Yale UL, Beinecke 535 (= Sargent's Ya2).

[fol 68r]
¶ Ande yan saide ye angell to hym Bey
yen now off gude confort my lorde & wyrchey ma*n*fully ffor it is semly
to hym yat is in hye degre // To do grete thyng*is* & worthy & to hym
yat is a ma*n*full ma*n* to suffre hard thyng*is* // ffor yo thyng*is* yat ben hard
& peynfull schull sone passe ande yo thynges yt bene ioyfull & glo-
rious schull come aft*er* ye fadyr sayith yt he is & schall be eu*er* wt ʒhow & yat
he schall kepe ʒo*ur* dere moder & ʒour disciples at ʒour wyll and
[fol 68v]
& schall ʒeue hem safe aʒane to ʒhow ¶

4.1   Ya2 relates closely in stemmatic terms to the printed tradition, which seems to derive wholly from the alpha-branch of the text. The *editio princeps* of Love's *Mirror* was issued by William Caxton in 1484 (STC 3259); only two copies survive, viz. an imperfect copy in Cambridge University Library and a fragment in the library of Lambeth Palace (see Hellinga 2014: 366 note 1, and references there cited). This edition in textual terms underpins all subsequent printed versions. Clearly the publication met a demand, since Caxton printed the work again in 1490 (STC 3261). Here is the passage parallel to A1 transcribed from the 1484 edition:

And thenne said the Aungel to hym . Be thenne now of good
comforte my lord / and wyrcheth manfully / For it is semely

**to hym that is in hyhe degree . to doo grete thynges and worthy
and to hym that is a manful man to suffer harde thynges /
For thos thynges that ben hard and peyneful shall soone passe
and tho thynges that ben ioyeful and glorious shall come af=
ter the fader saith / that he is and shalle be euer with you . and
that he shall kepe youre dere moder and youre discyples at yo=
ur wille and shall yelde him sauf ageyne to you .**

And here is the same text as presented in the 1490 edition:

**and thenne sayd the aungel to hym . Be thenne now of goode
comforde my lorde . and wyrcheth manfully / For it is semely
to hym that is in hyhe degree . to doo grete thynges and worthy
and to hym that is a manful man to suffer hard thynges .
For tho thynges that ben hard and peyneful shall soone passe
and tho thynges that ben ioyeful and glorious shalle come af=
ter the . fader sayth that he is and shalle be euere wyth you : and
that he shalle kepe your dere moder and your discyples at your
wylle and shalle yelde hem sauf ageyne to you .**

4.2   Comparison of the usages demonstrated in Ya2 and Caxton's two prints shows interesting differences in the range of usages adopted. Ya2, for instance, is comparatively selective in its use of marks of punctuation, in this passage using the double-slash or virgule (*//*), in a way comparable to the *punctus elevatus* in A1, to mark off the complements **To do grete thyng*is* & worthy** and **& to hym yat is a ma*n*full ma*n* to suffre hard thyng*is***. The purpose of both deployments seems to have been 'to emphasize the importance of propriety in the moral interpretation' (see 3.2. above), otherwise distinguishing *sententiae* and other units simply by means of *litterae notabiliores*. In that sense, Ya2 demonstrates an ongoing instability in punctuation-practices, whatever the pressures may have been to assert stability in the presentation of the textual content.

4.3   By contrast, although the Caxton prints draw in their presentation of this passage upon a more limited repertoire of punctuation-marks, they deploy more of them, demonstrating a closer, more directive engagement with the structure of the text on the part of the printer. The location of the pointing seems to be comparatively stable, although there is an interesting contrast between the two editions, with the single virgule being reduced in the later version of this passage in favour of the *punctus* (including its erroneous introduction in **the . fader**); however, Mackay (2012: 30) reports that the 1490 edition introduces elsewhere greater variation, including the sporadic use of a double punctus and the slightly more frequent use of a raised punctus.

4.4   This more insistent and increasingly stabilised pattern of punctuation is found to an even greater extent when we turn to the work of the two later printers of the *Mirror*, Richard Pynson and Wynkyn de Worde, both of whose sets of editions derive textually from Caxton, and are thus within the alpha-tradition of the text. Pynson published two editions that we know of, in 1494 (STC 3262) and 1506 (STC 3263). Again, there are some interesting distinctions between the two editions, in that the later edition simplified the repertoire of marks deployed:

Pynson 1494 (STC 3262)

**/ and than sayde the aungell to him , Be thou
nowe of good comforte mylorde and watch manfully . For it is seme
ly to him that is in hye degree to do greate thinges / and worthy / and to
him that is a manfull man to suffer harde thinges . For tho thynges
that been harde and paynfull shall sone passe . And tho thinges that
been Joyfull and glorious shal come after : the fader saith that he is
and shall be euer with you and that he shall kepe your dere moder &
youre disciples of youre wyll and shall yelde theym sauf ageyne to
you .**

Pynson 1506 (STC 3263)
**and thanne sayde the aungelle vnto hym . Be thane
nowe of gode conforte my lorde and worke manfully . For it is semely
to hym that is in hye degree to doo grete thynges and worthy : and to
hym that is a manfulle man to suffer harde thynges . For tho thynges
that ben harde and peynfulle that sone passe . And tho thynges that be
Joyful and gloryous shal come after : the fader sayth that he is & shall
Be euer wyth you and that he shalle kepe your dere moder and youre
Dyscyples at your wylle and shalle yelde theym saufe ageyne to you**

Pynson's two prints deploy punctuation rather differently, with a slightly reduced use of the virgule in the later edition (virgules are found elsewhere in the 1506 edition, but certainly less commonly than in the 1494 version). The double *punctus* (:) is fairly common in both versions. However, it is noticeable in both editions that the pointing is more insistent than in Caxton's prints.

4.5 Wynkyn de Worde was the most prolific and sustained publisher of editions of Love, with no fewer than five editions surviving, ranging from an incunable from 1494 to an edition published in 1530, on the eve of the Reformation. The last of these versions was 'almost certainly' recommended by no less a figure than Thomas More as a means of rebuttal of the heretical publications of Tyndale and others (see Thompson 2014: 7–10, and also Thompson forthcoming). Again, all the passages come from the Friday section in the work, but the usages exemplified here are typical of the text as a whole.

Wynkyn de Worde 1494 (STC 3260)
**And then*n*e sayd the angel to hym . be then*n*e now of good com
fort my lorde . and werchyth ma*n*fully . for it is semely to him
that is in high degree . to do grete thynges and worthy . and to
hym that is a manfull man to suffer harde thynges for tho
thynges that ben harde and paynfull shall soone passe . & thos
thynges that ben Joyefull and gloryous shall come after . the
fader sayth that he is and shall be euer wyth you : and that he
shall kepe your dere moder and your discyples att your wyll .
And shall yelde hem sauf agayne to you /**

Wynkyn de Worde 1507 (STC 3263.5)
**And then sayd the aun
gell to hym / be then now of good comfort my lorde / and
werche manfully . For it is semely to hym that is in hygh
degree / to do grete thy*n*ges and worthy and to hym that**

**is a manfull man to suffer harde thynges . For tho thyn
ges that ben harde and paynfull shall soone passe / & tho
thynges that ben Joyefull and gloryous shall come af=
ter / the fader sayth that he is and shall be with you / and
that he shal kepe your dere moder and your dysciples at
your wyll . And shal yelde them sauf agayn to you /**

Wynkyn de Worde 1517 (STC 3264)
**And then sayd the aun
gell to hym / be then now of good comfort my lorde / and
werke ma*n*fully . For it is semely to hym that is in hygh
degree / to do grete thy*n*ges and worthy / and to hym that
is a manfull man to suffer harde thynges . For tho thyn
ges that ben harde and paynfull shall soone passe & those
thynges that ben Joyefull and gloryous shall come af=
ter / the fader sayth that he is and shal be with you / and
that he shal kepe your dere mother and your dyscyples at
your wyll . And shall yelde them safe agayne to you .**

Wynkyn de Worde 1525 (STC 3266)
**And than sayd the aungell to hym / be than now
of good conforte mylorde / and werke manfully . For it
is semely to hym that is in high degree / to do grete
thynges and worthy / and to hym that is a manfull
man to suffer harde thynges . For those thynges that
ben harde and paynfull shall soone passe / and those
thynges that ben Joyfull and gloryous shall come af=
ter / the father sayth that he is and shall be euer with
you / and that he shal kepe your dere mother and your
dyscyples at your wyll / & shall yelde them safe agayne
to you .**

Wynkyn de Worde 1530 (STC 3267)
**And than sayd the aungell to hym / be than now
of good conforte my lorde / and werke manfully . For it
is semely to hym that is in high degree / to do grete
thynges and worthy / and to hym that is a manfull
man to suffer harde thynges . For those thynges that
ben harde and paynfull shall soone passe / and those
thynges that ben ioyfull and gloryous shall come af=
ter / the father sayth that he is and shall be euer with
you / and that he shall kepe your dere mother and your
dyscyples at your wyll / & shall yelde them safe agayne
to you .**

4.6   Wynkyn de Worde, in contrast with Pynson and as these extracts illustrate, retains
throughout his printing of the *Mirror* a comparatively wide repertoire of marks of
punctuation, ranging from virgules and *punctus* to *litterae notabiliores*, with virgules being
rather more commonly deployed in the editions from 1507 onwards. Moreover, although as
reproduced above the varying lineation in the various versions indicates that editions were set

up differently, the location of punctuation-marks is fairly regular. It seems in sum that a more insistent and settled pattern of punctuation for the Love text – in tandem with a more standardised form of spelling (see 2.2 above), assisting the communicative reach of the work -- was emerging as printing became established as the primary vector for the text in the first decades of the sixteenth century.

4.7   Such textual stability would have pleased More, who specifically recommended the *Mirror* (**Bonauenture of the lyfe of Cryste**) to **the people unlerned**:

> **For surely the very best waye were neyther to rede thys not theirs but rather the people unlerned to occupy them selfe beside theyr other busynesse in prayour, good medytacyon, and redynge of suche englysshe bookes as moste may norysshe and encrease deuocyon. Of whiche kynde is Bonauenture of the lyfe of Cryste, Gerson of the folowynge of Christ, and the deuoute contemplatyue boke of Scala perfectionis with suche other lyke then in the lernynge what may well be answered vnto heretykes** (Schuster et al 1976: 37, cited Thompson 2014: 8).

More's perspective was clearly, mutatis mutandis, much like that of Arundel over a century before: the suppression of heresy and the assertion of orthodox reading; and textual control, expressed inter alia through stabilised practices of punctuation, would have been part of this programme of regulation of religious practice along approved lines. In a manuscript culture, such control was difficult, as the examples of the very varied practices sketched out above demonstrate; but the world of print, as exemplified in Wynkyn de Worde's texts, offered new ways to control the dissemination of a particular form of the text even as it also allowed for the wider circulation and consumption of works of (in More's terms) more dubious provenance. More insistent punctuation that had first appeared in the later manuscripts of Love's *Mirror* but was increasingly stabilised in the printed tradition would not leave the 'figuring out' to individual readers, but instead would offer them clear – and authoritative, from More's point of view – interpretative guidance.

5.   Implications

5.0   What are the implications of this change in usage? Francesca Mackay (2012: 108) has plausibly argued that the changes and eventual comparative stabilisation of punctuation-practices found in the printed editions of Love align with the emergence of what might be termed more 'extensive' literacy. When texts are read repeatedly, after an initial stage where the encounter would have been primarily oral and perhaps tutor-assisted, they become aides-memoires rather than opportunities for encounters with new information, and intensive reading-cultures typically place less emphasis on punctuation. Extensive readers who read more books without an intermediary needed more on-page guidance; as a result, more comprehensive programmes of punctuation were required. Such practices can be linked to increasing habits of private and indeed 'silent' reading. Such 'interiority' was indeed widely recommended by late medieval writers, and the common acceptance of interiority as a devotional practice is witnessed e.g. through the wide circulation of translations of Thomas á Kempis's late fifeenth-century *Imitatio Christi*, a work that insisted on solitude and silence.

5.1   But as the example of the 'modified' Brasenose manuscript of Love's *Mirror* shows (see 3.9 above), punctuation could be inserted by a later private reader as part of devotional practice; and although the intensive-extensive shift may be part of the story, perhaps more significant is the issue of social control of textual reception. In this context the example of the

Imitatio Christi is an interesting one, since although it began as a work of late medieval devotion composed by a German Augustinian canon it developed an afterlife – that More would certainly not have approved – not only in catholic but in the reformed religion of **heretykes** (see von Habsburg 2011). Extensive reading of **suche englysshe bookes as moste may norysshe and encrease deuocyon** may have been a good thing, but clearly such practices could potentially lead in directions of which More would have disapproved. For that reason a carefully presented text, with increasingly stabilised punctuation present to resolve any potentially worrying 'structural uncertainties', was clearly a good move even if (obviously) it was not foolproof. The appearance of the various forms of Love's *Mirror*, therefore, reflect in quite delicate ways how these various texts functioned in socio-cultural terms. (4)

5.2　　Such correlations of textual form with socio-cultural function is an approach familiar to scholars working in the linguistic paradigm known as pragmatics. For linguists, pragmatics began as a 'modern' topic, viz. the study of how language works in particular interactional situations, i.e. in conversations, in speeches, in letters, in computer-mediated communication etc., and typically its practice overlapped from the outset with other linguistic sub-disciplines, such as sociolinguistics or semantics. Historical pragmatics, which emerged in the 1990s, is the application of pragmatic approaches to materials from the past, which until the end of the nineteenth century survive solely in written form. Hitherto, valuable work in historical pragmatics has focused on the analysis of corpora, notably with reference to grammatical or lexical features; a 'typical' piece of research in this area would deploy quantitative analysis of large corpora to trace (e.g.) the linguistic expression of 'polite' discourse through the deployment of particular forms of address or particular grammatical constructions.

5.3　　However, if pragmatics is about how utterances work in context it is in principle possible to extend its domain to other phenomena that are less traditionally part of linguistic enquiry but which nevertheless reflect the interactive functions of human discourse, such as punctuation (as in this paper) and script-/font-choice, and also broader codicological/bibliographical matters such as *mise-en-page*, annotation and paratextual features, and even questions of production, provenance and ownership, all features traditionally considered part of distinct scholarly disciplines such as palaeography, codicology and book history. Bringing such issues into the domain of pragmatics aligns rather well with that paradigm's emerging focus on the contextual and the qualitative that has been recently called for (see e.g. Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 6). For, as we have seen, the deployment of virgule or a punctus can be interpreted plausibly as relating to the ways in which writing functions in society; and the final argument of this paper is that the kind of concerns underpinning this paper should be seen as part of the increasingly capacious agenda of pragmatic research. (5)

inspirational commitment to the wider team-project of which this article is part (see further e.g. Thompson forthcoming). I should also like to acknowledge with gratitude the important MPhil thesis on Love undertaken by my student Francesca Mackay, cited below (Mackay 2012), which inter alia compares the punctuation-practices in two local Love manuscripts (MSS Glasgow, University Library, Gen. 1130 and Hunter 77) with those in the early prints. Although I have to come to differ from Francesca in my views on the implications of the evolving punctuation of the Love tradition, I have much enjoyed my discussions with her both on this text and on many others as she moved on to produce a distinguished doctoral thesis on Older Scots chronicles (see Mackay 2016). I am grateful for input many years ago from †Malcolm Parkes, whose verbally-expressed axiom that 'the greatest mistake a paleographer makes is to forget the nature of the text being copied' seems to me especially relevant to the arguments put forward here. And finally I should like to thank the very helpful comments on this article by two anonymous readers.

NOTES

(1):   Descriptions of both these manuscripts, with details of the marginal comments in MS Cambridge University Library, Additional 6578, appear at http://www.qub.ac.uk/geographies-of-orthodoxy/; see further 3.1 below.

(2):   Ad1 makes no distinction in form between thorn and *y,* a dialectally-distinctive feature in medieval English handwriting, so none is made in the transcription above. See further Benskin 1982, supplemented by a discursive note in Laing and Williamson 1994: 115–116. Sargent places the text in Leicestershire/Nottinghamshire on the basis of the combination of forms used, but there are definite distinctive Northernisms recorded, not easily accommodated in Leicestershire/Nottinghamshire, that seem to be part of the emerging Love spelling-tradition, notably **suld** 'should', **gude** 'good', **lufe** 'love', **saule** 'soul'.

(3): Accessible images of this scribe's copies of Chaucer and Gower, lodged on the *Medieval Scribes* website authored by Mooney's team, include:

https://www.medievalscribes.com/index.php?browse=aspect&id=3&navlocation=Petworth&navlibrary=Petworth House, The National Trust&msid=116&nav=off
https://www.medievalscribes.com/index.php?browse=aspect&id=57&navlocation=Cambridge&navlibrary=Pembroke College&msid=181&nav=off

The York-Oxford-Sheffield *Late Medieval Scribes* project (PI Linne Mooney, Co-I Simon Horobin, RA Estelle Stubbs) acknowledges the support of the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council.

(4):   Something similar can be perceived fifty years later in 1560s Scotland, in the punctuation-practices found in public notices ('broadsides') derived from private documents; see Smith forthcoming (b).

(5):   Historical pragmatics correlates rather well with another paradigm that was formulated in literary circles in the 1990s: 'new philology'. New philology, formulated most famously in a special 1990 number of the high-profile journal *Speculum*, stemmed in medievalist circles from the 'turn to manuscripts' in the late 1970s, emphasising the reception of texts as the focus of enquiry rather than the traditional philological and editorial goal of

reconstructing authors' original conceptions of their works. Such concerns also spoke to postmodernist agendas current in the humanities that emphasised textual fluidity and the negotiation of meaning. The key essay in the special number of *Speculum* is probably Nichols 1990; key theoretical works include Zumthor 1972, Cerquiglini 1999. Other key works significant for Anglicists included Patterson 1988 and Pearsall 1977. The latter is ostensibly a textbook but in retrospect it can be seen as the inspiration for the key series of York manuscript conferences that Pearsall instigated from 1981 onwards; these conferences, and the papers that followed from them, are increasingly recognised as agenda-setting for a whole raft of initiatives, e.g. the Early Book Society. For further discussion, see also Smith 2014.

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